

**ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES AND THEMATIC**

**ASPECTS OF THE BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC**

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**PROMOTER:**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES AND THEMATIC ASPECTS OF THE BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC**

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Informed by the functionalist perspective, the study analyzes the Basotho accordion music over the period 1980 – 2005. Of particular importance are the various themes addressed by the verbal text that comes up in the music. Specifically, the study analyzes the language used in the composition of the songs accompanying the Basotho accordion music; the rationale behind the use of such language. The study also looks at the status of the composers or artists of the music as well as the role of their music among Basotho; and last, it looks at the reception of the Basotho accordion music by Basotho.

In order to address the above purposes of the study, the qualitative method was used to interpret the songs. The population of the study was all the Basotho artists, radio presenters of the music, shop owners selling the music, street vendors and the public that listens to the music and buys it. A stratified random sampling method was used to select with the subjects of the study. A total of 100 songs were analyzed while 81 subjects were interviewed for this study.

The findings of the study on the issues investigated are that, Basotho accordion music promotes or helps in the aesthetics of the Sesotho language; that it is a reservoir of rich language. The recurring themes in the music range from social, political and economic issues. The music forges patriotism among Basotho by promoting customs, norms and values of the nation. In terms of status, the artists are either illiterate or semi-literate and the music is their main means of livelihood. On the whole, most Basotho are receptive to Basotho accordion music in many different ways.

The study concludes that Basotho accordion music is part of the oral traditional music of Basotho since it retains some features of oral traditional music. Accordion music is very rich in a variety of linguistic techniques common in oral traditions of Basotho. The music also reflects the lifestyle of Basotho because of its historicity and coverage of concerns of the nation.

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## **OPSOMMING**

### **ONDERSOEK NA DIE TAALTEGNIEKE EN TEMATIESE ASPEKTE VAN DIE BASOTHO TREKKLAVIERMUSIEK**

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Die studie is onderneem vanuit 'n funksionalistiese perspektief en daarin word Basotho Trekklaviermusiek gedurende die periode vanaf 1980 tot 2005 geanaliseer. Van besondere belang is the verskeidenheid temas wat na vore kom uit die verbale teks met die musiek wat daarmee gepaardgaan. In hierdie studie word die taal van die liedere, wat met die bypassende Basotho Trekklaviermusiek gesing word, in meer besonderhede ontleed. Die doel hiermee is om die onderliggende motivering vir die taalgebruik in die gekomponeerde liedere te probeer vasstel. In die studie word ook na die status van die komponiste of skrywers van die musiek gekyk, sowel as na die rol wat hul musiek in die Basothokultuur speel; en laastens, wat die ontvangs van Basotho Trekklaviermusiek onder Basothomense is.

Ten einde die bogenoemde aspekte van die studie te ondersoek, is daar van die kwantitatiewe metode vir die interpretasie van die liedere gebruik gemaak. Die omvang van die studiegroep bestaan uit al die Basothokunstenaars, radio-omroepers wat die musiek speel, winkeleienaars wat dit verkoop, smouse en die publiek wat daarna luister en dit aankoop. 'n Gestratifiseerde ewekansige streekproefmetode is gebruik om die proefpersone van die studie te selekteer. 'n Totaal van 100 liedere is geanaliseer, terwyl daar met 81 proefpersone onderhoude vir die studie gevoer is.

In die studie van die onderwerpe wat ondersoek is, het geblyk dat Basotho Trekklaviermusiek die estetika van die Basothotaal promoveer of aanhelp; dit is 'n reservoir van ryke taalgebruik. Die herhalende voorkoms van temas in die musiek strek oor sosiale, politiese en ekonomiese kwessies.

Die musiek bevorder patriotisme onder die Basotho deur gebruike, norme en waardes van die nasie te bevorder. Die kunstenaars is statusgewys óf ongeletterd óf semigeletterd en die musiek is hul hoofbron van inkomste. Die meeste Basotho is oor die algemeen en op baie verskillende wyses ontvanklik vir Basotho Trekklaviermusiek.

Die studie se bevinding is dat Basotho Trekklaviermusiek deel vorm van die mondelinge tradisionele musiek van Basotho, aangesien dit sommige elemente van die mondelinge tradisionele musiek bevat. Trekklaviermusiek is baie ryk aan 'n verskeidenheid taalkundige tegnieke wat algemeen in die mondelinge tradisies van die Basotho voorkom. Die musiek reflekteer ook die leefwyse van die Basotho as gevolg van die geskiedkundigheid daarvan en die oorsig wat dit bied van die nasie se belange.

Desember 2009

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES AND THEMATIC ASPECTS OF THE BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Lehlohonolo Samuel Phafoli

December 2009

Signed:

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Last, I want to thank my wife, daughter and son for their support during my studies.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- ALASA** - African Languages Association of Southern Africa  
**ANC** - African National Congress  
**BCP** - Basutoland Congress Party  
**BNP** - Basotho National Party  
**MFP** – Marema-tlou freedom Party  
**NRC** - National Recruiting Companies  
**UDM** – United Democratic Movement  
**SAFOS** - Southern African Journal of Folklore Studies

## **KEY WORDS**

**Accordion artists**

**Accordion music**

**Famo**

**Functionalism**

**Language techniques**

**Lead-singer**

**Soloist**

**Thematic aspects**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRDODUCTION

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the following sub-topics: introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, value of the research, definitions of terms, scope of the study, literature review and methodology.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

*Famo* is a term used to describe Basotho music sung in Sesotho which started with concertina as the key instrument and later accordion and drums. This music was played in shebeens and was famous for the immorality of its participants. The *famo* music, which is currently known as accordion music, had been a popular shebeen performance from its origins in the Republic of South Africa but, with migrant labour from Lesotho, it crossed into Lesotho. Not much has been written about this music except by Coplan, who from time to time the study will refer to. Additional information about the music was gathered from interviews and personal experiences of the researcher. *Famo* music was played in shebeens in Lesotho, especially in the outskirts of major towns. The music was played mostly during weekends where people had organized themselves into the business of *stokvel*. The music was meant to attract more customers. However there were other places known as *lipoto* where this music was played regularly. The *famo* artists did not have their music recorded except one, 'Malitaba, whose recorded songs could be heard over Radio Bantu and Radio Lesotho.

In 1979, a group by the name **Tau-ea-Matšekha** released their album of the same name. The album became popular among the Basotho to the extent that the group was highly in demand and was invited to perform at different places on a variety of occasions. The formation of **Tau-ea-Matšekha** and others that followed instantly sparked a change of attitude among the Basotho. Instead of referring to the music as low class and associated

with immoral behaviour, Basotho began to identify themselves with it, accepting the music as it reflected their culture, as highlighted by Coplan (1995:258). In it, they felt that their language, customs and beliefs were retained and propagated. Based on the change of attitude, the *famo* music was renamed *mino oa korianana* (accordion music). There are two reasons for this change of name. One was that, the accordion, as a musical instrument played a major role, as it was only accompanied by the home-made drum. The second reason was that it had its own special and acceptable taste, and had to be distinguished from *famo* which was associated with immorality. The accordion music was welcomed with respect as opposed to the *famo* which was meant for the commercial business of prostitution.

The years 1980 –1985 could be referred to as the larva stage where a few groups began to organize themselves and recorded their albums. Some of these groups were **Tau-ea-Linare, Tau-ea-Thaba, Lilala-tsa-Sekhonyana** and **Mahosana a ka Phamong**. Currently, this music has won the hearts and sympathy of most Basotho.

The period 1985 – 2005 marks the increased production of the Basotho accordion music and the proliferation of artists in great numbers. One observes that, in each and every district, there are accordion music artists. This period has seen fast growing numbers of accordion music artists throughout Lesotho to the extent that it is difficult to give the specific number of artists in the country. Since 1980-1985, when there were about 15 artists who had recorded cassettes, the numbers have grown to over 200 in 2005. It could also be said that the change of attitude led to its high rate of production. Not only that, but it was seen as one way of generating income in order to alleviate poverty. One might also indicate that the rate of unemployment during 1980-2005 was increasing at an alarming rate and as a result it also contributed to wide production of this music. Some artists had to resort to the production of accordion music in order to meet their economic needs. For instance, in 1987, about 10,000 Basotho miners lost their jobs after a National Union Mineworker's national strike (Teba, Lesotho 2005). Again, since 1990, there has been a drastic decline in the numbers of Basotho mine workers working in the Republic of South Africa due to retrenchment. The total number of workers has gone down from

125,786 in 1990 to 57,989 in 2004 (Central Bank 2005). One observes that as the rate of unemployment increased, the number of Basotho accordion musicians also rose.

This period could also be described as the evolutionary one as there had been various developments within the accordion music. One remarkable change is with regard to the instruments used during the performance. For instance, in the early eighties, artists played accordion and drum accompanied by *lifela* or praise poetry. The drum that was used in the early 1980's was made up of either a 20 or 25 litre tin that had a car's inner tube covering its top end and fastened by wires. Alongside the top, there were either two sticks or any metal wire which were tied to the drum connected by another wire holding a string of beer bottle tops meant to produce a sonorous sound. The drummer used short beaters cut from tyres for improvised drum sticks. But, with time, the artists employed guitars, and later, modern drums and other instruments like saxophones, depending on an individual group. Currently, most groups use modern sound systems during their performance, which was not the case in the early 1980's. When performing, they either connect their instruments to a car battery, generator or mains electricity.

With regard to literary analysis of accordion music, most scholars have dwelt on the analysis of *lifela-tsa-litsamaea-naha*, also known as migrant workers' songs. They have looked at the origins, language and contents of the *lifela-tsa-litsamaea naha*. Many, except Coplan, linked Basotho accordion music to the migrant workers' songs as both originating from similar setting in the mines of the Republic of South Africa. Wells (1994), like Coplan, also relates the history of accordion music focusing on the type of instruments used during the performance.

Nowadays, this music is popular and Basotho identify themselves with it as their traditional music, which is why this study has undertaken to investigate why it is appreciated and regarded as Basotho traditional music.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The research problem is the analysis of Basotho accordion music, in particular the evolutionary nature of the music, its creative production and attitude of Basotho towards the music. There has been a change of attitude among the Basotho towards accordion music, a lot of creativity to produce the music and the music has itself undergone evolutionary changes. The feeling among the Basotho is that, the accordion music is part of the Basotho oral literature and addresses the social, economic and political issues of the Basotho in general. As such, it is regarded as a reservoir of the Basotho customs, beliefs and a variety of language techniques, hence, its popularity among the Basotho. Although the musicians refer to these important issues, very little has been written about this music to show the didactic and nation building role accordion music plays among the Basotho nation. The study responds to the question of to what extent is accordion music can be seen as a traditional music of Basotho. In brief, the study argues that, indeed, Basotho accordion music is part of Basotho oral literature as it retains some of the orality features found in Sesotho oral literature. Since not much has been written about this genre, the research fills the gap through comparison of accordion music and some Sesotho oral genres in order to justify its being regarded as Basotho oral literature. That is, the period 1980 to 2005 had not seen much scholarly analysis of the Basotho accordion music; therefore, there is a need to carry out this study in an attempt to analyse in depth the propagation and refinement of the accordion music, considering its form, content and status among the Basotho. The study raises awareness with regards to the importance of this music and emphasizes that it deserves to be documented for future reference.

## **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study is a response to and a continuation of the spadework done by Coplan in various works (1985-1995), who relates the origins and the development of this music, focusing on its performance, although he attaches it to Basotho migrants which is not the case nowadays.

The aim of the study is to analyse the themes of the Basotho accordion music from 1980 to 2005. It examines a variety of thematic aspects which have been incorporated by the artists in the production of accordion music.

The study also analyses the language used in the composition of the accordion songs and the rationale behind the employment of such language.

It also aims at looking at the role of their music among the Basotho, and the reception of the accordion music by the Basotho.

#### **1.4 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study helps to enhance the importance of this music socially, politically, economically and academically.

Socially, this music carries along the cultural aspects that in some cases, guide us in our daily lives. As an embodiment of Basotho customs and beliefs, accordion music sets examples of behaviour worth practicing and those to avoid in life focusing on the Basotho in general. This aspect is in some cases, reflected through the experiences of the artists. Again, this study will contribute towards the social status of the artists, enhancing their dignity in the society as public figures that deserve respect as eyes and voices of the people.

In contemporary times, politically, this music raises concerns of the public in the form of songs. It addresses the feelings of the public with regard to good governance and problems experienced by society due to political upheavals of Lesotho. Thus, in short, the artists do not only speak for themselves but for the nation as a whole. It is through this study that the public will learn that their concerns about the politics of Lesotho are encapsulated in accordion music.

Economically, this music addresses the Basotho standard of living. Through this study, the public will learn that the artists are aware of the economic problems of Lesotho such

as high rate of unemployment and unreliable economic policies which create insecurity and instability. This study will also benefit the artists themselves in that the public will buy more of their music in order to cater for the economic needs of the artists. By so doing, the public will be contributing towards poverty alleviation in the country.

Academically, this study sensitises the academics about what is entailed in accordion music, for instance, poetic language and language skills of the Basotho nation. It also helps students to understand the use and application of different language techniques when speaking and writing Sesotho. This is because accordion music is enriched with a variety of language devices. This music focuses on some historical aspects of Lesotho especially between 1980 and 2005. Therefore, the study conscientises the public about the didactic role played by the accordion music with regard to historical events of the Lesotho. It enables people to view this music as one of the genres which preserves the history of Lesotho.

## **1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Basotho accordion music is the genre of Basotho songs where they sing *lifela* in Sesotho, accompanied by the accordion and the drum as the key instruments. There are two types of these songs;

The first one is *makhele*, where the artist and his team sing the chorus together followed by an individual *lifela* and end by repeating the chorus. In some cases, the *makhele* sound like *mangae* songs of the initiates.

The second type is *masholu*, these are the songs where there is no chorus at all, where the artists and other members of the band sing the *lifela* in turns, one after the other until the end of the song. These types of songs were named after one Thabo Lesholu Tšoanelo Peni, who started his music career in 1969 in the Republic of South Africa. He used to play accordion for a group of men called *Marashea*. He became famous to the extent that the accordion songs, similar to his, became known as *masholu* in singular it is *lesholu*.

Artists/singers refer to people who compose and sing the accordion music.

Themes refer to various topics that artists sing about in their songs.

*Famo* is a term used to describe Basotho music sung in Sesotho which started with the concertina as the key instrument and later accordion and drums. This music was played in shebeens and was famous for the immorality of its participants.

*Focho* is another name for *famo* music which was used in the 1970s.

Style refers to the Sesotho language choices and techniques used by the artists in their songs.

*Lifela tsa li-tsamaea- naha* is a solitary form of Sesotho *mélange* poems recited by Basotho men. They are mostly referred to as migrant labourers' songs. They are recited in a distinctive tonal manner of a song.

*Marashea* are groups of Basotho men residing in the Republic of South Africa who have formed different units famous for terrorizing people in the locations. The name comes from Russians. These groups are based in different locations; they sometimes fight each other and forceably take other people's wives.

*'Mino oa litsamaea-naha* is the term used by presenters of Leseli FM Radio in the Republic of South Africa for the programme on Basotho accordion music.

*'Mino oa koriana* is a term used by presenters of Mo-Afrika FM Radio in Lesotho for a programme on Basotho accordion music.

*Re hlasela thota* is a term used by presenters of Radio Lesotho in Lesotho for the programme on Basotho accordion music.

*Rea kubasela* is a term used by presenters of Catholic Radio in Lesotho for the programme on Basotho accordion music.

*Seoeleoelele/oeleoelele* is another term for *famo* music used by some scholars like Coplan. In most cases, the *seoeleoelele/oeleoelele* is heard in songs where female participate in the music. The lead-singers, especially female ones, usually repeat the word *seoeleoelele* throughout the songs.

*Sepoto* is a drinking place for certain people who prefer privacy while drinking beer. Such a place is normally frequented by the friends or people with close social relations.

*Stokvel* is normally a group of people who have organized themselves to hold monthly or weekly functions where they contribute a certain amount to one of their members. They either drink together as members or invite other people to boost their business. In such gatherings, they buy and drink beer, and to attract more customers, they may invite the *famo* musicians.

It is worth noting that, for the purpose of this study, names of bands or groups are used as sources, except where individual artists have used their names instead of the group name. This is done in order to avoid confusion that may arise when it comes to the writing of the references. Again, for convenience, the names of groups have been bolded while personal names which are sometimes are names of groups, have not been bolded. Titles of songs and Sesotho lines have been italicized.

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study covers the period from 1980 until 2005 when Basotho accordion music became famous and popular among the populace. The study involves the accordion music artists, radio stations presenters, business people who sell accordion music and the general public who have interest in this music. These are stake-holders in this music who contribute to its production and sustainability. For instance, artists produce the music, radio presenters promote it while the public are the consumers.

There are three major reasons for choosing this period, namely:

- Change of attitude towards Basotho accordion music;
- High creative production of accordion music; and
- Evolutionary changes of accordion music.

The study is structured in the following manner:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

Chapter 3: Historiography of Basotho accordion music

Chapter 4: Analysis of the accordion music

Chapter 5: Thematic aspects of accordion music

Chapter 6: Conclusion.

## **1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The researcher read a variety of documents that included journals, theses, and books that dealt with aspects related to Basotho accordion music. The materials cover four broad topics, which are, the history of Southern African Township music, the Basotho migrant labourers' *lifela*, the Basotho music and African music in general. These topics are related in that, Basotho accordion music is traced from the 1920's to 2005. It is said to have emerged in the Republic of South Africa, in the mining compounds and around the squatter camps, and even to date, it still retains some aspects of African oral literature. Most of the literature review would take a closer look at most of Coplan's (1985 – 1995) works since he has related the history of accordion music until as late as the 1990's. Coplan's works at the time of writing this research were the only which had intensively treated the *famo* music. And, because of the quality and relevance of the works to the study, the researcher had to pick on his works. For instance, Coplan's works touch on origins, audience and function of the *famo* in the 1920s until 1990s. The documents that were read still leave a gap for further research as they do not address the language, themes and change of attitude towards Basotho accordion music.

### 1.7.1 HISTORY OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN TOWNSHIP MUSIC AND BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC

This section deals with works that cover the history of Southern African Township music and Basotho accordion music. *In Township Tonight* Coplan (1985) relates the brief history of Basotho accordion music. Coplan highlights the origins of *lifela* from as far back as 1867 with the opening of the South African gold mines. He describes the mining compound conditions, which prompted the migrant workers to compose *lifela*. He also points out that migrant workers used to sing *lifela* in their solitary journeys to and from the mines. Thus, the composition covered various topics, which referred to social problems such as family life and economic issues such as unemployment, which led to their going to the mines.

Coplan seems to have done intensive research with regard to the origins of what is now called Basotho accordion music. He traces the origins of this music from as far back as the 1920's in the shebeens and in the squatter camps of Johannesburg. He points out that the popular instruments in those days were the concertina and the home-made-drum. These instruments were accompanied by a variety of *lifela* from the audience who participated in the dancing during the drinking session. The establishment of shebeens became one way of solving the problem of unemployment through illegal sale of liquor. The music was played in the shebeens as one way of attracting more customers and entertaining them so as to speed up cash flow into the shebeen queens' pockets. He further indicates that the music was played in shebeens for rough and sexy Basotho migrants, both men and women. He writes:

According to numerous eyewitnesses, the *famo* (from *ho re famo*) to open nostrils; to raise garments, displaying the genitals, was almost defiantly suggestive. Women made shaking and thrusting movements with their shoulders, hips and bosoms while lifting their flared skirts in an effort, perhaps to show their ass to Lesotho. The dancers wore no underwears but instead had painted rings around the whole area of their sex, a ring they called "stoplight". ... Men, dancing along side or seated against the walls, chose the

women they wanted and took them into the back for intercourse (1985: 98).

Coplan goes on relating the historical background of this music until the 1950s when some of the recording companies recorded the *famo* music. He further points out that the *famo* music was recitative songs performed by the women with the purpose of paralleling the male's *lifela*, that is, women addressed their *famo* songs to men. Against the historical background given above by Coplan, this study wishes to treat the recorded materials, which are in the form of cassettes that are produced by different groups, in a well-organized manner. Coplan's work, which concentrates on performance, leaves room for one to analyse the language and thematic aspects in the Basotho accordion music. The focus of the study is not only based on the fact that accordion music is produced by migrant workers but, that it is currently sung by any artist who feels he has the talent of singing, not necessarily because he has been to the mines. When considering themes, one would say that, currently, the Basotho accordion music addresses various aspects that affect Basotho lives in general. Attention is no longer on the ill-treatment of miners or poor living conditions experienced in the mines.

It is worth noting that the setting and the form of performance that used to take place as mentioned above by Coplan is no longer the case nowadays. For instance, at the present moment, women no longer flare their skirts without under-wears to attract men, but dress in any form which is acceptable. This music is accepted as the Basotho traditional music meant to preserve the integrity of the Basotho as a nation. Although, in most cases, the artists are semi-literate, it inspires both the literate and illiterate as it identifies them as Basotho. Again, while still on the morality issue, the Basotho who attend the concerts or shows of different artists, behave in a more acceptable manner, accepted by modernity as compared to what has been described above. The public attend these concerts because they want to listen to the music and see the artists in person and not for sex. They attend the shows because they want to listen to the fluency of the artists when they employ figurative and poetic language.

Coplan (1987) describes *famo* as nothing but the emotional response of demoralised African proletarians to a social environment. Current Basotho accordion music is sung even by those people who run their own businesses, the educated and the uneducated alike. Although many resort to it for financial reasons, they are not as demoralised as in those days of the 1950's. Coplan (1987:23-24) also relates the historical background of the accordion music though he still attaches it to the Basotho migrant labourers. He writes:

Once at the mines the poet regales his audience with hilarious and ironic narrations of the seamier side of urban life. Especially popular are amorous encounters with *matekatse* (camp followers of the Sotho migrant army). These women are in many ways the counterparts of the migrants whom it is their profession to entertain. Stubbornly independent, they compose their own songs of innocence and experience to the rhythm of *famo*, songs played on drums and accordions in the illegal bars of South Africa... Suffice it to say that in the amorous as well as poetic contests that spring up in shebeens, the women are quite often the victors.

As indicated above, Coplan shows that, in shebeens where the accordion music is played, women, called *matekatse*, compete with men on *lifela* and that such women are meant to entertain male migrant labourers. Though this was to be the case in the past, it is currently no longer the practice. This music is no longer sung only by migrant labourers, but even by those who have never been to the mines. As indicated earlier, the setting and the performance are different from the one described above. The accordion music is not restricted to shebeens; it is now a famous and popular music where artists entertain the public in different functions like weddings, graduation ceremonies, national official functions and festivals. They also hold commercial shows in different halls where the public has to pay an entrance fee to watch them. The artists nowadays make a living out of the accordion music. We also find that, in their concerts, there are no *matekatse* who sing parallel to males or whose presence is to entertain males. The study deals with the current well-organized personnel, whose morality during the performance is retained as they are in business. Organized as they are, we still have young emerging artists, who, for

them to be known, have to start by performing either on streets or in liquor restaurants. But since artists are in business they are paid for their performance.

With regard to the participation of the women folk, one can say that there are certain groups, which have a combination of females and males. But, in their songs, they do not compete, they sing a song as a group, where each of the participants has a chance to sing *lifela* or join in the chorus in an orderly manner. Again, the quality of instruments used by most of the known artists is far better compared to those of the olden days and, as such, they produce quality sounds except for beginners who may have to use the old or second hand instruments.

Wells (1994:2) has also written about Basotho music in his book, *An Introduction to the Music of Basotho*. His book covers a wide range of Basotho songs under the two categories of established canon and emergent culture. He draws a line of demarcation in the two terms when he writes:

...the established canon refers to self-consciously recognized aspects of culture thought to have their origins in the past, emergent culture refers to recently evolved organic continuities of performance style which have evolved in modern performance contexts, usually with foreign influence.

He classifies Basotho songs such as men's songs, women's songs and children's songs that do not have foreign influence under the established canon, while others like mission hymns, school songs and songs of travellers fall under emergent culture. His work intensively analyses each and every category of the songs. It covers participants involved and instruments used in such songs and, more importantly, the social settings. In this research, we find that Wells classifies Basotho accordion music under songs of the travellers. His argument is that they were born out of the complex of experiential values, developed in conjunction with migrant labour, and the effects that it had for those who travelled and those who stayed at home. He goes further to relate a brief history similar to the one given by Coplan earlier. He differs a little where he feels that *setolotolo*, one Sesotho traditional instrument, is related to the modern instruments like accordion and

concertina. He points out that when one plays *setolotolo*, one manages to sing words that accompany the sound produced as is the case with concertina and accordion. He rounds up by describing the type of instruments used in the *famo* songs. Wells's work is just an overview of Basotho accordion music; its analysis does not cover the broad aspects of the accordion music. It does not deal with the language, content, the role and significance of the music. Therefore, as much as its contribution is of great importance, it still leaves a gap to be filled by this study, which intends to go deeper into the language techniques and social context of music among the Basotho.

Coplan (1995: 11) highlights the origins of this music though he labels it shebeen songs. He indicates that Basotho women, who happened to live in South Africa with migrant workers, imported this type of music into Lesotho. He describes these women as:

...undesirable women, barflies and canteen-keepers; single, deserted, deserting or married who develop the genre in the company of migrant men. The shebeens provided women not only with an independent albeit hard-won means of livelihood; they created a female-controlled area for the extended individual textual composition. Their right to sing out was ensured by the intoxicating freedom of the immoral, illicit but indispensable shebeen.

From the above lines, one observes that Coplan relates the historical background of the accordion music, which he refers to as shebeen songs not the current status of accordion music as from 1980 up to 2005. The researcher acknowledges an invaluable contribution that Coplan has made by providing the history of this music. It is now desirable to take the task further by analyzing what is currently being sung and documenting it for future generations.

Currently, these songs are taken as traditional Basotho music and not shebeen songs and have gained dignity and the Basotho identify themselves with them as their traditional songs. This music has lost the immoral status by which it was known in the past by many people. Coplan (1995:12) goes further to write:

Today shebeen singing, as retailed on recordings and even on South African Television by popular artists such as Puseletso Seema is the nearest form to a Basotho national music. Dominating the live performance domain of the shebeen, good female singers are much respected and sought after...

From the above information, one can deduce that this observation by Coplan is closer to the study in that it refers to the present status of the Basotho accordion music. This study analyzes the present and the current Basotho accordion music, which is recorded for commercial purposes. As Coplan has pointed out, it is a fact that due to high unemployment some Basotho, young and old, men and women, have turned to Basotho accordion music as one way of making a living. It is also a fact that South African television shows this music on their programme called 'Ezodumo' currently known as 'Origins'. The Basotho accordion music is mostly shown on this programme as Basotho traditional music and this supports the researcher's contention that currently the Basotho inside and outside Lesotho identify themselves with this music as their traditional music. It is considered to be traditional as it still retains the flavor of Sesotho as a language, its customs and beliefs, poetic form and experiences shared by many Basotho nationals.

It is further observed that current female singers are respected as against the *famo* female participants whose sole purpose was to entertain the males sexually. Some bands are composed of both female and male singers where, during the performance, each of the singers takes part by singing the *lifela* and sometimes joins in the chorus. In some groups like 'Bana Ba Khoale' or 'Basali ba Mphutseng', singers are mostly females while the males play the instruments. These female singers are highly respected by both other artists and the public alike. The change of attitude towards women in this music shows yet another turn of the clock from *famo* music where they were said to be irresponsible barflies. It would be observed that Coplan (ibid) in the above paragraph had not tried to engage himself in what is entailed in the accordion music but highlighted its current status among the Basotho.

Coplan (1995: 258) reiterates the status of the Basotho accordion music among the Basotho although he calls it *seoeleoelele* which stems from the usually repeated words

*oeleoelele* when one takes a break from the lengthy *lifela*. The information he obtained from different quarters of Basotho is that this music is considered and accepted as Sesotho music. He writes:

...Seoeleoelele is a nearest thing to a contemporary Basotho national music. ....Today seoeleoelele music is popular to some extent with virtually all segments of Lesotho's resident and non-resident population. For the exclusively Sesotho speaking, this is their favourite music; but even the highly educated enjoy it, no longer look down upon it, and appreciate its sagacity, pointed humor and Sesotho aesthetic and cultural qualities.

This last quotation summarises and strengthens the argument that Basotho accordion music is currently seen and accepted as Basotho traditional music. The view shared by Coplan is closer to the study in that it poses a challenge to the researcher to investigate why Basotho accordion music is seen as Sesotho music. Coplan's contention that it is nearest thing to contemporary Basotho national music is the idea that is shared by most Basotho, illiterate and educated alike, both inside and outside the country. It is not unusual to hear students from Lesotho studying abroad observe that accordion music brings them closer to home because of its nature and that it covers various aspects that relate to Basotho lives in general, and hence they regard it as a dynamic Basotho traditional music. That is, this type of music changes with times, for instance, from *famo* to *focho* and from *focho* to its current status where it is accepted as '*mino oa Sesotho* or '*mino oa koriana* thus traditional Sesotho music.

### **1.7.2 BASOTHO MIGRANT LABOURER'S LIFELA/TRAVELLERS' SONGS**

Academics like Coplan (1985 -1995), Mokitimi (1982) and Wells (1994) link travellers' songs to Basotho accordion music as they consider it as a modified *lifela* as it is accompanied by instruments. This link led the researcher to read some books and journals on *lifela-tsa-litsamaea-naha*. It is argued that migrant labour experiences contributed much towards the birth of Basotho accordion music. The researcher would, in a nutshell, try to establish the relationship looking at the similarities and differences of *lifela* and Basotho accordion music. Among the works read only three will be mentioned, those of

Moletsane (1982), Mokitimi and Coplan. Moletsane and Mokitimi have similar views when it comes to the treatment of *lifela*. Their analysis focuses on the historical background of the mining situation and the forms and the themes of *lifela*. So, likewise, are the titles of their theses, Moletsane's (1982) reads 'A Literary Appreciation and Analysis of Collected and Documented Basotho Miners' Poetry' while Mokitimi's (1982) is 'A Literary Analysis of *Lifela tsa Litsamaea-naha* Poetry.' The works by the two academics do not treat Basotho accordion music but concentrate on the analysis of *lifela* of migrant workers.

Coplan (1987) has also analysed *lifela* of the Basotho migrants just like Moletsane and Mokitimi, though he says they are narrative songs. He gives a comprehensive analysis of the text and context of *lifela* including its performance. He goes further to compare and contrast *lifela* with *lithoko*-Sesotho praise-poems. The three documents do not even refer to the accordion music in either its form or content or its present status among the Basotho. Therefore, there is a gap to be filled by the current study as it focuses specifically on the accordion music. However, there is a relationship between the two, in that, with accordion music, most songs have *lifela* though different in tone and rhythm, and are in tune with the accompanying musical instruments. This is why in some cases accordion music is called a modified *lifela*.

One can say that the Basotho accordion music performance differs from that of *lifela* in that it needs a team or group of people. For instance, it needs a lead singer, a guitarist, drummer, an accordionist and other group members who either sing or dance. These groups hold a variety of concerts in different places and for different ceremonies, sometimes as individual groups or they hold music festivals where different artists participate. *Lifela*, unlike accordion music, is an individual performance and not a team-work performance. Though the *lifela* and accordion music could be said to differ in performance, they both have common basic themes which are social, economic and political. These aspects form the contents of the two genres drawing them closely together as interrelated Basotho oral literature.

### **1.7.3 BASOTHO MUSIC**

The section covers various materials that have dealt with Basotho music in general. Mokhali (1966) makes a brief overview of the Basotho traditional music and dancing. He defines sixteen Sesotho traditional musical instruments, how they are used and who uses them. He goes further to describe four Basotho dances and those who participate in them. Mokhali addresses the traditional Basotho music and dances which have not been influenced by the western world. His contribution does not relate to the music which is influenced by European domination, where instruments and dancing differ from the traditional ones. Therefore, Mokhali's work still leaves room for the present study to be conducted.

Another relevant text is *The Ethnomusicology of the Basotho* by Moitse (1994). This is a comprehensive piece of research which treats music as an integral part of the Basotho cultural institutions. The contents highlight the role and the significance of music in the cultural institutions of the Basotho such as ancestral worship, traditional healing, initiation and birth. The study by Moitse, though it treats Basotho music, pursues a different direction by paying special attention to the role of music in cultural practices. It is related to the study in that it deals with accordion music as an adopted type of music as it bears some aspects of Basotho oral literature. Again, one finds that Moitse's study looks at the performer, audience, art of performance, context and the songs sung in such performances, while this research pays attention to the songs, the language, the content, the role of music and its reception by the nation.

### **1.7.4 AFRICAN MUSIC IN GENERAL**

The researcher referred to some works which analyse African music in general in order to make a general observation with regard to common features among Africans' songs in relation to Basotho accordion music. *Stern's Guide to Contemporary African Music* by Graham (1988) provides a review of the contemporary African music, with special focus on a brief history of organization and production. The review covers West African, Central African, East African and Southern African regions of the continent. The guide

gives highlights of the production in different countries; it also singles out a few popular artists and their songs in the selected countries. Sesotho music appears under South Africa under the grouping of the songs by language. A few comments that relate to accordion music include: that it is rustic, with piano accordion, shouted chanting and mid-paced stomping beat. Graham has not attempted to treat the form and content of this music that this study sets out to analyse. He just listed seventeen songs, indicating names of the artists who sing them and the production companies but made no detailed analysis of the songs. The observation by the researcher is that, much has been left out and needs to be covered by the present study.

## **1.8 METHODOLOGY**

### **1.8.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study employed qualitative analysis that focused on the analysis and interpretation of the songs.

### **1.8.2 POPULATION**

Jegade (1999:114) refers to population as that universe to which the investigator wishes to make generalisation. He points out that it is the totality of all the observations an investigator is concerned with. In this study, population refers to the songs, artists, radio presenters, cassette shop-owners, street vendors and the audience.

### **1.8.3 SAMPLE**

Sample is a manageable unit which one can easily work on without difficulty. In this case, it refers to the number of songs the researcher analysed and the number of people interviewed. The total number of songs that the researcher analysed was one hundred while that of interviewees was eighty one.

### **1.8.4 SAMPLE PROCEDURE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The type of sampling that the researcher employed was probability sampling. It gave each of the artists a chance to have at least one song from his album analysed. For this to

happen, the researcher grouped the songs into two main divisions namely; themes and language. With regard to interviews, the researcher divided them into two groups, that of the artists and the general public in order to get their views on their status and the role of accordion music.

The type of probability sampling engaged was a stratified random sampling; this is where the songs were divided into yet another grouping. These groups were based on the commonality the songs share taking into consideration the language and themes. That is, there was a further breakdown of the two main aspects into smaller units that were more specific, for instance, under themes, those songs that dealt with a similar topic were grouped together and analysed accordingly. An example is that of songs that deal with the Lesotho General Elections of 1998. Songs that addressed such a topic were grouped together to check on how different artists address it in their songs and its significance to the audience. This was also the case with language; for instance, grouping was made on the use of metaphor in different songs by different artists to check on how it is used and its significance in the songs. Concerning the interviews, a sample of artists totalling 30 was selected in such a manner that there were some artists picked from the four periods namely; the beginning, 1980-1985, the Military era, 1986-1993, the Mokhehle era, 1994-1998 and the Mosisili era, 1999-2005. Coming to the general public, interviews were held with members from the three groups namely: radio-presenters, shop-owners inclusive coordinators, street vendors and audience. Six radio-presenters from six different radio-stations, fifteen shop-owners inclusive coordinators and street vendors and thirty members of the audience from different occasions, for instance, concerts, festivals or funerals were interviewed.

One can say this technique was easier and applicable in the study as it enabled the researcher to formulate topics and sub-topics under which he categorized different songs. It helped to avoid unnecessary repetition and lengthy discussion of one song and it also helped to accommodate different songs in each group as it focused specifically on the relevant lines in each and every song. Another advantage was that, this technique categorized different members of the public into manageable units, thus allowing those who are termed stakeholders to air their opinions with regard to accordion music. In-puts

from various groups enabled one to have a substantial collection of views that facilitated the progress of the research.

#### **1.8.5 DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher engaged in three methods of data collection. The first was that of collecting the recorded songs in the form of cassettes from 1980 to 2005. The second was through interviews, and the last was that of observation. Selected songs from different cassettes collected were analysed based on the language and themes contained in them. Interviews were held with artists and different groups of the public who have interest in the accordion music. Artists were interviewed in order to establish their consciousness of the status and role of their music while members of the public were interviewed to determine their reception of the accordion music. The observation technique was engaged in at different functions such as festivals, funerals and live performances in official functions, weddings and graduations.

#### **1.8.6 COLLECTION OF CASSETTES**

The researcher employed different steps of collecting cassettes as shown below. One of the first steps taken was that of listening to radio programmes on *'mino oa Sesotho/'mino oa liparola thota/'mino oa koriana/rea kubasela*. This is one programme which is given different names by different radio stations. For instance, this programme is aired on Radio Lesotho, Radio MoAfrika, and Catholic Radio in Lesotho and Radio Leseli in the Republic of South Africa. This method facilitated the collection of the songs in that one was in a better position to know which songs related to a certain theme and the language technique which the researcher needed. Instead of buying any cassette that he came across, this mode of preliminary selection was of great importance. It helped in identifying song, name of album and artist. Again, he even visited the radio stations to borrow some cassettes, which he needed, especially because most radio stations have a variety of collections in their libraries. It was observed that not every cassette that the researcher needed had the chance of being played over the radios or was found in the libraries as one had expected.

The second step of collection of the songs was the buying of different cassettes from the cassette stores. Since most clerks in stores are familiar with the themes and the language techniques used by various artists in different songs, the researcher obtained such information from them before buying the cassettes. Also, in most cassette stores, clerks usually play some cassettes to lure customers to buy them, the researcher, at times, opted for the exercise. It gave the researcher a chance to listen to the cassettes before buying any. It should also be noted that not all of the cassettes relevant to this study which the researcher either needed or wished to buy were found in the cassette stores. In some cases, the researcher had to contact different people who like the Basotho accordion music. One of the reasons for such action was that such people had rare cassettes containing what the researcher needed. Such people were easily traced during accordion music phone-in programmes over radio stations. One also obtained such cassettes from local street vendors who play the accordion music in their tape recorders.

#### **1.8.7 INTERVIEWS**

Interviews were held with artists, radio presenters, cassette shop-owners, street vendors and the audience at any convenient time, especially on occasions such as concerts, festivals and funerals of the artists. These functions attract many supporters of this music and one can make use of such gatherings to interact with the artists and audience in order to get their views on the music. Although these groups were interviewed personally, the researcher had made an outline of questions to be asked which he followed in the process. The convenient format was the unstructured type of interview, where the interviewees were asked open-ended type of questions. Unstructured interview is the situation where the interviewer has the interview guide which serves to remind him or her of the questions to be asked. He is not restricted to such questions. Open-ended questions are questions or statements that require free-range of responses. Respondents are not restricted in any way to a particular type of response. (Jegede 1999: 131 & 135).

Interviewees were asked to comment on the attitude of the Basotho nation towards accordion music and what led to the popularity and high level of production of the music. They were asked to relate the history of the music from 1980 to the present and to

compare and contrast the status of the artists and their music from its origins to the present. They were asked to comment on the relationship that exists between the artists and the audience, to indicate how each side benefits from the other. They were also given an opportunity to raise the pros and cons concerning accordion music, solutions and means and ways of improving the accordion music. One of the questions was to ask stake-holders to comment on the acceptance of accordion music as Basotho oral literature.

Another important exercise was to embark on the historical background of some of the selected artists. The exercise was helpful in that it led the researcher towards gaining more knowledge with regard to what prompted the artists into this type of music, how and why they compose the songs, their feelings about the accordion music, the advantages and disadvantages of being an accordion music artist. The information helped the researcher in that it responded to issues of the status and the significance of Basotho accordion music among the Basotho.

#### **1.8.8 OBSERVATION**

The type of observation that was engaged was a non-participatory one because it enabled the researcher freedom of movement to observe as many activities as he could. The researcher attended a variety of functions where there were live performances by accordion artists and watched television programmes that covered accordion music. The rationale was to establish the personality and the attitude of the artists during the performance, that is, how they reacted towards the audience. Furthermore observation was made of the styles and the techniques that artist use during the performance that enables them to win the hearts of the audience.

Observation was also engaged when it came to the reaction of the audience towards the music, especially during the live performances. It helped in that; it afforded the researcher an opportunity to observe both the negative and positive reaction of the audience. One was able to identify some of those aspects that the audience like in accordion music and those that are least liked and how the audience responded to each

one of them. Overall the observation procedure provided a wider spectrum in that different aspects of human behaviour were obtained from both the artists and the audience. It added valuable information to the analysis of the songs and the interviews held with different stake-holders.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has briefly introduced the study covering its background, what triggered the study, what the study intends to pursue and the significance of the study. The chapter has further shown how other scholars have written about accordion music and other related genres. Last, the chapter covers how the study had been conducted inclusive of research design and data collection.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

The researcher employs functionalism as the theoretical framework for the analysis of the accordion music. This theory is a sociological philosophy that originally attempted to explain social institutions as collective means to fulfil individual biological needs. It studies the contributions made by sociocultural phenomena to the sociocultural systems of which they are part. It emphasises the organic unity of society that leads functionalists to speculate about needs which must be met for some social systems to exist, as well as the ways in which social institutions satisfy those needs (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/functionalism>).

This theory is identified with sociologists and social anthropologists like Durkheim in the 1890s; Malinowski, 1920s -1930s; Radcliffe-Brown, 1920s – 1950s and Parsons, 1950s. It is said to have been dominant in the United States of America during the 1930's although in the 1960s it was criticised for failing to relate to some basic social concerns. That is, it was unable to explain a number of features of American society, such as poverty, social change, dissent and the continuing influence and political and economic power of the wealthy. Feminist approaches also attacked functionalism as it provided a justification for male privilege and ignored the past and potential contribution of women (<http://uregina-ca/~gingrich/n2f99htm>). It was viewed as consensus theory as it did not address the issue of conflict in society; instead it projected an ideal picture of harmonious relationships. That is, functionalism was unable to account for social change or structuralist contradictions and conflict ([http://www.hewett.norfolk.sch.uk/curric/soc/T & M/ funct.htm](http://www.hewett.norfolk.sch.uk/curric/soc/T&M/funct.htm)). Functionalists' theories have often been criticised as teleological. That is, they reverse the usual order of cause and effect by explaining things in terms of what happens afterward, not what went before (<http://web.grinnell.edu/courses/soc/s00/soc>).

Although there are several sociologists who subscribe to functionalism, the study will refer mostly to Parsons's and Radcliffe-Brown's views of functionalism. The two sociologists have been found to be appropriate in that their view of functionalism is relevant to the study. They consider the three key elements to functionalism as; function, social system and social structure. The study looks at the Basotho nation which is perceived as a social system that has a social structure of artists who play Sesotho accordion music. These artists have a specific function to perform within the Basotho nation as such; they are connected to the nation through interaction. Furthermore as indicated earlier the study is guided by the following:

Change of attitude towards Basotho accordion music;

High creative production of accordion music; and

Evolutionary changes of accordion music.

Parsons's and Radcliffe-Brown's approaches to functionalism address the above points. For instance Parsons (1951:408-410) discusses the role and attitudes of the artist. That is, the artist meets a need in his public, and on the expressive level he receives appreciation and admiration in return. And he further points out that an artist is sensitive to the attitudes of his public. Radcliffe-Brown writes about change and continuity within the social system which are concern of the study. Therefore Parsons's and Radcliffe-Brown's functionalism views are convenient and appropriate to the study for the analysis of accordion music. Other subscribers have been left out because their perception of functionalism does not augur well with the intended analysis of accordion music.

## **2.1 ELEMENTS OF FUNCTIONALISM**

### **2.1.1 FUNCTION**

Radcliffe-Brown (1952:178-181), in an attempt to provide a better understanding of functionalism, defines the word function in the context of sociology. His view is that, the function of a social institution is the correspondence between it and the needs of the social organism. His observation is that, the function of any recurrent activity is the part it plays in the social life as a whole and, therefore, the contribution it makes to the

maintenance of the structural continuity. Radcliffe-Brown further points out that, function relates to the contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part and that the function of a particular social usage is the contribution it makes to the social life as the functioning of the total social system. He contends that, the function of a social activity is to be found by examining its effects upon the individuals.

### **2.1.2 SOCIAL SYSTEM**

Ritzer (1992:247) defines social system as the cultural system of patterned and ordered symbols, and that since it is created by humans it is the social stock of knowledge, symbols and ideas. It also covers language and other forms of communication, systems of morality and all the shared knowledge of people.

Parsons (1951:5-6) describes social system as a system that consists in a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation that has an environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the 'optimization of gratification' and whose relation to their situations, including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols.

Radcliffe-Brown's (1952:5-6) interpretation of social system is based on the theory of Montesquieu, who says that, it is a system to which all the features of social life are united. According to this theory, the laws of a society are connected with the political constitution, the economic life, the religion, and the climate, the size of the population, the manners and customs.

### **2.1.3 SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

Radcliffe-Brown (1952:9-11) refers to social structure as some sort of ordered arrangement of parts or components. He goes on to say that continuity, in forms of social life, depends on structural continuity, that is, some sort of continuity in the arrangements of persons in relation to one another.

The three concepts defined above provide a constructive basis for the study. They enable the researcher to conduct, in depth, the study of the artists, their status and their role, reception of their music by the audience and the effects of accordion music within the social system. These artists have a specific function to perform within the Basotho nation as such; they are connected to the nation through interaction. Their music career is also guided by the values and norms of the Basotho. Artists continue to transmit the learnt ways of using the language, thinking, feeling and cultural aspects of the Basotho. Their main function is to provide the Basotho with music which caters for its expectations and to retain their social structure as artists within the social system.

## **2.2 OVERVIEW**

A consensus view of functionalism for Parsons (1999:1-3) and others is that it puts emphasis on *function, interdependence, consensus, equilibrium* and *evolutionary change* within a social system. They view the society as a social system that consists of different institutions where each has a role to play for the benefit of the entire society. These institutions are the social structures which serve the needs of the nation and bring stability in its social life (<http://uregina.ca/~gingrich/n2f99.htm>). The study contends that, the five aspects of functionalism as espoused by Parsons and others are also applicable in Basotho accordion music. A brief overview of their applicability follows.

### **2.2.1 FUNCTION**

The concept function entails that, different groups within the society contribute to the operation or functioning of the system as a whole. This is so because each society has certain needs in that there are a number of activities that must be carried out for social life to survive and develop. If the needs are being met, it is the social structures that meet them. For instance, goods and services must be produced and distributed in order for people to survive. Furthermore, family structures must operate in order to provide means to reproduce the population and maintain social life on a daily basis. In this process, individuals carry out tasks and roles in various institutions that are consistent with the structures and norms of the society. The social structures become functional in that they help the society to operate.

Parsons (1999:3) and others again view the idea of function as a way of talking about consequences of any given pattern or patterns of social interaction for the stability and ongoingness of systems of interaction. The shared values and norms and the generally agreed upon means for accomplishing ends are seen as patterns contributing to the smooth functioning of society.

In pursuit of the afore-going tenets of functionalism, the study focuses on the function of the artists in the society in which they live. The artists are viewed as a social structure that is instrumental in providing services to the nation. If one takes functionality into consideration, a few questions are triggered regarding the functionality of the music associated with artists of accordion music.

- What type of music do they offer the audience?
- Does the music they play relate to the basic needs of the society?
- To what extent does the music respond to the social, political, economic and religious aspects of the Basotho?

Although the study will respond in depth in later chapters, let it suffice to state that accordion music is functional in that:

- The music is produced for the society;
- The contents or messages conveyed by the music are relevant to the society;
- The music transmits language skills to its audience; and
- It meets the basic needs of the artists for their survival.

### **2.2.2 INTERDEPENDENCE**

Interdependence is a process where different parts of the whole (society) work properly for the smooth operation of the society. A society is said to be composed of basic units. These units constitute the social structures and perform certain functions within a social system perform in order to promote maintenance of the society as a whole. Each individual is born within a set of norms and values of a society, and in the process of

socialisation the individual internalises them in order to be an acceptable member of the society. His behaviour and actions are regulated by the value system within which he operates. No individual is exempted from the social expectations even on the basis of his/her social standing. As people pursue their different interests in their lives, they do so on the basis of the long standing tradition of their norms and values. Furthermore, for any social structures to function and operate properly and smoothly within the society as a whole, such structure needs both input from and acknowledgement by the relevant society.

Basotho accordion artists as individuals are basic units that form social structures and perform certain functions within Basotho society. They are born into and nurtured within the society of Basotho; consequently, they imbibe and internalize norms and values of Basotho. Naturally their music is bound to be influenced and reflect the environment which produces them. Thus, their artistic creativity is somehow dependent upon their social environment. Similarly, their survival as artists and the sustainability of their careers depends on the reception and marketability of their product. On the other hand, their audience expects to be fed with the music which satisfies their needs. Thus the relationship of parasite-host and host parasite is in perpetual reversal. The relationship is symbiotic. Evidently, there is interdependence between the artists and their society for the benefit of harmony within the society. This form of interdependence leads to the continuity of both their music and the social structure of their society. Radcliffe-Brown (1952:10) opines as follows:

Continuity in forms of social life depends on structural continuity, that is, some sort of continuity in the arrangements of persons in relation to one another...

The social life of the artists depends on the continued structure of their society whilst the continued structure of the society also depends on the role played by the artists through their music.

### **2.2.3 CONSENSUS**

Consensus refers to the social norms and rules that have been generally agreed upon within a social system. The lives of individuals within any given society are governed by social values and cultural traditions which are transmitted from generation to generation. These norms and values are learnt through socialization. The way individuals interact and behave in their social life operates within the context of the social system of which one is a member. Radcliffe-Brown (1952:52) observes:

The social relationships of which the continuing network constitute social structure, are not haphazard conjunctions of individuals, but are determined by the social process, and any relationship is one in which the conduct of persons in their interactions with each other is controlled by norms, rules or patterns.

In short, social norms and values are basic rules to which members of the society generally subscribe. Thus they constitute the unwritten rules and laws governing interpersonal relations. Although accordion music artists do not have standing rules by which they have to abide by during the performance or production of their songs, there are generally acceptable norms of behaviour to which they are expected to conform. The expectation is based purely on consensus. As artists, they are expected to have internalized the cultural practices of Basotho and to integrate this in their music. This could be demonstrated through content, language and performance of their songs. The audience normally evaluates and assesses the artists through consensus. Artists who comply with consensus' expectations receive a positive reading from the audience and the market, whereas those who do not conform are likely to be shunned by the audience and prospective market. Thus, consensus may make or break an artist.

### **2.2.4 EQUILIBRIUM**

This is a situation where the state of affairs is normal, there is peace and stability. Having agreed on certain basic issues members of the society return to normality. Sometimes, it does happen that the society experiences disturbances emanating either internally or externally thus it becomes necessary for disequilibrium; after which the society readjusts itself to such an extent that it regains normality and reclaims equilibrium. Thus,

individuals are expected to adhere and abide by the norms and values that are acceptable, and are made to return to them in times of disturbance. This is done in the form of punishments, social disapproval or sanctions. This leads to stability which is a state of equilibrium.

### **2.2.5 EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE**

Evolutionary change is a change which occurs within any system for as long as the system exists. Evolutionary changes are usually gradual and reflect a response to changing times as individuals try to adapt to the ever changing environment. As the environment constantly changes, the norms and values of the society might lag behind, resulting in a state of equilibrium. Therefore, adjustment, whether through external or internal influence, is often necessary to move towards a new equilibrium. The adjustment takes place through evolutionary change. Such change, as a process, takes into account various components of the societies which become differentiated and adapt to new needs and problems. In this process, societies become more complex, and new institutions and subsystems develop to perform new functions required for the smooth operation of the society under the changing times. Evolutionary change is a necessary societal instinct for survival Radcliffe-Brown (1952:7-9).

Evolutionary change is usually triggered by a wide range of phenomena such as attitudes, instruments and performance. The attitude of Basotho people to accordion music has become more appreciative and accommodative, especially after 1980s as compared to what used to be case in the 1920s. Most Basotho identify themselves with it as their traditional music. The tendency to associate accordion music with immorality is on the wane. Accordion music artists are treated with respect and are accorded status befitting respectable artists. Currently, their music is recorded and distributed for public consumption and no longer confined to shebeens. It has now reached a stage where it is generally accepted as Basotho traditional music. This music is commercialised, and as such, it serves the economic needs of the artists and the Basotho nation, of which they are part. This makes a major evolutionary change indeed.

### **2.3 CONCLUSION**

Functionalism, in its various manifestations, as briefly outlined above, is the pivot around which the study on accordion music hinges. The theory of functionalism enables the study to display the importance of accordion music among Basotho and that it is not just for entertainment but has didactic role to play in the lives of Basotho.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **HISTORIOGRAPHY OF BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter briefly discusses the concept of Mosotho and Sesotho, overview of the Basotho music in general and, last, the origins and evolution of Basotho accordion music. In order to understand the concept Basotho accordion music, the researcher finds necessary to contextualise it by brief discussion of the concept Mostho and Sesotho.

#### **3.1 THE CONCEPT OF MOSOTHO AND SESOTHO**

Lesotho is a Southern African country enclosed by the Republic of South Africa. Its population is currently estimated at 1.9 million (Population census: 2006) According to Ellenberger (1912) and Gill (1993), Lesotho was established around the years 1820s-1830s by the founder of the Basotho nation, Moshoeshoe I. For one to have a better understanding of Basotho and Sesotho, the following questions have to be asked and answered:

- What is a Mosotho?
- Who is a Mosotho?
- From where does the word Basotho originate?
- What is Sesotho as a language?
- What is Sesotho as a custom?
- When do practices become a custom?
- When does a Sesotho custom become a tradition?

These are some of the few questions for which, although often asked, it is difficult to provide convincing answers. The responses given below will only provide a general understanding of the possible answers. The response to who is a Mosotho, can best be given as anybody who is an African, who speaks Sesotho, belongs to a certain African

ethnic group and who observes and practices the cultural aspects of Basotho. This is a general understanding of a Mosotho from the Basotho's view point. But, with the political developments, especially after independence, Mosotho can be understood to refer to what makes one a citizen of Lesotho, irrespective of one's origins.

There are a variety of versions which have tried to explain the origins of the word Basotho, but we will refer to the one which seems to be acceptable to most writers of history. Ellenberger (1912:34) when relating the history of the first Basotho refers to the Bapeli in the 18<sup>th</sup> century who lived next to the Amaswazi. He writes:

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 a *mocha* or sporrán, 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, bestowed in derision, was adopted with pride by the Bapeli, and later by the other tribes similarly clothed, and was the origin of the present term Basuto.

According to Ellenberger the first tribes to bear the name Basotho were the Bapeli, Makholokoe, Maphuthing, Batlokoa and Basia.

Gill (1993: 27) goes further to indicate that, although various groups that are called the 'Southern Sotho' today had much in common linguistically and culturally, they were not united politically and also not homogeneous. Their traditions were frequently innovative, localized and contested. With regard to the general feeling that the word Basotho came into being between 1820s-1830s and that prior to this period each ethnic group was called by its clan name, he relates that:

"Basotho" was later adopted by Moshoeshe as a unifying political term for his emerging kingdom, which contained peoples from a large number of clans, both Sotho and Nguni. It is important that we look upon the pre-19<sup>th</sup> century "Sotho" with an eye for diversity and be prepared to break out of the stifling uniformity which has sometimes been wrongly imposed upon the "Sotho" peoples.

When coming to the Sesotho language, it may seem rather difficult to say exactly what it is. The most possible and acceptable response would be that it is a mixture of different related dialects spoken by different clans under the leadership of Moshoeshe I. Ellenberger (1912:34) points out that the dialect of Bapeli was Sesotho, though it was harsh and crude compared to the soft and graceful Sesotho of Bakuena and Bafokeng. This feeling is shared by Wells (1994: 29) who writes:

This Sesotho language was a mixture of the Sekoena of the ruling clan, the Sefokeng of the original Sotho occupiers of the land and Setlhaping (Setswana) usages added by the missionaries. The standardization 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.

As indicated above, Sesotho as a language, during the time of King Moshoeshe I, played an important role in unifying his people, and enabled him to rule a united nation with one medium of communication. But, that practice did not rule out the fact that individual groups spoke and retained their languages under Moshoeshe I.

Another difficult question worth answering relates to the practices that are labeled Sesotho customs and Sesotho traditions. According to Basotho, Sesotho does not only refer to the language but to anything that distinguishes a Mosotho from other tribes or nations. That is, in Sesotho, when we say *ka Sesotho* or *rona Basotho* (according to Sesotho or we Basotho), the understanding is that, we try to express our feelings that relate to customs and traditions that identify the ways in which the Basotho do things. To elaborate on this notion, Coplan (1992: 6 & 53) writes:

... the domain of Sesotho includes not only the language but the entire self-identified culture of the Basotho nation both as theory and as practice. Most broadly, Sesotho is Basotho... a people's conceptions and perceptions of themselves and of their situation in society and history, formulated in the terms and the occasions of their culture. Sesotho is localized types and qualities of things and local styles of enactment. Sesotho becomes a precious resource, a reservoir of identity, self-expression, and social entitlement that appears crucial to any meaningful form of national survival.

Although, given the above information, one could say that the understanding is that, customs and traditions are not static but, dynamic. They flow with times and change from time to time based on the conditions that prevail at a given time. It could therefore be concluded that when we talk of Basotho and Sesotho we are engaging ourselves on what happened to Basotho as from the 1820's under the kingship of Moshoeshoe I. That is, with the emergence of Moshoeshoe's kingdom, with one country, a united nation and one dominant language, many changes occurred to different tribes that sought refuge under him. Some of their customs and traditions got lost and dominant ones of the powerful and the ruling Bakuena tribe substituted them. Not only that, the arrival of the missionaries and British colonial rule affected the customs and traditions of Basotho. As the process of acculturation began to develop it either diluted or substituted some of the basic acceptable practices. Therefore, currently, when we speak of Sesotho or Basotho customs and traditions we are not referring to the static and unpolluted type of behaviour that is devoid of foreign influence, but the one that has undergone transformation.

### **3.1.1 EXAMPLES OF DYNAMIC CHANGES WITHIN THE BASOTHO CULTURE.**

The following paragraphs will highlight some of the practices regarded as Sesotho traditions though they have undergone changes. This is so because they still retain some of the traditional aspects of Basotho traditions. These practices are discussed as examples to show that Sesotho culture is not static but dynamic. They are; initiation school, Basotho attire, death ritual and horse rearing.

Initiation, commonly known as circumcision school, is one example of traditional practices that is still operational even today in Lesotho. This is a stage where youths are trained for adulthood, where members of the society they are prepared to fit in the existing social structure. Among the Basotho, initiation involves both young males and females who are said to be ripe for marriage but, for the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the changes that have affected the males' initiation custom. This is because, many people, even today, still regard the initiation school, especially for males, as a tradition that has resisted change; but, when comparing what used to be the practice in the olden days and what is currently prevailing, one observes distinctive changes.

- Male-initiates are no longer trained to be warriors as was the case. Currently, Basotho have established units of police force and military force that maintain law and order and provide national security. Male-initiates are not summarily absorbed into the army as one would expect, instead, the lucky ones manage to get jobs in the mines. The ‘graduates’ from the initiation school are, in most cases, not seen to be playing any major roles in the society that could be linked to their initiation school.
- In the past, the *mesuoe* (teachers) used to be dignified persons with good morals. Today, most of the teachers are people with low morality who do not receive much respect from the society. What currently prevails is that, if anybody has been to the initiation school he qualifies to be a teacher, self-esteem and social attributes are no longer valued.
- In some areas, these schools have turned out to be a source of income for the owners, which was not the case in the olden days. Most people who establish these schools do it for commercial reasons. This is so because there are no standardized regulations that control this type of school.
- The attire worn during the graduation is entirely of western culture including the blanket which is now associated with the Basotho traditional attire.
- The *mangae* songs sung show western education and Christian influence. Sometimes, the initiates recite English poems which are referred to as *makotompi*, and they also sing modified Christian hymns.
- The bull slaughtered for the boys is no longer the one that is related to the cattle that were captured at war. This is because there are no wars that Basotho fight these days.

- Journalists from different quarters are invited to witness the graduation and to cover some of the activities believed to be for public consumption which was not the practice in the past.

These are but a few changes one notices with the present initiation school activities. But, all the same, it is still regarded as one of the unpolluted custom of the Basotho.

Another observation is drawn from the Basotho attire. The Basotho attire, according to the history was mostly skins and hides of both tame and domestic animals and also used special grass to make a *mokorotlo* (Basotho hat). But, today, the three items Basotho hat, modern blanket and *seshoeshoe* (a dress made up of a special cloth that Basotho call *terantala*) are accepted as the real attire that characterizes a Mosotho woman. Needless to say that the blanket and the *seshoeshoe* are of western influence but they are generally accepted as portraying the real Basotho attire. If one could ask ‘who approved this form of attire as Basotho traditional attire?’ The answer would be far-fetched. The simple answer would be *Ka Sesotho re apara joalo* or *Ke bosotho ba rona* (That is how we dress in Sesotho or it is our traditional attire). Approval or non approval by any outstanding body is not a big issue, but what counts is the general acceptance of the practice by the people.

Death is another ritual worth mentioning, especially the funeral services.

- Basotho used to have their funerals early in the morning hours before sunrise. One of the reasons was to give them chance to use the rest of day by engaging themselves in productive and fruitful chores. But today, 10 a.m. is taken as the standard time to start a funeral service. As to who set this time, Basotho will tell you that *Ka Sesotho ehlile ke nako e nepahetseng ea ho ntša mofu* (In Sesotho it is the right time to start funeral services.)
- The dead are no longer buried after two or three days. They are left to spend at least two weeks in the mortuary while preparations for the funeral are made. Two

weeks has become the standard period for most Basotho. If you ask them they will tell you that *Ka Sesotho mofu ha a ke be abe a se a sobokelloa feela* (In Sesotho it is improper to bury the dead within few days). As to who set the period of two weeks it is still a mystery.

- The corpses are laid in a variety of coffins depending on the wealth of the family concerned; they are no longer wrapped in hides. But, all the same, the funeral would still be said to have gone according to the Basotho culture.
- The animal slaughtered for the dead used to be eaten and finished on the same day. These days such meat, if left, is kept in fridges or distributed among family members to take to their respective homes. The meat was not salted because it was believed that since people were in grief, it had to be different from the normal meat that is salted before it is eaten. But, these days, the meat is salted. At present, the diet that we eat at funerals is no different from the ones served at wedding feasts. And, all the same, we still insist we are keeping to the Basotho tradition.
- Women who had lost their husbands used to wear a string of grass *moli* on their heads. The string or *thapo* in Sesotho denoted that the woman was in mourning for her husband. These days, most women put on black full dress and black shawl to signify that they have put on *thapo* (mourning cloth). This type of clothing is called *thapo* although it is not a string at all. But, Basotho will tell you that *Ka Sesotho o lokela ho roala thapo ea monna oa hau* (In Sesotho you have to put on *thapo* of your husband). As to who approved the black cloth to substitute the string of grass, they will not give you a clear answer. Their simple answer is that it is Sesotho custom to put on the mourning cloth. Whether the cloth is of western culture or not, that is not relevant. Any woman seen putting on special design of black clothes is in mourning, grieving for her husband or her son.

There are other ways of living that have been adopted and said to be Sesotho. For instance, there is a saying among the Basotho that *Lipere tsa re liha ka bo-morena*. (We

fell off from the horses together with the chief). Basotho people are made to believe that this is a Sesotho traditional way of showing respect to one's chief. It was a shameful scene to have the chief lying down alone while his subjects remained calm on their horses. But, history says that the first horse (*pitsi/pere*) that Moshoeshe 1 owned was given to him by chief Moorosi in the early 1830s. It was named *pitsi ea haka* (animal that was not known by Basotho) because even the renowned doctor, Chapi, did not know what to name it. Moshoeshe is said to have asked Moorosi to send somebody to teach him to ride it. Around that time, Griquas used to attack Basotho riding on horses. From that time, Basotho began to own horses and later horses this became the popular mode of transport for most Basotho. Coplan (1992:26) indicates that Basotho became renowned handlers and breeders of horses. He goes on to point out that, around 1875, with the first census, the number of horses in Lesotho outnumbered the human population. To prove that horses play an important role in the lives of Basotho, there is a Sesotho proverb that says *Pitsi e khothjoa e le maoto-mane* (A horse though four-legged falls) which means that to err is human. This proverb is at present part of the Sesotho language and shows that horses are some of the animals reared by Basotho and as such influence their mode of living.

These are but a few examples that make what is termed traditional among the Basotho questionable. But, on the whole, it could be said that, anything that is generally acceptable among the Basotho that distinguishes them from other nations and retains some of their cultural aspects, is traditional, hence accordion music is termed Basotho traditional music. They say it is Sesotho, meaning that, it bears their identity as Basotho, as against other types of music which are said to be associated with of western culture.

### **3.2 OVERVIEW OF BASOTHO MUSIC IN GENERAL**

Basotho, like other nations, have their own music that can be divided into two main types. The first one is the traditional form of music that can also be divided into a variety of sub-divisions. The second type is the adopted forms of music borne out of acculturation due to contact with western culture. The traditional form of Basotho music refers to the type of music that Basotho practised before they came into contact with

Europeans. This is the type of music that originated among the Basotho and is regarded as a tradition that was passed on from generation to generation among different ethnic groups that constitute the Basotho nation. It is the music that bears the cultures of Basotho people. Wells (1994:1-2) refers to this music as established canon as opposed to traditional music. His view is that, tradition relates to something that is static, while canon implies a created concept that provides people in the present with a constructed access to the past. He goes further to point out that the music styles of the established canon tend to be associated with performance contexts that are thought to contain values relating to past experiences. The first part of the overview of Basotho music, in general in this study, covers the traditional music, gospel, jazz and choral music. It also highlights metamorphosis within the four mentioned genres of music in Lesotho between 1980 and 2005. For the purpose of this study, metamorphosis is referred to as acculturation, as the period 1980-2005 period saw a lot of changes that transformed different genres of music. The second part of the overview will discuss the origins of the Basotho accordion music, evolution of Basotho accordion music 1980-2005, the status of Basotho accordion music, training of artists, performance, naming of the albums, language usage, predominant themes, musical instruments and recording.

### **3.2.1 TRADITIONAL MUSIC**

Basotho music can be divided into a variety of songs that relate to different occasions, institutions and groups of people with different levels. This general grouping enables one to have a better understanding of Basotho, as it caters for many sub-divisions. Other researchers divide Basotho music according to gender, while some divide it according to performance. But, since the study does not focus on classification, it will not discuss classification in detail. Under certain circumstances we may refer to Basotho work songs and Basotho dance songs. Work songs specifically relate to the type of work done by the Basotho and that identifies them as Basotho, for example, communal actions such as hoeing, tanning ox hide or threshing corn (Guma 1967:103). Basotho have their own style of doing things, for instance, where they work together as a team, they sing songs that are specific to the work done, and such songs help to make their work easier.

Concerning institutions, one may refer to the institution of initiation that refers to the initiation of Basotho males and females. The institution of initiation takes into consideration the types of songs rendered, how they are sung, when they are sung and why they are sung (Moitse 1994: 45-79). Institutions vary according to their status and functions; hence, each has its special songs and certain roles it plays in the society. Moitse (1994) divides Basotho music into three main institutions, namely; institution of divination, institution of initiation and institution of birth. She further divides the institution of divination into two sub-topics which are ancestral worship that deals with Basotho religious beliefs in ancestors, and traditional healing that refers to the practice of traditional medicine. Under the institution of initiation, she has male institution of initiation and female institution of initiation. Under the male and female initiation institutions, she discusses the music and other relevant activities. Concerning the institution of birth, she also relates the musical performances and other activities performed during the celebrations.

With regard to age and gender aspects, Wells (1994) makes three main divisions, those being men's songs, women's songs and children's songs. His grouping is seen to be taking into account both age and gender aspects. For instance, certain songs, among the Basotho, are sung by young males and females who are ripe for marriage. Examples in this case are drawn from the *selia-lia* and *sephumula* games. The participants who sing in these games are young males and females; in these games, which are accompanied by singing, they are given a chance to choose their future husbands and wives. Another example is that of *mokorotlo*-war song, which is normally sung by male adults and not females. The other example is that of *lesiba*, which is also played by males, especially herdboys. This is played on a mouth resonated instrument with a hole cut at one end of a stick, with a quill tightly folded and firmly held in place by two small sticks. The quill has another hole from which a string is attached and runs along to the other end of the long stick. The lips are put against the quill, as the performer inhales and exhales to provide the vibration that produces melodious sounds. A variety of songs known as *linong* are played by the *lesiba* in this manner.

On the other hand, one may argue that there are few static examples of traditional Basotho music as most of the traditional music including dances show a lot of influence from western culture. For instance, if we take *Mohobelo*, we find that the attire that is worn is of foreign origin. The *Se-Leribe* or *Se-Molapo* performers normally wear white large shirts, large black trousers, black and white shoes and one shiny handy iron bar with a handkerchief or a yellow cloth fastened to it. The *Se-Matsieng* performers put on white shirts, large tan trousers, black and white shoes and the shiny handy iron bar. The type of attire though of western origin, distinguishes one group from another. But, all the same, the *mohobelo* they perform is still regarded as Basotho traditional dance. It is also the case even with *mokhibo* performed by females. They put on a variety of blouses, *seshoeshoe* and other decorations not necessarily indigenous to Lesotho. Currently, Basotho seem to have adopted foreign materials and behaviour to portray their cultural identity, that is, western technology is employed to reflect traditional cultural practices. Thus, it is not surprising that accordion music is regarded as one of the Basotho traditional music. The process of acculturation seem to have affected the entire lives of the Basotho, it seems to be a continuous process that affects each generation. This is because of the evolutionary changes that are at play, generation after generation.

### **3.2.2 ACCULTURATION IN LESOTHO 1980-2005**

This section will describe the status of different types of music during the period from 1980 to 2005. During this period, different genres of music were active and lively. It was a situation where various music styles were performed, where both the traditional and emergent forms of music lived side by side and were progressing towards national recognition at an accelerated speed.

During this period, traditional performances and activities gained more popularity through the media, schools and social functions. They included, among others, traditional songs, a variety of dances, display of traditional instruments and attire including tasting and eating of a variety of traditional Basotho cuisine. One of the underlying factors behind the revival of the traditional performances was that of *sekoele*, commonly known as African Renaissance. In Lesotho, this meant going back to one's roots, retaining and

maintaining one's identity. The media, through radio stations and television, slotted programmes on this aspect, and also covered and presented performances on *sekoele*.

The Ministry of Education through schools embarked on a countrywide campaign on *sekoele*. The national response from schools resulted in the celebration of cultural days to the extent that, at present, schools regularly hold cultural days at any convenient time. In some cases, schools from one region organize cultural competitions where winners are given prizes. During cultural days, education officers and other dignitaries are invited either as guests or guest speakers. To show its effect on the Basotho students, the *sekoele* spirit is also witnessed even in the one and highest institution of learning, the National University of Lesotho that first held its celebration in 2002. It also engages a variety of performances that are traditional, taking into consideration even the minority groups from within the country and outside Lesotho that reside in Lesotho. It invites regional schools, primary and post-primary and local performers from the nearby villages to participate.

Traditional performances which seemed to have been dying regained their popularity even among the national social functions. In most of the functions, where choral and *monyanyako* music used to be dominant, there was a change, as there seemed to have developed a balance with the inclusion of the traditional performances. One can take *mokhibo* dance as an example. In most functions where the Matsieng *mokhibo* group performed, Her Excellency Queen 'Mamohato would be found in their midst in full attire participating. Her participation became a source of inspiration to other women across the country. Most official functions were entertained by traditional performances such as *ndlamo*, *mohobelo*, *mathuela* and *mokhibo* just to mention a few.

### **3.2.3 TRANSFORMATION WITHIN CHURCH SERVICES**

This period is also marked by drastic changes that affected church services and musical performances in the two biggest denominations, especially the Roman Catholic Church and Lesotho Evangelical Church, formerly known as Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. The musical performances in these two denominations took a different turn, as

they resorted to the introduction of drum beating, playing the ringles, clapping of the hands and putting on traditional attire during church services.

One example is that of the St. Celilia Association in the Roman Catholic Church, whose sole function is to sing hymns during church services. The changes are said to have started around the late seventies in one Catholic Mission that of St Paul in the Butha-Buthe district. This group, under the leadership of one priest, Tšasane, introduced the traditional style of celebrating the mass. The tunes of the hymns were changed, the ringles were played, men carried fly-whisks and other forms of traditional attire became part of the newly introduced forms of religious performances. When Rev. Tšasane left the mission, he was replaced by Rev. Selia-lia who also became influential in cementing the traditional performances within church services. This turn of events sparked a lot of discontent among the Roman Catholic followers in other missions (Molefi, 2005).

As though that was not enough, when Rev. Selia-lia was transferred to Maria 'Mabasotho Mission in Maseru he continued to sow the spirit of traditional style of celebrating the mass. It was also the case even when he later went to Mazonod Mission in the middle of the nineties. Around that time, many Roman Catholic missions had begun to identify themselves with the traditional manner of celebrating mass. The introduction of the traditional celebration of mass caused a rift between the followers. In some cases, it ended up with physical assault, Christians fighting among themselves, abusive language against the priest, stealing of church ornaments and lock-out measures. In other missions, negotiated settlements were reached, where one group attended a seven o'clock morning mass and the other ten o'clock mass. In order to show their dedication, the St. Cecilia Association of St. Paul Mission released their first album in 1995, and it sold very well both inside and outside Lesotho. Another Four more albums followed in the succeeding years. Since then, many traditional St.Cecilia groups from different missions have had their songs recorded such as Maria 'Mabasotho Choir in Maseru, Holy Gross Choir from Mohale's Hoek and Roma Traditonal Choir in Maseru to mention a few.

Concerning the Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC), there was an introduction of one group called *Mokhatlo oa banna le bahlankana* (Association of men and lads). One of the major functions of this group is to sing during church services. Their singing style involves hitting the ground with their feet, clapping hands and ringing of hand bells. This musical performance differed very much from the old style where movement of the body was forbidden during church service. Wells (1994: 190) writes “Dancing was not a part of hymn performance, and was not viewed as a suitable manner in which to worship God.” He further quotes Casalis who was one early Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in Lesotho as having written that his greatest problem was that of preventing Basotho from beating the ground with their feet when singing hymns. One observes that Basotho had most of the time when singing moved their bodies, beaten the drums, and clapped their hands. It therefore, did not come as a surprise when they revived what used to be done by their great grandfathers.

The years of suppressing their feelings could no longer be contained and they had to move their bodies when singing hymns. This practice also brought a great rift even among the LEC followers. Some church ministers did not allow it in their missions, while others did. Despite this resistance, this style of singing seems to be growing and attracting many missions who join in great numbers. It was not surprising when the Honourable Prime Minister of Lesotho, Pakalitha Mosisili, joined the association of men and lads in the 2005. Although these groups have not yet recorded their songs, their influence and effect is felt in churches even at funerals.

#### **3.2.4 GOSPEL MUSIC**

Gospel music was alive in Lesotho before 1980, although very few songs were recorded. However, in the years between 1980 and 2005 Gospel music saw great developments. The country has close to one hundred artists who have had their songs recorded, played on different radio stations and sold in cassette shops. For instance, Radio Mo-Afrika has one programme on Sundays at 5pm called *Tsa lapeng* that plays Gospel music by local Basotho artists. This programme is popular with many Basotho as it promotes local talent

with which the nation identifies. The main instrument in most groups is the electronic keyboard.

In the eighties, one group named Maseru Top Six was the only Gospel group that was known to have recorded an album. It was popular and held concerts throughout the country. But with time, especially during the nineties, other groups emerged. To mention a few, groups like; Bothata, **Khanya Lefatšeng**, **Gospel Key Notes**, Ntlhoki and many others came into being. At present, there are many groups that have organized and have had their songs recorded.

### **3.2.5 JAZZ MUSIC**

Another type of music worth mentioning is the African Jazz. This type of music has been in existence for sometime in Lesotho. But those who played it could hardly have their songs recorded. In order to keep this music alive in Lesotho, they played in restaurants and held concerts in different places. One of the well-known groups in the late seventies was **Uhuru**. It had prominent figures like Tšepo Tšola, Moses Nkofo, Frank Leepa and others. Because of the name **Uhuru** that was associated with African patriotism, the group had difficulties in getting its songs recorded in the Republic of South Africa that was under the apartheid regime. Some how, it kept on surviving by holding concerts within Lesotho. With time, they managed to have their songs recorded in the Republic of South Africa. The group later changed its name to Sankomota. The group used both Sesotho and English for composition of songs, which is why they also became popular in their country. In the early nineties, the group disbanded. Leepa and Tšepo moved to establish their new bands. They each teamed up with other famous artists to make their names known locally and internationally. For instance, Tšepo teamed up with Hugh Masekela and toured England and America while Leepa sang with artists like Nana Coyote and toured many Southern African countries. But, regardless of that, they kept the African Jazz alive in Lesotho.

There were still other artists as indicated earlier but who did not have their songs recorded. In the late nineties, African jazz in Lesotho saw the emergence of Budhaza

Mapefane, whose first album *Bo-Mapefane* became a hit. This is one of the very artists who studied music up to tertiary level and taught it in high school. This gifted artist had earlier on sung in the company of artists like Lucky Dube, Phillip Meitjies and Sankomota. His album, *Bo-Mapefane*, has really impressed most Basotho and South Africans as well. At present, African Jazz in Lesotho is thriving well with groups organizing themselves and intending to have their songs recorded.

### **3.2.6 CHORAL MUSIC**

Choral music is one genre that is popular in Lesotho. Although not much changed during the given period, it is worth highlighting its existence. This has been one of the dominant types of music that was given much attention both in the schools and national functions even before the 1980s. One observes some form of decline in its status. Competitions that used to be held in schools, primary and post-primary, do not seem to be progressing as would be expected. One of the reasons could be that the type of teachers the schools have do not have keen interest in choral music, most of them seem to be inclined towards *monyanyako*. But, regardless of such problems, choral music is still sung and local competitions, especially for independent choirs, are still held. One remarkable aspect is that, one Maseru Choral group under the leadership of Motlounq, introduced a new style of attire. During their performance, they wear traditional attire, that is, hides and skins. They win many competitions both in Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa. Many choirs seem to have adopted their style of dressing during performance.

### **3.3 ORIGINS OF THE BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC**

The history of the Basotho accordion music can be traced as far back as the 1920's, when, as Coplan (1985:93-103) indicates it originated in the slum yards around Johannesburg. Due to the migration of people because of the 1913 South African Land Act, which deprived Africans of their land, people from different ethnic groups flocked into towns looking for jobs. These included, among others, men who had left their families seeking employment, and some were lucky to find jobs, while others were not. Another group was of women who had come in search of their husbands and who never returned to their home countries. These women who resided in the slum yards were

joined by others who were also destitute. Life became difficult for them as they had to make a living, there being no jobs for them. That being the case, some women got involved in the selling of illegal home-made beer in shebeens, these being drinking places where they could sell beer to both the working and the jobless individuals alike. With brewing and selling of liquor as one way of making a living, music enhanced the beer drinking to a fully fledged type of entertainment, so it was incorporated. The music was meant to attract more customers to the shebeens and so enhance their socio-economic aspect. Different musicians got engaged in the playing of the music in shebeens. Relating to the origins of this music, Coplan (1985: 94) writes:

In the 1920's, these musicians assimilated elements from every available performance tradition into a single urban African musical style, called marabi.... A kind of symbiotic relationships developed between musicians and entertainment sponsors, and helped to create a new culture for an urbanizing mass audience. As music, it had a distinctive rhythm and a blend of African polyphonic principles, restructured within the framework of the Western 'three-chord' harmonic system. As a dance it placed few limits on variation and interpretation by individuals or couples, though the emphasis was definitely on sexuality. As a social occasion it was a convivial, neighborhood gathering for drinking, dancing, coupling, friendship and other forms of interaction. Finally, marabi also meant a category of people with low social status and a reputation for immorality, identified by their regular attendance at *marabi* parties.

Coplan goes further to point out that one Gashe, a Xhosa, who was known for his versatility on the keyboard, moved to Johannesburg where he joined the Sesotho version of the *Marabi* party known by then as *famo*. *Famo* was a type of dance where women who did not put on their underwears used to lift their thighs, flaring their skirts to reveal their thighs seductively in an attempt to seduce men. This being the bait, men would choose the women of their choice to quench their lust. Women performed the dance while the music was being played. Thus one could say, as has been pointed out, that people who joined this type of dance were of low moral status. It was during those years and those that followed this music became known as *Mino oa famo*. Around that time, one of the instruments mostly used was the pedal organ.

With the changing times, the instruments used in the *famo* music were also changed to suit the musicians. As Coplan (1994:192) mentions it, the Basotho concertina tradition was highly developed by the 1940's to the extent that some recordings were made. One such example is that of a woman by the name of 'Malitaba, whose songs were played even in the 1970's on Radio Lesotho and Radio Bantu. The main instruments here were concertina and the drum. But, as time passed, musicians opted for the accordion, which they found convenient in producing different tunes. Coplan (1994:195) when referring to this change observes that:

It was also during the early sixties that the piano accordion appeared in South African music stores and was adopted by Basotho instrumentalists in the mining compounds and shebeens in preference to the pedal organ. Combining the portability of the concertina with the musical range and full-textured volume of the organ, the piano accordion enabled its most serious exponents to make live performance something like a full-time profession.

The *famo* music spilled over to Lesotho and was also played in shebeens. One can attribute its coming into Lesotho to two major groups, the first one being migrant labourers, especially men, and the second one Basotho women who happened to have been at the locations and around mine compounds. The *famo* music became common in the shebeens next to the capital towns of Lesotho. For instance, in the district of Maseru we have places like Thibella, Qoaling and Lekhaloaneng, while in the district of Leribe well-known places were Maputsoe, Lisemeng and Mankoaneng. These places were known for selling a variety of strong home-made beer, and *famo* music was played in order to add more entertainment for the customers.

Most people who flocked to shebeens were people who had come to look for jobs in the towns and those who had come to try their luck with the National Recruiting Company (NRC). NRC offices in Lesotho were mining agencies meant to recruit capable men from Lesotho to work in the mines of the Republic of South Africa. The other group was of those labourers working in towns who earned low wages. The *famo* music got absorbed into the country to the extent that it was played even in the rural areas, especially in

drinking places. People who had come to towns admired the music and when they went back to their rural areas they played it.

Accordion music artists were invited to different places to play *famo* music to an extent that they were labelled *maloabe* (wanderers). There is a saying in Sesotho that *Ngoana oa hau ha u sa mo rate u mo rekele koriana a tle a tsekele a e'o shoella moo u sa tsebeng*, (If you do not love your child buy him an accordion so that he can wander and disappear into thin air). One of the artists, **Lekena Bohale ba Tau** (1997) in his song *Boloabe*, protests against this label of *boloabe* (wandering) when he sings:

*Boloabe ke kelello ea motho  
Boloabe ha se koriana...  
Batho ke khale ba re sonta,  
Liriti tsa rona li behiloe fatše,  
Le se 'na le soma 'mino oa koriana  
Koriana e tšoana le mesebetsi eohle  
Ebile e buseletsa motho.*

Wandering is one's way of thinking,  
Wandering is not accordion instrument,  
People have long been despising us,  
Disregarding our integrity,  
Do not keep on criticizing the accordion music,  
Accordion music is like any other type of work,  
It even benefits those who play it.

From the above excerpt it is evident that this feeling was not only associated with those who used the accordion for *famo* music, but even those accordion artists who performed at wedding feasts. Such persons got invitations from places faraway from their homes. It happened that they also spent weeks or months away from their families and their whereabouts could hardly be traced. This was so because wherever they went they would spend some time in such a place, due to several invitations that delayed their going back to their families. Most parents developed a negative attitude towards the accordion as an instrument, and also *famo* music because of the immorality associated with it. This was also the case with the wives, many of whom denied their husbands the right to own an accordion, because they feared that they would leave them for ages and become modern

age minstrels. Regardless of this negative attitude, accordion music in the form of *famo* or wedding songs never died in Lesotho.

*Famo* music was still played at drinking places in the 1960s and 1970s. During the 1970's in Lesotho the other name for this music was *focho*. It was common to hear people saying: '*Re ea focho*' (we are going to *focho*). The music played at the *focho* was known as '*mino oa focho- focho* music. One recalled the place called Setebing mostly known as Molimo-Nthuse on the mountain road, that one group of musicians used to hold *focho* in various villages in the area. *Focho* used to be held during weekends from Friday night to Sunday. Weekends were convenient for liquor-sellers as they attracted many customers, especially the work force. A variety of home-made beer and quarts were sold to customers as well as foodstuffs like meat and porridge. The group played the homemade drum and the accordion. Customers joined in by making a variety of the modified *lifela*. They said whatever they wanted to say, there was no regularized pattern of turn-taking. Different bands played at the *focho* and were paid money in return by shebeen owners. *Focho* music, like *famo*, was associated with beer-drinking and immoral sexual practices.

### **3.3.1 EVOLUTION OF ACCORDION MUSIC 1980-2005**

Since the study addresses the issue of the evolution of the Basotho accordion music, it is worth highlighting its metamorphosis as from 1980 to 2005, taking into consideration its significance and the mode of performance. For the purpose of convenience, this period is divided into four sections namely; the beginning, 1980-1985, military era, 1986-1993, Mokhehle era, 1993-1998 and Mosisili era, 1998-2005. The sections are named mostly after those who were in power in successive governments. The Basotho accordion music during the period 1980-2005 is seen to have undergone drastic changes that distinguish it from *famo* and *focho* as indicated earlier.

#### **a) The beginning, 1980-1985**

Around 1980, one organized group from Mats'ekheng, Bela-Bela in the district of Berea, recorded their first album, **Tau-ea-Mats'ekha**. Their main instruments were the

homemade drum and accordion. The accordionist and lead singer was Forere Motlohelo, while Apollo Ntabanyane chanted the modified *lifela*. In the early 1980's, other groups also recorded their songs, among them were **Lilala tsa Sekhonyana, Tau-ea-Thaba, Tau-ea-Lioli, Tau-ea-Linare, Mahosana a ka Phamong, Manka le Phallang, Puseletso Seema, Maele and Manka le Phallang.**

**b) Military era 1986-1993**

This period saw another proliferation of Basotho accordion artists. In 1986, after the military took over from the then Prime Minister of Lesotho, Dr. Leabua Jonathan, many more young men and women got organized into musical groups and recorded their songs. It was during this period that Lesotho experienced some social and political upheavals that were captured by the musicians in their songs.

Some artists composed songs that showed appreciation and approval of the military take over from the civilian government led by Dr. Jonathan. There were other songs that protested against the signing of the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme agreement between Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa. Many of the songs that were composed during this time captured various outstanding incidents such as the assassination of two former Cabinet Ministers of Dr. Jonathan's government, the Papal visit to Lesotho in 1998, the downfall of the head of the Military Government, Major General Lekhanya, teachers' strike, and, in some cases, artists composed songs about international events such as the Gulf war. Around this period, most of the established artists were using advanced drums instead of the home-made and electric guitars, and some groups used microphones to show that they were advanced. In this period, accordion music became more popular among the Basotho to the extent that it was performed even at official public gatherings. Many groups were formed, and had their music recorded on to cassettes. Around these years, the standard price for a cassette was M20.00.

**c) Mokhehle era, 1993-1998**

This is the period in which Lesotho went back to the polling stations to democratically elect a government since 1970 when Jonathan suspended political activities. The Basotho

Congress Party (B.C.P.) won the election with what most people referred to as a 'landslide victory' where took all the sixty constituencies. The party was led by Dr. Ntsu Mokhehle who became the Prime Minister until 1998; hence the period is referred to as the Mokhehle era. The Basotho accordion musicians covered these political events in their songs. They also sang about many important events which took place during this period, for instance, the toppling of the Basotho Congress Party government by the king, the factional fighting within the army, the death of former deputy prime minister Mr. Selometsi Baholo, defection within the ruling Basotho Congress Party, the death of His Majesty King Moshoeshoe II, and many other events. These events were captured by some of the musicians in very captivating and inspiring poetic language.

Even around this period, many upcoming artists were recognized and accordion music was reaching each and every corner of the country. The sale of cassettes became a business even to the street vendors who sold cassettes at negotiable prices to as low as R10.00, instead, of a standard price of the time which was R30.00. Around this time, artists used advanced instruments that enabled them to perform effectively during their concerts and they even rented them to inexperienced artists.

#### **d) Mosisili era, 1998-2005**

This period is named after the Prime Minister who is the leader of the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy. He won the 1998 election with 79 out of 80 constituencies, while the Basotho National Party won only a dismal single seat. The 1998 election and its aftermath became another source of songs for Basotho accordion music. Musicians observed a variety of important events from which they composed their songs. For instance, the riots that followed the elections, the royal wedding of his Majesty King Mohato Bereng Seeiso, the victorious performance of the Likuena National Team in the Confederation of Southern African Football Association football competitions, and the 2002 election to mention a few.

This era saw the involvement of many females in accordion music where groups such as **Bo-mme ba mehahlaula, Bo-mme ba Maphutseng, Bo-mme ba Ha Mootsinyane,**

**Mankoko** and many others who formed the music bands with the assistance of some experienced male artists. This era also saw accordion music in compact disks and many artists producing DVDs that became popular and were marketable among the Basotho. In these years, artists began to express their views openly with regard to the exploitation they experienced from their coordinators. The music coordinators reduced the prices of those cassettes they felt did not sell well to between R10.00 and R5.00 while the standard price remained R30.00. As much as the accordion music was getting popularized, one observes that economically, it was not advancing in line with its popularity.

### 3.3.2 THE STATUS OF THE MUSIC

The musicians involved in this music nowadays are more dignified and morally upright as compared to those of *famo*. Their dignity stems from the fact that most Basotho identify with this music as traditional Sesotho music. It is no longer seen as a shebeen type of music that involves people with low morals.

At national level, we find that the musicians even go and perform during official national functions. This could be traced as far back as 1984 when Her Majesty Queen 'Mamohato attended Apollo Ntabanyane's show at the then Airport Hotel. Coplan (1995:156) makes this comment: "But how could a male performer become the king of *famo*, and play before the Queen?" It was also notable when the National University of Lesotho honoured both Apollo Ntabanyane and Puseletso Seema in 1994 with doctoral degrees as in recognition of their outstanding contribution to Basotho accordion music.

In many official functions held by the government, the accordion artists are invited to perform. For instance, when Lesotho celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year of Independence in 1991, the accordion artists were invited to entertain the nation at the race course in Maseru. It was also notable when one Mahase of **Mahosana a ka Phamong** joined the Prime Minister's delegation to Malaysia on the Smart partnership business. While in Malaysia, Mahase entertained guests of honour with his Sesotho accordion music. This accordion artist is very active in the Smart partnership office; he is the spokesperson for the arts and culture in the said office. Mahase and other groups even performed during preliminary meetings

that were held at 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre in preparation for the Southern African International Dialogue for the National Smart Partnership Conference in November 2005. We could say that the government, at national level, recognizes accordion music as one genre that closely appeals to the hearts and feelings of Basotho.

Accordion music is played over five radio stations within Lesotho, namely: Radio Lesotho, Mo-Africa Radio, Catholic Radio, Thaha-Khube Radio, People's Choice Radio and also Radio Lesedi in the Republic of South Africa. Each radio station has a programme on this music, where it plays Sesotho accordion music for one hour or more depending on each radio station. To exemplify, Radio Lesotho has a programme called *Re Hlasela Thota* (We explore the landscape) on Wednesdays from 21:45-23:00, Mo-Africa has two such programmes called '*Mino oa Koriana* or '*Mino oa Sesotho*' (Accordion music or Sesotho music) on Mondays and Thursdays at 21:20, Catholic Radio has it under the name of *Rea Kubasela* (We are traveling) Thursdays at 21:45 and Radio Leseli '*Mino oa Litsamaea-naha* (Music of the travelers) on Wednesdays at 21:45. The fact that this music is played on Sesotho radio stations shows its popularity and its identification with the Basotho. It is also observed that by playing this music over the radio stations, presenters contribute a lot towards marketing the accordion music. As a result, this practice encourages the lovers of this music to buy it from the music shops.

Currently, accordion music artists hold concerts. This is done in order to promote their music and to generate income. Individual artists organize concerts which are held in public halls, where the audience pays entrance fee. In some cases, owners of restaurants invite artists to perform in their compounds in order to attract more customers. In exchange, the artists get paid for such performances.

Morija Arts and Cultural Festival annually organises a *famo* music festival in its four days celebration. Evenings are allocated to different activities such as Jazz, theatre and drama, choral and accordion music. As is norm, one evening is set aside for *famo* music festival. This festival has been going on since its inauguration in 1999. It is usually held

at the beginning of October every year. Some artists are asked to perform on a given day and are paid for their participation. The audience also pays an entrance fee to watch the performance.

One or several accordion music festivals are also organized by different radio stations. Radio stations like the Catholic Radio, Mo-Afrika FM and Thaha-Khube Radio also organize accordion music festivals to celebrate their anniversaries. In all of these festivals, the public turns out in great numbers to listen to the music.

These few examples mentioned above show the status of *famo* music we have nowadays. They also show the type of audience who watch this type of music, and that it is now a dignified type of music. It has moved from being identified with people of low morals being recognized as part of Basotho traditional music. By so saying one does not rule out the fact that there are young musicians or beginners who still perform in shebeens, and that there are also some who perform in different restaurants no matter how famous they are.

Audience that attends the concerts held by these musicians do so mainly for entertainment and sometimes to while away time and not for sexual satisfaction as it was the case with *famo*. Again while *famo* was meant for a smaller group of people, the current Basotho accordion music performance attracts multitudes of people. People of different ages and personalities attend shows as opposed to those of *famo* where the audience was only adult males and females with loose behavior.

#### **a) Artists and their training**

Singers of this music can be classified into three categories, illiterate, semi-literate and literate. That is, there are those who have never attended any formal schooling at all, those that have primary school education, who are in the majority, and a few with post-primary education.

It is worthwhile to give a general background of many of the artists in order to have a better understanding of how they got involved with the music. Most of the artists interviewed personally and those listened to when interviewed by radio presenters, have indicated that they joined the accordion music because they liked singing. Some pointed out that they felt the urge when they were teenagers, examples being artists like Apollo Ntabanyane, Puseletso Seema, Mosotho Chakela and others. Apollo pointed out that as a herd-boy he used to play '*mamokhorong* or *sekhankula* and later took up accordion music in 1973. Puseletso started singing while she was also looking after animals. She used to sing about any incident that affected her. Chakela said that he has always been an eloquent person from his youth and later formed his accordion group in 1989.

Other artists like Mantša Lephoi, Teboho Tšepiso and others said that they developed love for accordion music because they were inspired by other artists when already adults. Mantša said that his love for accordion music started in 1983 when he got obsessed by one accordion artist, Mabili, in the Mafeteng district. Teboho developed love for this music while he was a driver, when he used to play the accordion music cassettes. After sometime he bought himself a guitar and accordion and started his group.

Artists like Bokaako Khoatsane, Motlohelo Forere and others, were engaged in different groups that sang vocal music before joining accordion music. Bokaako started his singing career while he was a student at Auray High School, Mantšonyane, being a member of the school choir and church choir and he later joined his brother who played a guitar and he opted for accordion. Forere used to be a lead-singer in *ndlamo*, and having felt he was gifted he took up accordion music. These are just a few examples of artists the researcher was able to interview.

It should be noted that Basotho, by nature, are oral, that is, very little of what they do and say is written. This is so even when it comes to music, as they do not write their songs on paper. They always recall, and recite what has been learned orally. For instance, boy initiates do not write their praises and their *mangae*, but during graduation they perfectly sing the *mangae* and recite the praises no matter how long they may be. This is the case

with other songs such as *mokorotlo*, *mokopu*, *mokhibo*, *serobolela* that are never written but are orally learned.

Given this background, it is not surprising that accordion music songs are not written prior to their rendition. The group members normally rehearse the words, each singing the part that suits him or her; the lead-singer doing his part, others singing soprano, tenor or bass. During rehearsals group members, apply their informal education on how to tune their voices just as it is done at initiation school. It is during the rehearsals that a talented singer composes the accompanying poetry and others follow up with the chorus.

When it comes to the playing of instruments, one observes that, most artists, if not all of them, have not undergone any formal training. They have all learned to play the accordion or guitar or any other instrument informally. They practiced with their relatives' or friends' instruments. As they practiced for sometime, they developed love for the instruments and later began to play for bands. All in all, one could say Sesotho accordion music has no formal and standard way of assessing it, ours is to accept the tunes delivered as natural and inborn oral talent.

Taking into consideration the background of many of these artists, the research found that many joined accordion playing for economic reasons. That is, most of them developed love towards this music because it contributed much towards their families as the only source of income. It was also observed that, none of the artists have ever attended any formal lessons of music, but have informally learned this music. As such, one cannot judge Sesotho accordion artists in terms of academic qualifications but the quality work that they produce.

#### **b) Performance**

It is observed that the current Basotho accordion musicians differ from those of the *famo* when it comes to organization. Each band has its name and members who play different roles during the performance. In some bands it may be found that the lead-singer plays the accordion, there is a guitarist, drummer, members who sing the chorus and who are

also dancers. The lead-singer sometimes chants *lifela* assisted by one or two of his members. This is the case with groups like that of Mosotho Chakela, Mantša and **Likheleke tsa Lesotho**.

In some bands, there is a lead singer who also chants *lifela*, accordionist, guitarist, drummer, members who sing the chorus and who are also dancers. In such groups, the lead singer does not play the accordion at all but sings and chants *lifela*. The bands of Apollo Ntabanyane, Famole and Puseletso Seema could be taken as some examples. Each band has its own style of organizing itself during performance but the two examples mentioned above seem to be the trend which most bands follow.

Accordion songs also follow certain patterns that are popular with most of the artists. They have *makhele* and *masholu* as the main types of accordion music. With *makhele*, there is a chorus that is normally followed by the chanting of *lifela*. The most popular structures are as follows: chorus-*lifela*-chorus-*lifela* and chorus-*lifela*-chorus. *Makhele*, in most cases, refer to songs that have a chorus regardless of which format they follow.

The second type, *masholu*, does not have a chorus but *lifela* are chanted throughout the song although still accompanied by instruments. The *lifela* may be sung by one or more people, depending on the individual band. Sometimes the *masholu* songs are just instrumental and not accompanied by *lifela*.

During the performance, there is a systematic turn-taking for the chanting of *lifela* as well as the chorus singers. As an example, when the *makhele* are sung, the group may start by singing the chorus accompanied by instruments, the chorus may be followed by the chanting of *lifela* by one or two people, each taking his turn in a properly arranged manner. They do so throughout until the song comes to an end. It is unlike in *famo*, where each and everyone present in the shebeen house would join in with his or her *lifela* whenever they felt like, without proper arrangement of the group.

It is also observed that, there are instances where the artists have organized themselves in such a manner that they are able to sing with other groups. This means that artists may at any given time upon agreement, team up to produce one album without necessarily abandoning their groups. There are also cases where outstanding members, especially the accordionists and the lead-singers, decide to make albums in their own names, as one way of strengthening their relationship. For example, Lehlohonolo, the well-known accordionist, and Tšeole, the eloquent *lifela* poet, produced cassettes that were titled *Lehlohonolo Number One* up to *Lehlohonolo Number Nine* and *Tšeole Number One* up to *Tšeole Number Five* during the life-time of Tšeole.

### c) Naming of the albums

In some instances, artists produce albums under different names. That is, one artist may give himself several names and record different albums under those names. There are some artists that appear on different albums under different names, for instance; Mantša who also sings under **Lekena Bohale ba Tau**, Matsie who sings under two other names, **Lesholu la Maboloka** and **Raboshabane**, while Keketso Mathula on other cassettes are labeled **Poho li Matla**. On such cassettes, members may be seen to have changed their style of singing or have re-organized themselves in a different way, in terms of the roles they play when singing. But the bottom line is that, they would still be the same group. There are many reasons for this practice and one is economic. If one records a different album under a different name, he manages to accumulate more money as compared to cassettes produced under one name. Another one is that, well-known artists do it in order to promote young talented artists. To exemplify, in some cases, it may be found that some of the background singers or dancers, after having been with the group for sometime, want to record an album under their name. As members of one band, they may agree on how to go about it. We may take the case of Sanko, who sometimes teamed up with Libatha to produce a cassette titled **Sanko le Libatha**. Mosotho Chakela, on the other hand, has recorded albums with other members of his group under the name of **Haeso Terateng** or **Chaba sa Matelile**. In this way, they help young artists to grow and to become famous.

Although there are important reasons for this type of naming, sometimes it creates problems when it comes to buying and referencing the cassettes. For an example, if one buys a cassette with a different name and finds that the lead-singer is the person he knows, it causes confusion especially when such an artist sings on different cassettes. When it comes to referencing, one may find that there is one composer for different albums or the lead-singer has teamed up with other artists and that his name appears on most of the cassettes. It sounds like repetition of one artist although he sings with different people. This is the case with Chakela who has many albums bearing his names and has teamed up with different artists in various albums where he still dominates. He has albums that are labeled **Mosotho Chakela, Mosotho le Molotsana, Motsamai le Chakela, Chaba sa Matelile** and **Seeiso, Tšoana-Mantata**.

There is another problem when it comes to the writing of the Sesotho names of the songs and the artists. This concerns the negligence concerning the grammatical rules, especially on the part of record companies, who might be expected to provide their expertise in helping artists, as some of them are semi-literate or illiterate. The spelling of some names makes it difficult for one to read, as for example words that are supposed to be written disjunctively are written conjunctively and vice versa. The listed examples below are a typical of many cassettes:

<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>Corrected</b>
<i>Hara Marou</i>	<i>Ha Ramarou</i>
<i>Moeketsi LeSentšo</i>	<i>Moeketsi le Sentšo</i>
<i>Lerapo letlama khomo</i>	<i>Lerapo le tlama khomo in Moeketsi le Sentšo No4.</i>
<i>Onyantse tšoene</i>	<i>O nyantse tšoene</i>
<i>Banoele drinkopopo</i>	<i>Ba noele drinkopopo in Mahosana a ka Phamong No17.</i>
<i>Basoilakannna</i>	<i>Ba solo ka 'na</i>
<i>Keletebele</i>	<i>Ke Letebele in Ba Tatile Batho.</i>

This type of mistake needs special attention because artists love their language and their country. It would be gratifying for them to have their language written in a manner and the respect it deserves.

### **3.3.3 LANGUAGE USAGE**

When one listens to most songs, one observes the enriched flavour of the Sesotho language. The poetic nature of the language that captures the minds of the listeners is one important aspect of this genre. The type of language that musicians employ is, in most cases, full of language techniques that are not normally used in day to day communication. Musicians express themselves in rhetoric and poetic language. They not only narrate events as one would do using everyday language but, there is a choice and application of captivating diction. In most cases, the words that they use display their fluency and mastery of the language. This study, therefore, seeks to analyze the language of the accordion music and to show its importance to the nation as a whole and not as just a form of entertainment but, as a vehicle and reservoir of poetic language in the changing technological world.

Although, there are eloquent artist who display language proficiency there are some whose songs lack poetic qualities, whose language is not worth admiring..

### **3.3.4 PREDOMINANT THEMES OF THE ACCORDION MUSIC**

This relates to the subject matter of the accordion songs, like social, economic, political and religious aspects. Artists, as the eyes of the nation, address the concerns of the society, and sometimes proffer possible solutions to them. We get to know more about the artists as they express their feelings about their own personal experiences, families and relationship with others. In most cases, one observes that artists consider themselves teachers who have a didactic role to play in their societies. As such, they try to sensitize their fellow country people about some of the national concerns. This study intends to analyse the variety of themes covered by the artists and the impact they have on the society. That is, what contribution their songs play in influencing the members of the society that listen to the accordion music.

### **3.3.5 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**

In the early 1980s, most bands used home-made drums, an accordion and a guitar. The type of guitar used was the model that produced sound without being connected to sound box. The guitars used these days are electronic.

There is dynamism in the accordion music, especially when it comes to technology. The musicians now use electronic instruments; they either use electricity, generators or car batteries to charge their instruments. Only beginners can be found in possession of old instruments like the drums covered with rubber tubes with a wire-like string, which has soft drink bottle lids. Currently, musicians use imported drums and not homemade ones. With the present technology, musicians, sometimes, during performance, make additional sounds to their songs to imitate gunfire or lightning as to make their message clear to listeners. Although these instruments make their job easier, many cannot afford to own them. This creates a problem as they have to borrow some of them from other groups whenever they want to perform. They use microphones and huge sound boxes for amplifying sounds.

### **3.3.6 RECORDING**

Currently, artists want as one of their aims, to have their songs recorded and sold to the public. This is because most of them have opted for this music for economic reasons. People have to live but, there are no jobs. They have to eat, consult doctors and pay school fees but there are no jobs. To some artists, accordion music is the answer to their prayers for a better living. Since this music is commercialized, its recording is of vital importance to both artists and consumers.

Recording is done in the Republic of South Africa, as there is not a single recording studio in Lesotho presently. Artists, who are eager to have their songs recorded, are introduced to managers of studios by other well-known artists. They sign contracts of agreement, and once that is done the recording process starts. Mostly, it is the managers of the studios who incur all the expenses from the recording until the production of the

cassettes is completed. This is so because most artists do not have the capital to cater for the expenses. As a result, the managers of the studios take the lion's share when the product is sold in order to make up for the expenses incurred. But, for those artists who have capital, they pay for the whole process.

With regard to the distribution of the product, that depends on the type of agreement signed between the artists and the recording company. Sometimes, the recording company may do the distribution on behalf of the artists, while some artists may distribute personally. In the case of the first option, as indicated earlier, the company takes a bigger share. Mostly, the first option causes a lot of dissatisfaction. For example, many artists complain that it takes them time to get their royalties. And when they get them, they are just a pittance. One artist in an interview stated that he once had only two hundred maluti for the cassette he had recorded. To show their dissatisfaction, artists often compose songs that express their bitterness about the recording companies.

With regard to the second option, artists make an agreement with the music and cassettes shops. Sometimes, depending on their agreement, they collect the sales at the end of the month, while, in other instances, there is direct exchange of cash when the cassettes are delivered. For the renowned artists, this exercise helps them to maintain control and market their product in a profitable manner.

Since the recording of the songs is the highest achievement, many singers are struggling to have their songs recorded. But, for the experienced ones, their major concern is the marketability of their music. They take precautions when they compose songs, and put more effort in order to produce quality work which sells lucratively when it reaches the market. The plea of many artists in Lesotho is that the Lesotho government should intervene by establishing a recording studio in the country so that there is circulation of capital within Lesotho.

### **3.3.7 ACCORDION MUSIC AND ITS RECEPTION**

Change and continuity within the music circles in Lesotho has been and continues to take place in different forms of music. This is because a variety of music types in Lesotho known to be traditional could be said to have been modified in order to adapt to the modern times, and to meet the new challenges and expectations of the modern society. The changes that have taken place and continue to take place have not affected the concept of their being traditional but have helped to adjust them to the times within which they operate. People have to accept that there are dynamics of culture, culture is not static, and it changes with times.

Dynamism has also affected accordion music mostly positively, in that it is now seen and accepted as part of the oral traditional music of Basotho. Although some people criticize it on the basis of western influence, its evolution cannot come to a halt as cultures change. Musicians, as a social structure within the social system of the Basotho society, have to maintain their position by providing people with what they need, at the right time, and at the right place. That is, for them to continue to survive as a social group, they must fulfill their obligations to the society which they are responsible to entertain, and to address cultural aspects that nourish them as human beings. That is, as Malinowski (1961:42) puts it, cultural aspects such as social groups, human ideas, beliefs and customs have to put a man in a position to cope with the concrete, specific problems that face him in his adaptation to his environment. As Malinowski (ibid) argues, one may find it difficult to draw a line of demarcation between one's culture and one's life as man's life is his culture. Therefore, accordion music as one genre of traditional music has to be accepted on the basis of its contextualization thus satisfying the needs of the Basotho nation.

To determine the reception of accordion music, the study compiled views from different stakeholders, namely; audience of accordion music that is the people who attend accordion music festivals and concerts, coordinators, music shop owners and hawkers, and radio presenters. The views were gathered from personal interviews, radio stations and television interviews. Although each group had its own questionnaire, the questions

were to a certain extent similar in that the core of the questionnaire focused on the reception of the accordion music. We shall first treat the general views that seemed to be common responses from interviewees and this will be followed by specific responses from each group.

### **3.3.8 GENERAL VIEWS**

General views, in this case, refer to different aspects of the music that appeal to different tastes and so influence people to like accordion music. Information gathered showed that people love accordion music because they appreciate the following in it: Sesotho language, eloquence, thematic aspect, voice, instruments, biological and clan relationship, place identity, message and manipulation of emotions. These general views are grouped into two major categories, those being; views that specifically refer to the lyrics of the music and those that relate to personal attributes of the artists. Those that fall under the lyrics of the music are as follows: Sesotho language, language techniques, themes, message and manipulation of emotions, while those that focus on the personal attributes of the artists are eloquence, dramatic performance, attire, voice, accordion and other instruments, biological and clan relationship and place identity,

#### **a) Appreciation of the lyrics in the music**

Under this sub-topic focus is on the appreciation of the lyrics of the music as the sound heard, that is detached from the artists. The rationale behind this is to get the overall picture of how the public feels towards this music as a separate entity without linking it to the artist.

##### **(i) Use of Sesotho as a mother tongue**

Interviewees, as though questioned at the same time and same place, unanimously felt that they love accordion music because it uses their mother tongue, which is the Sesotho language. As Basotho, they understand and can easily interpret what is being said without seeking assistance from anybody as is the case with English songs. Their feeling is that Sesotho language is a form of identity that distinguishes them from other nationalities. As such, accordion music makes them feel their *bosotho* (sense of being a Mosotho) is

retained and maintained as they listen to it. That is Sesotho and Basotho are one and the same thing. Coplan (1994:250) points out that by the concept 'Sesotho', the Basotho mean far more than their language and culture narrowly conceived, but the social identity and its entitlements, reciprocities and their resources. He further indicates that it relates to investments of the self and personal as well as communal genealogical, and national history, and a secure, self-comprehending way of life.

When asked how this music is different from other types of music such as choral and *monyanyako*, which are also sung in the Sesotho language, the general response was that; their origins are foreign compared to accordion music that is poetic with rich language expressions, and bears cultural aspects of the Basotho from their past.

Some interviewees, especially those who have stayed outside Lesotho for some time, indicated that when this music was played they felt closer to their home country as it is homely and reminded them of Lesotho and Basotho. The fact that it is sung in Sesotho revived their being Basotho regardless of distance. To most interviewees accordion music urges them to appreciate themselves as Basotho, to love their Sesotho language and to love their country Lesotho.

#### **(ii) Employment of language techniques**

Another point that draws many followers into liking this music is the employment of language techniques. Accordion music is full of figurative expressions that enable one to observe the beauty of the Sesotho language. It makes its listeners to admire the use of idioms, proverbs, language techniques such as metaphor, simile, repetitions and many others. The use of rich Sesotho language has a positive impact on the up-coming musicians, its lovers and the entire Basotho nation as it inspires them to employ figurative expressions whenever they speak or write Sesotho. This music enables its listeners to be aware that even Sesotho has a wide vocabulary that can be used in different contexts in various fora. That is, it dispels the common feelings among some Basotho that Sesotho has limited vocabulary.

### **(iii) Manipulation of emotions**

Another point worth mentioning is that accordion music seems to manipulate the emotions of its audience. Accordion artists are invited to perform at different functions and, in most cases, play songs that fit the occasions and win the hearts of those attending. Examples given were that, accordion artists, when they are invited to play at wedding feasts, play those songs that relate to the occasion and that make people feel entertained as they are in a joyous mood. They also perform differently during funerals; they sing those songs that would console those affected by the death of a relative.

It was indicated that, as the music is now commercialized, its artists seem to be business-minded, and perform according to the occasions to which they are invited, thus giving the right music at the appropriate time and at the right place. This is in line with Tracey's (1948:3) observation that the artistry of music relies on the choice of right music and the correct manner of performing it. If one chooses a wrong kind of music for an occasion or performs it badly, the people for whom the music is performed would not have that sense of well-being and would not respond positively to it. The artists' flexibility makes them to adapt to any situation they are called to perform at. That is, they are able to satisfy the feelings of the audience according to given contexts. This is what Sekoni (1990:142) refers to as emotive satisfaction, where a narrator manipulates the feelings of an audience in order to retain the attention as in oral narratives. Accordion artists, like other narrators, manipulate their emotions by retaining the attention of their audience during the performance.

It was further observed that, each artist has his own way of winning the hearts of the people through his music. For instance, Hatlane is singled out as the one who strikes a balance in his composition of songs which are both spiritual and entertaining, while Mantša's music focuses on the revival of traditions and values of the Basotho and the economic development of the country. **Manka le Phallang** and **Mahosana a ka Phamong** are said to be more inclined towards the historical events of the country in their composition.

#### **(iv) Thematic aspects**

Some people said that they like accordion music because it encompasses thematic aspects that relate to Basotho and Lesotho, be they economic, political, religious or social as highlighted earlier. Any event, whether saddening or pleasing, when it happens, is worth listening to when it is in the form of a song. If it is a heart-breaking event, it becomes more saddening when sung, especially when the proper tone and words have been used. The same goes for the entertaining event; it becomes more pleasing when being sung. The inclusion of different events in accordion music not contributes to the entertainment value but to the continuity of the oral traditions of the Basotho. That is, the lyrics delivered through oral words which recorded help to retain the nature of oral poetry of which accordion music is the product. Reference to occasions that relate to Basotho and Lesotho makes the Basotho to identify themselves with this type of music as their traditional music that bears and intends to pass on to the next generations the history of the country.

It was also pointed out that this music serves as a moral teacher to the society as it addresses concerns and human behavior of its people. It calls for the correction of problems and possible ways of dealing with different social concerns among the Basotho. Therefore, it is not just a noise for entertainment but plays a didactic role in the society that it serves. This is what Sekoni (1990:141) terms cognitive satisfaction, where a performer, in a traditional narration, comments on a human behaviour in his community and that what is contained in the story must have clarity of meaning or suggestion of meaning. He further points out that the traditional stories address the concerns and values of the community they serve, such as social issues that include justice, honesty, order, peace, respect and ontological considerations like death, origins and the ultimate end of man. With these aspects featuring in accordion music as explained earlier, it is not surprising that it keeps on attracting many Basotho.

#### **b) Appreciation of Personal identity**

Turner (1982:18) defines personal identity as attributes of the individual such as feelings of competence, bodily attributes, and ways of relating to others, psychological

characteristics, intellectual concerns and personal tastes. These are qualities that each artist has, that distinguish such an artist from others. When coming to the reception of the artists by different interviewees from various groups, it was observed that each artist has his/her own qualities that are appreciated by the audience at large. Each artist is accepted by the audience for certain specific a reason, which is why people would buy his cassettes attend his concerts and even invite him to perform at social functions. Specific qualities that seemed common according to the interviews included, among others, the following: eloquence, voice, dramatic performance, style of playing instruments such as guitar and accordion and social identification of audience with the artists.

**(i) Eloquence**

Eloquence is a personal quality that one has in terms of proficiency in one's language, in our case Sesotho. Wells (1994:7) describes it as a socially valued concept of artistic talent with poetic influence in which an artist is able to create impressive and innovative images with rhythmic potential where one extemporizes commentaries on events, real or imagined, personal or collective. He goes on to say that in accordion music, the poetic tradition is blended with other influences to create dynamic new styles that synthesise Sesotho and other forms of expression adapted to suit contemporary contexts.

It was observed that some people admire eloquence that is displayed by artists in their songs. For one to assess this quality, one has to be very attentive during the performance or listen carefully to the cassettes or compact discs. Eloquence, as they put it, includes one's knowledge of the Sesotho language, creativity, imagination, and spontaneous composition that enable one to coherently put together bits and pieces of information in a poetic style with the rhythmic flow of words which is consistent throughout the song.

What the audience admires most is the ability to use this skill profoundly in a captivating manner that retains spectators' or listeners' attention. Some of the outstanding accordion artists with regard to eloquence are: Lekase, Famole, Selomo, Puseletso and 'Mankoko. They were credited by interviewees for the way they logically and coherently, in a poetic

manner, relate and describe whatever they sing about. As they sing, they take into consideration the employment of figurative expressions and other language techniques.

## (ii) Voice

Voice in this context may be taken to mean sound produced through the mouth, meant to communicate a certain message to the hearers. It may be high or low, sonorous or hoarse, audible or inaudible. Artist's voice changes as he sings, it changes according to the patterns of the song and the role that one takes during the song itself. This is another aspect that is mostly loved because it was said that it strengthens artist's eloquence. That is, an artist may be eloquent but, if his voice is not suitable to the song or not audible, his eloquence fails to be foregrounded as it cannot assist one to be appreciated by his audience.

Interviewees referred to some of these points when expressing their feelings towards the accordion artists. Some of the interviewees preferred a sonorous voice as the best voice as it is, in most cases, audible. They further indicated that sonorous voices are manly, therefore, as this music is dominated by males, it is more appreciated as compared to a fine one which is more effeminate. Others went further to indicate that a sonorous voice reflects well on the Basotho male songs as it is the case when they sing *mangae*, *mohobelo* and *mokorotlo* where they sing from their throats in a low-pitched manner. Therefore, such artists still retain the traditional low-pitch tone even nowadays, which is known as men's tone of singing. Among those who are prominent with sonorous voices the names of Chakela, Matsie, Keketso and Hatlane were mentioned.

Some people preferred those artists with average voices like that of Mantša, Numere, Mosia and 'Maseotsa. Their contention is that, those voices are not awe-inspiring, they are homely, and are welcome to their ears as compared to the hoarse ones.

Others opted for fine voices which are normally said to be female or *tsoetse*. Names of artists given here were the likes of Lehlohonolo and Maema. For instance, when one listens to Maema's songs, one takes time to identify it as a male voice.

The quality of the voice is much appreciated as it also contributes much to one's popularity and fame. If one has a charming voice, it challenges the young generation to tune their voices during the performance so as to win the hearts of the public.

### **(iii) Dramatic performance**

Dramatic performance in this context refers to any form of action in which the artists and their colleagues are engaged in during the performance. This may refer to any physical movement done in response to the song either individually or collectively as a group. Dramatic performance, especially on stage, catches the attention of the audience and diverts their attention from their private thoughts and preoccupations to the performance.

Some people said that they appreciated the dramatic performance of some artists especially when they perform on the stage. They mostly focus on the dancing of some back-up singers whose role in most cases is to dance to the music, while substantive participants may be seen playing the instruments and holding the microphones. They felt that such back up singers add more entertainment as they show different styles during their dancing. Sometimes, if they perform quite well, they upstage the main artiste as the audience end up focusing on them and ignoring the artist and his team.

Interviewees referred to one incident at the Morija Arts and Cultural Festival where three women who wore grey blankets, with blue overalls stole the show from the main artists. They performed so well that the audience ended up imitating them from the floor. According to them, such participants enliven the performance and make the audience active. Groups that seemed to be popular in this respect included **Rabotšo and Semanyane**, Tšepiso, **Sefako sa Menoaneng**, Mantša and Chakela.

Interviewees also pointed out that they preferred the dramatic performance where artists dramatize every action that is referred to in the song. This is what could be called dramatic musical performance, where artists sing while at the same time acting what is being conveyed by the song. Most of the interviewees said that this is one of the most interesting parts of the performance as it shows innovation, imagination and creativity within the accordion music. It was said that it makes performances more lively and

attractive, and, in some cases, diverts audience attention from the music sounds. Apollo Ntabanyane and Puseletso Seema were said to be leading artists in this respect. It was said that when they get on stage, they urge spectators to react impulsively by ululating and dancing widely to their tunes. Some recalled Apollo's (2004) performance when singing one of his songs *Seqaqana se seng le se seng* (each and every frog). The words of the song go thus:

*Qaqana se seng le se seng sea iqothomela,  
Mokholutsoane o mong le o mong o ikorela letsatsi.*

Each and every frog leaps for itself,  
Each and every lizard warms itself in the sun.

As Apollo sang, his son leaped like a frog from the first line, and pretended to be warming in the sun like a lizard in the second line. Apart from acting Apollo is regarded as the best performer on stage as he even puts on traditional Basotho attire when performing in comparison to other artists who prefer Western attire. He has a unique style of dressing and dancing while performing that attracts many accordion music lovers to attend his shows.

#### **(iv) Musical instruments**

Each artist seems to be unique in whatever he does; this is the case even with the instruments they play. Each artist has his/her own style of playing the guitar or accordion to mention the few common instruments that are popular among accordion artists. Interviewees pointed out that the sounds of the instruments produced by different groups also inspire them to develop enthusiasm towards accordion music. As there are many artists involved in this music, it is rather difficult for one to make a justifiable judgment. To make justice for all, we have to opt for the three major groupings of the artists that is based on the regions, to exemplify **Matšekha** and **Linare**, for all of those artists from the northern part of Lesotho, **Lilala** for all the artists found in the central region and **Makaota** from the southern region. People who come from the northern part seemed inclined towards artists from their region so it is the case even with other regions.

**(v) Social identification**

It was found that social identification of the audience with the artists plays an important role in promoting the reception of the artist by the society. Social identification is a situation where two or more individuals perceive themselves as members of the same social category. As a group, they are socially or psychologically interdependent in order to satisfy their needs, attain some goals or consensual validation of attitudes and values. Their interdependence leads to cooperative social interaction, communication, mutual attraction and influence between individuals. This model further suggests that individuals structure their own perception of themselves and others by means of abstract social categories that they internalize as aspects of their self-concepts that produce group behaviour (Turner, 1982:16-17).

What was learned from the personal interviews and the phone-in programmes was that the audience associated itself with the artists because of the following reasons:

- They are their relatives, as such, they represent family or belong to the same clan, therefore, represent all those who belong to that clan;
- They are neighbours or from a nearby village or area, therefore, these artists belong to their area;
- They come from one principal chief; therefore, they represent people from the said principal chief; and
- They come from the same district; therefore, they represent their district.

Most families in Lesotho still identify with their extended family; this is because most Basotho have grown up in the extended families and still adhere to this concept. Apart from that, practically speaking, most Basotho are directly or indirectly related to one another. It is not surprising that some people who identify with artists are their distant relatives.

Relationship is also observed through sharing of one clan name. Among the Basotho, one's clan is a highly respected form of identification; whether one shares a common surname or not, as long as the two belong to one clan they are related. That is, if one artist

is a *Mofokeng* (of the hare), he is related to all the *Bafokeng* regardless of which category of *Bafokeng*. The pride is that one is a *Mofokeng*, therefore he or she represents all the *Bafokeng*, therefore, and all the *Bafokeng* must support him or her, as he or she is their daughter or their son. The overview picture is that, artists do not represent themselves but the entire family, therefore, one's relatives feel that it is a great achievement for them to have one of their sons or daughters as an artist and as such, they automatically support him or her, buy their cassettes and even attend their shows.

Neighbourhood is one form of social security because neighbours are the first ones to advance their help in times of crisis, while they may be the worst enemies if one has sour relations with them. According to Basotho, neighbourhood is considerably extended; it starts with one's next-door neighbour, but expands to village and area. It is common for one to hear Basotho referring to one's neighbour when referring to somebody from a nearby village or from a certain area which could be some kilometers away.

As one listened to phone-in-programmes, it was observed that this is one of the social identification aspects that promotes accordion artists. Normally, when an artist or artists from one group are invited to any radio station, they are usually asked to relate their historical background and their music career; afterwards listeners are given a chance to speak to them. To show their appreciation of their artists, some neighbours from the above categories even attend shows which are held in faraway places, the main objective being to support one's neighbour. For example in the case of a group named **Bo-mme ba Maphutseng** (Women of Maphutseng) one observes that most people from Maphutseng and surrounding villages associate themselves with the group. Maphutseng is a place found in the district of Mohale's Hoek, in the southern part of Lesotho. The place is named after big pumpkins, *maphutse*, which were grown in that area, and there is also a river from this area which is called Maphutseng. To ensure that they retain fame in their home place, these artists opted for a name that identifies them with their home Maphutseng.

Identification by places or areas takes into consideration even chiefs of those areas and districts. Sometimes, the audience associates itself with the artist because they are both subjects of one chief or principal chief. This is because chieftainship, among the Basotho, represents leadership, safety, security and above all is a symbol of unity. That is, why even today, in a democratically elected government, people still report their social problems to their chiefs. No matter how limited their powers, chiefs still play a major role in the lives of Basotho. This being the situation, it is no wonder that people under different chiefs still associate themselves with them.

In some instances, listeners associate themselves with one artist mostly because they come from the same district. For an example, Lehlohonolo comes from Mohale's Hoek district. His song '*Helele Majantja!*' became very popular among the people of Mohale's Hoek. It was played almost everywhere even by those people who did not come from this district. Its popularity stemmed from the fact that people from this district are called Majantja (those who eat dog). This shows how the impact of association could be for the artists as far as he identifies himself with his people.

Association with one's place shows that there is a strong attachment that artists have with their homes especially places where they were born. There is a sense of pride that looms in them that urges them to talk proudly of where they were born and grew up. Reference to one's home also brings up the aspect of social identity in that it informs listeners that the artists belong to a group of people of a certain area who love his music. Most importantly, the artists' association with their places helps to boost the market of their music. The followers from the home area of the artist help to influence their friends and colleagues to buy the music, and attend shows of their fellow artists. The fact that the audience identify themselves with their villages shows that they are still part of the social group in which they grew up. As members of a certain social group, they define themselves in terms of the location from which they gained social influence that led them to internalise social norms in their attitudes and social behaviour.

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

Based on the given information above it could be said that various types of music among Basotho changes with times to suit the needs of the society. Concerning accordion music, one observes the transformation that took place within the years 1980 until 2005 that has led to the popularity of the music. This chapter has shown various stages and activities that artists go through in order to produce the accordion music. It has highlighted the reception of the music by Basotho by identifying some of the aspects that have influenced and changed the attitude of Basotho towards accordion music to an extent it is appreciated as Basotho traditional music.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE IN ACCORDION MUSIC

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the analysis of language in accordion music, and is divided into three sections. The first section is the background which treats the poetic nature of accordion music language. It highlights the influence of Basotho praise poetry on the accordion music language, shedding light on the similarities between the two genres. The second part is the analysis of the proverbs in Basotho accordion music that focuses on the application and functions of the proverbs in this music. The third section is the analysis of the common figures of speech used in Sesotho accordion music and their role in the music. It is worth noting that some additional information used in the analysis is borne out of the researcher's knowledge of Basotho culture and experiences, and cannot be precisely referenced to source. Furthermore some of the knowledge shared in this study has not been documented anywhere, it is just oral; it is recorded for the first time by this study.

Analysis of the language is based on the theory of functionalism, that is, the role it plays in the accordion music. Accordion music, as a social activity, is communicated through language and that being the case its language has a role to play among Basotho. This is in line with Radcliffe-Brown's (1952) view that the function of any recurrent activity is the part it plays in the social life as a whole and the contribution it makes to the maintenance of the structural community. He goes further to indicate that the function of a particular social usage is the contribution it makes to the social life and that each social activity is to be found by examining its effects upon the individuals it serves. In this study, it could be said that the language used by the artists has a role to play in the social lives of Basotho in that it provides listeners with the artistic skill of the Sesotho language. The language enables the public to maintain the status of Sesotho language even for future generations, thus maintaining the structural continuity. The employment of proverbs and figures of

speech in this music helps to retain their importance and continuous use among the public. That is the reason why it is worth analysing the language in this music.

It could further be said that the social usage of the Sesotho language through aspects such as proverbs and figures of speech has enabled of change the attitude of the Basotho towards accordion music. It is through the use of some of these language techniques that artists have succeeded in winning the hearts of the Basotho into loving this music. That is, its language has an important role to play in popularizing the music; therefore, it has a function of changing people's attitude towards the music. As indicated earlier, the type of language that is used currently in this music has some features of politeness and respect as it is meant for public consumption. It differs from the early versions of the music which used loose and immoral language. As Radcliffe-Brown (1952:181) observes, the function of any social activity is to be found by examining its effects upon individuals, therefore, the analysis of the language in this study also suggests possible positive effects of Sesotho language on the public. It could be said that the evolutionary change that took place from the 1980s to the present was gradually internalized, having been influenced by changing times and factors such as language so that Basotho adjusted and accommodated the accordion music as part of their oral literature.

Language as a major component of the accordion music in the context of functionalism could be regarded as a social system. Ritzer (1992:247) describes a social system as the cultural system of patterned and ordered symbols, social stock of knowledge which covers language and other forms of communication. It is through language that we observe certain sets of norms and values of the society which promote and maintain the social life of a society. In the case of accordion music, as it is argued, its language, to some extent, reflects the artistic skills of verbal art and retains some values of Basotho that make this genre acceptable in the society. It is through skilful use of language that artists become popular and famous. It is fame and popularity that makes them to reach the state of equilibrium, which is a state of peace and stability because they have met the needs of the society. Therefore, the analysis of the language aspects in accordion music helps in determining the status of this music among the Basotho that has led to a change

of attitude, rich productive output and evolutionary changes. That is why, in the analysis, the language aspect will be identified, defined, determining why and how it is used and what could be deduced from its contextual use, based on the function it performs. It is against this background of functionalism that one can understand why accordion music language is given a similar status to genres such as traditional praise poetry and other types of traditional poetry.

Having shown how functionalism will be applied on the language analysis, the following section will highlight the poetic nature of accordion music.

#### **4.1 POETIC NATURE OF ACCORDION MUSIC LANGUAGE**

It is worth to discussing the language in accordion music is related to the Basotho oral traditional literature such as praise poetry. One observes that, accordion music employs some of the language techniques found in Basotho oral literature. It is against this background that it can be said accordion music artists have drawn their knowledge from the oral traditions of the Basotho, resulting in it being Basotho traditional music.

This study looks at how accordion music language resembles traditional oral poetry like heroic poetry of the Basotho. The poetic nature of accordion music is based on its orality, as is the case with praise poetry. That is, accordion music, like oral poetry, is not written but orally presented.

Accordion music is also similar to praise poetry in form and structure. Form, in this study, is taken to be the external shape of a poem (Lenake 1984:119). In this case, it refers to the physical form of the lines as they appear when written, while structure is the internal organization and composition. Damane and Sanders' view about the line and the rhythm of praise poetry is applicable even to the accordion music:

Lines, like stanzas, are units of meaning. The fact each line is a unit of is naturally reflected in the seroki's chanting, for either he pauses between one line and the next, or else he conveys the sense of division through his intonation or emphasis. The way in which he does this varies

considerably, and depends mainly on the meaning of the passage rather than on any artistic conventions.

(Damane & Sanders 1974:52)

Accordion music lines are constructed based on the pauses or intonation of the artist as he sings. Therefore, accordion music lines like those of the praise poetry do not follow the artistic conventions of written poetry, which will not be discussed here.

Another feature attributed to the lines of this music is that they have free verse forms. When defining free verse forms Lenake (1984:121) says that, it implies a freedom or an absence of the typical formal features of poetry such as rhyme and metre. He goes further to point out that in African poetry it refers to a form that has liberated itself from the formal features or poetic devices borrowed from Western models. Accordion music lines, like praise poetry, do not align themselves with formal features as understood in written poetry and as such are free from any restrictions. An example is in the following lines:

*'Nake ngoan 'a Leboli,  
A k'u ba tlohele ba ntšale morao.  
Ntho eo ke bonang lapeng la ka Tšeole.*

My brother the child of Leboli,  
Let them follow me.  
What I see in my family Tšeole.  
(Tšeole 1998)

The above lines, although poetic cannot be judged on the basis that there is no rhyme or metre because they are produced orally. The terminal words; Leboli, *morao* and Tšeole do not form any rhyme at all but that does not disregard the poetic nature of the lines among the Basotho. The lines are free of written convention just as is the case with the Basotho praise poetry in the following lines:

*Ngoan 'a morena a fetoha letolo;  
La hohotla le maralla,  
La fhla la e-hloa holim 'a Boqate.*

The child of the chief became lightning;  
It made its way along the hills,  
It arrived; it climbed to the top of Boqate.  
(Mangoaela. 1988: 179)

The above lines are quoted from the praise poems of Griffiths; as much as they are praise poetry they cannot be treated like written poetry as their production is oral like accordion lines. The words at the end of the three lines are *letolo*, *maralla* and *Boqate*, and do not rhyme at all. These lines do not follow patterns of rhyme or metre but, all the same, constitute poetry of its kind which suits Basotho oral literature.

One observes that the lines from the two quotations vary in length, which relates to structure which is the internal arrangement or organization of the words. In the quoted song above, there are three words in the first line, seven in the second and eight words in the third line. In the example of praise poetry, the first line has five words, the second one has four lines and the third has six lines. It could also be said that, during the production of these lines, the arrangement of words and number of words per line was not the target as it is oral production. Therefore, it can be said that accordion music lines and praise poetry lines are similar in nature as traditional oral poetry that is free from written patterns of modern poetry. It is poetry that suits its own context of Basotho society as it retains the indigenous flavour and patterns of its artists.

It can also be argued that, accordion music poetry resembles heroic poetry of the Basotho when it comes to linking of an idea or progression of an idea in lines. This is when lines are linked to form an idea that is developed across the lines. This is seen in what Damane and Sanders (1974: 44-46) call structured stanzas while in most accordion songs it is reflected through what may be referred to as repetition. The aspect of repetition will be dealt with in depth under the sub-topic of figures of speech. Damane and Sanders (ibid) point out that heroic poetry consists of statement, development and conclusion which are based on deverbative or metaphorical eulogie. Their example is taken from the praise poetry of Letsie I which reads:

*Ralerotholi, phumeli 'a matsie,  
Phumeli, a k'u phumele Baroanyana ,  
U phumele Baroa ba Chere ba khutle.  
Baroa ba matha, ba siea likokote,  
Likolopata ba li siea morao!*

Father of Lerotholi, the locusts' repeller,  
 Repeller, repel please, the wretched little Bushmen,  
 Repel Gert Bushmen, and make them return.  
 The Bushmen ran, they left their buttocks,  
 Their tortoise-like buttocks they left behind.

(Damane and Sanders 1974: 45)

The first line is referred to as a statement; this statement is developed in the second and the third lines, while the conclusion comes in the fourth and the fifth lines. These lines, according to Damane and Sanders (ibid), form a structured stanza where an idea is introduced and concluded towards the end. In the first line, there is introduction to Ralerotholi who is the repeller of the locusts; the second line gives an instruction to the repeller to do something. He is asked to repel the Bushmen who seem to be causing trouble in the region in the second and third lines. The request that he should repel the Bushmen is retained in the third line where the Bushmen are even identified as those of Gert. The idea of repelling is carried through repetition of "*U phumele*" which appears in the second and third lines. In the fourth and fifth lines, Ralerotholi seems to have heeded the advice; and as a result, the Bushmen are chased away. The last lines relate how the Bushmen flee from Ralerotholi. This is emphasized through repetition of meaning but, in different words. "*Baroa ba matha ba siea likokote, likolopata ba li siea morao.*" The two phrases mean one and the same thing in that the Bushmen left their buttocks behind as they fled the war zone.

With regard to accordion music, our example will be drawn from the song *U ka nketsang?* (What can you do to me?):

*'Nake ngoan'a theka la ka.*  
*U joetse morali'a Puleng,*  
*U joetse 'Maliekhe,*  
*He le ke le mamele mosali eo oa ka,*

My brother, my child.  
 You tell the daughter of Puleng,  
 You tell 'Maliekhe.  
 Please listen to that wife of mine.

(Tšeoale: 1998)

The first line is the statement, the second and third lines are development and the fourth line is the conclusion. The artist introduces the idea in the first line where he calls for his child, in the following second and the third lines he gives an instruction. He requests his child to plead with the daughter of Puleng whose name is 'Maliekhe. He puts emphasis on his request through repetition of "*u joetse*" in the second and third lines. There is also a semantic repetition which is carried out in "*morali'a Puleng*" and Maliekhe. 'Maliekhe is the daughter of Puleng, which means it is one and the same person. Instead of repeating "*morali'a Puleng*" or Maliekhe the artist chose to do it in different words that carry one meaning in order to play with words and display his language proficiency. The fourth line can be taken as the conclusion where the idea is brought to an end. It is a clarification to should be passed on 'Maliekhe, he instructs his child to plead with 'Maliekhe that the two of them have to be obedient and show respect to his wife. The central idea, as according to Kunene (1971:53) is completed, while according Damane (1974:43) it is the structured stanza.

Another poetic feature of accordion music language is poetic diction. Poetic diction refers to the choice of words, or language with rhetorical devices used for aesthetic and evocative qualities in addition to the apparent meaning. Khaketla (1986:VI) refers to it as the special language different from the everyday common language meant to provide a vivid picture of the feeling that is embedded in the chosen words. Artists in accordion music employ expressions and words that show their fluency and mastery of the Sesotho language; that bring forth the feeling and meaning contained in them. The language they use is captivating and exciting, and different from the day to day conversation. The aspect of choice of words will only be mentioned in passing as it will be treated at length under figures of speech in other sub-sections of this chapter. But, to clarify a little, the study will refer to the following example taken from one of the accordion songs entitled *Sekaja* (Swift running):

*Ea se nang sekaja,  
'M'ae a tele, motella ruri,  
Masiea-sieane ma-hloka-lebelo.*

The one who has lacks swift running,  
His mother should renounce,  
Competitive race, swift-runners.  
(Sehlopha sa Moketa, no date)

The artist in these lines relates how, in music, there is a strong competition among them as artists and that each and everyone tries his best to beat others. He does this by choosing particular words which are uttered during a race, especially during athletic competitions “*Ea se nang sekaja*,” which means that anybody who has no strength must forget about winning the competition. The word “*sekaja*” is used here instead of *lebelo* because it has a certain effect; it sounds stronger and more challenging than *lebelo* which simply means running. Instead of saying *Ea se nang lebelo*, he sings: “*Ea se nang sekaja*.” *Lebelo* does not convey the challenge to the listener as it is everyday language. “*Sekaja*” has the connotation of strength, endurance and determination. “*Sekaja*” sounds tougher and stronger as it gives some form of impact to the listeners and demonstrates that the artist is more fluent in his Sesotho.

In the second line “*m’ae a tele, motella ruri*,” this means that the mother should forget, for good. It is like saying that the mother of the one who lacks enough strength for the race must give up hope and never even think that her child would ever win. The artist has “*m’ae*” which is short and poetic instead of *m’e oa hae* (his mother), which is everyday language. “*M’ae*” sounds forceful and puts more pressure on the participants to try his level best while *m’e oa hae* is more of child talk especially for those who are being taught how to speak their language. The artist uses the words “*a tele*” from *ho tela*, which means to give up or to renounce, instead of *a lebale* from *ho lebala*, which means to forget in a simple way in order to express his feeling in a rhetorical manner. The predicate, which is followed by the phrase “*motella ruri*” which means to give up completely, has more impact and is more poetic as compared to *a hle a leballe sa ruri* (it is better for him to forget for good) which is a long form and more typical of everyday conversation. One observes the repetition of sound of *tel* in “*tele*” and “*motella*”, which is fascinating adding more to the melody of the song. Instead of the long version of everyday conversation of *m’e oa hae a hle a lebale, a leballe sa ruri* (his mother should

forget, forget forget for good) which would not properly fit in the flow of the song, the artist has used the short and poetic language. Therefore, it could be said that the language used sounds more rhetorical and captivating to the ear as compared to the long and boring version.

The use of the word “*masiea-sieane*,” which means stiff competition, brings to our attention the toughness of the competition in the accordion music, that is, it is survival of the fittest and dying of the ill-equipped. It is not like saying *tlholisano e matla haholo ‘minong* (a very tough competition in the music), which is like a prose type of language or language used in everyday conversation. The word “*masiea-sieane*” brings an imagery of tough competition where the runners are at logger heads, each one trying to come out first. The repetition of *siea-siea* brings to one’s mind the vision of runners; as they run, those lagging behind overtake those in front and, in turn those overtaken take the lead, and this becomes a pattern until towards the end where the winner wins by a margin. Therefore, the choice of this word does not only provide melody to the song but helps to build a vivid picture of the competition in the accordion music. One observes another repetition of restatement of ideas through the words “*masiea-sieane*” and “*mahloka-lebelo*.” The choice of the word “*mahloka-lebelo*” puts emphasis on the first word to reiterate the toughness of the competition where one has to do his best, produce quality music in order to beat other artist. In simple language, he could have said *batho ba hlokang lebelo* people who cannot run swiftly which would be void of poetic tone and like everyday conversation. Therefore, the choice of the two words “*masiea-sieane*” and “*mahloka-lebelo*”, have successfully managed to bring an image of the stiffness of the competition as compared to *tlholisano e matla ‘minong*, *batho ba hlokang mokoka ba tla hloloa*, meaning tough competition in the music and people who are not dedicated will dismally fail to achieve their objective. But, the words as they appear in the song have condensed meaning, easier and quicker to understand.

For the purpose of this study, language encompasses figurative expressions as well as figures of speech. Language conveys one’s culture, that is, it transmits norms and values in every society. Language reflects one’s way of thinking, one’s way of dealing with

other individuals; all in all, it reflects one's social life inclusive of religious, political and economic lifestyle. It is through language that, we can make both specific and general conclusions about the current status of accordion music status.

The choice of language by artists contributes towards the popularity of their music. It is through language that a society is moulded and its members are consolidated into sociable human beings. The language that is used in most accordion music displays verbal art, as it shows artistic skills of language usage in different contexts.

Having dealt with the poetic nature of the accordion music, the study will, in the following sections analyse proverbs and figures of speech used in songs from different artists.

## **4.2 PROVERBS**

As indicated earlier, Basotho accordion music is currently one form of entertainment that retains and preserves some Basotho oral traditions. It could also be said to be a verbal transmitter of dynamic oral literature, as it is a combination of praise poetry and *lifela-tsa-li-tsamaea-naha*. As part of its promotion of cultural aspects, this music is flavoured with proverbs which are the accepted language of wisdom. Sesotho proverbs as part of the Sesotho language are employed to retain the rich flavour of the language in accordion music.

The use of proverbs and their application in accordion music will be discussed in the following paragraphs. The analysis will follow this pattern:

- Identification of the proverbs;
- Definition of the proverbs;
- How and why they are used; and
- What message they convey to the public in general.

The study will, under each sub-topic, analyse two examples that will be taken as representative of others with similar features. Analysis of two examples will enable the researcher to deal with each and every example in depth.

For the purpose of this study, proverbs and idiomatic expressions will be considered as one category under proverbs. The rationale is that, as songs are different from everyday spoken language, artists have a tendency to use proverbs and idioms interchangeably in their songs. Sometimes, artists do not follow the normal pattern of using proverbs or idioms in their fixed forms and instead, prefer to utter them in a way that suits the rhythm of the song. As they adopt a kind of poetic licence they sometimes leave out some words that complete the proverb.

This is in accordance with Guma (1967:65) who aptly defines a proverb as a pithy sentence with a general bearing on life. He says that it serves to express some homely truth or moral lesson in such an appropriate manner as to make one feel that no better words could have been used to describe the particular situation. He further points out that they apply to various situations, they are an embodiment of the distilled and collective experience of the community on such situations.

Finnegan (1970:389 & 393) also defines a proverb as a rich source of imagery and succinct expression on which more elaborate forms can draw. She further says that it is a saying that is more or less in a fixed form marked by shortness, sense and salt and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it.

Finnegan goes on to quote Nketia (1958) as saying that, to the poet of today who is an artist in the use of words, the proverb is a model of compressed language. It is further indicated that the artist takes an interest in verbal techniques, that is, the selection of words and use of comparison as a method of statement. It could be said that this is characteristic of accordion music artists in Lesotho as they employ proverbs because of their technical language which is highly appreciated by most Basotho.

One could say that the use of proverbs in accordion music dispels the assumption that proverbs are sayings of the past that are no longer in use in our day to day communication. Mokitimi (1999:1) shares the same feeling that it is wrong to view idiomatic expressions and proverbial sayings as language of the past that does not have a place in modern society. She also quotes Mielder (1995) who argues that these expressions have not lost their established popularity and that they continue to be present even in a modern technological society. This is a fact if we base ourselves on Basotho accordion music where proverbs are in use even today.

During interviews, some artists such as Lehlohonolo, Keketso and Matsie indicated that proverbs are part of the Sesotho language; therefore, if their music is in Sesotho it is not surprising that their songs sometimes have proverbs. Lehlohonolo who used to sing with the late Senone is one prominent artist who is known for his employment of proverbs in his songs.

Lehlohonolo's (2005) feeling is that, as a Mosotho, he likes the Sesotho language. This is his reason for employing proverbs in most of his songs. He pointed out that, most of the time, in any group he sings with, he plays the accordion and sings chorus which, in most cases, is the repetition of proverbs, therefore, his role enables him to select, with ease, the proverbs he wants to use in each song as he hardly chants *lifela*. This was the case even when he sang with Tšeole alliance Senone, and even when he teamed up with Lampi he still sang chorus and played accordion while Lampi chanted *lifela*. Proverbs, as part of oral literature, will continue to be present in our everyday language because their usage is kept alive even in the accordion music.

Keketso (2004), likewise, gave a similar response that he likes the Sesotho language, and due to the fact that he grew up as a herd-boy and never attended school, he developed interest in the language. And when he first released an accordion music cassette, many Basotho showed appreciation of his music. This was due to the type of language he used and he felt that he had to work even harder in order to impress his audience.

Matsie (2004), unlike the other two artists, sings chorus and chants *lifela* in his group. He feels that the usage of proverbs in songs depends on the background knowledge of one's language in that he could use them anytime he feels like it.

The three artists shared similar views in that proverbs convey a condensed message which does not need to be elaborated on. And, again, they incorporate them because they want to preserve and transmit the rich flavour of the language so that the audience can learn a lot from accordion music. According to them, proverbs play a didactic role in the society; they advise and educate people on various aspects of life.

The following section has two main parts, the first one is the application of proverbs and the second one is the use of proverbs in accordion music. In each quotation from the songs, the proverbs are underlined as a way of identifying them from the rest of the text. Again, in the quotations, the few preceding lines and those that come after the proverbs appear in most quotations; this is done with the aim of retaining the context within which they have been used.

#### **4.2.1 APPLICATION OF PROVERBS**

This part deals with the application of proverbs to various situations that are based on the experiences of the artists. This treatment is in line with the characteristics of proverbs in that, they may be applied to different situations and that they are an embodiment of the distilled and collective experience of the community in such situations. Furthermore proverbs are didactic and sometimes suggest a course of action to be taken while in some situations they may be said to pass a judgement (Guma, 1967:65). Basotho artists concur with this idea because they use proverbs in order to communicate to the society, in a concise manner, a message based on practical experience.

The first song to be treated is sung by the group Tšeoale (1998), whose songs are composed by Lehlohonolo Leboli and produced by the late Thabo Senone alias Tšeoale, who was a lead-singer. The name of the song to be analyzed is *Ngoan'a lekhala* (Child of the crab) it goes:

*Ngoana o tšoana le `m'ae, o tsamaea ka lekeke joaloka `m'ae.*  
*Ngoana oa lekhala o tsamaea ka lekeke joaloka `m'ae.*  
*Ngoana oa tali o tsejoa ka mereto.*(chorus)  
*Ke bolela kamehla ke hlola ke joetsa bana bana ba ka,*  
*Ke re ngoana o motle ha a futsitse `m'ae le ntat'ae.*  
*Ngoana a sale mekhoha ea batsoali morao.*

The child is like his mother, he walks sideways like his mother.  
The child of the crab walks sideways like his mother.  
The child of the field mouse is known by the stripes. (chorus)  
I always tell these my children,  
I say that it is good if a child behaves like his mother and father.  
A child must follow in his parents' footsteps.

*“Ngoan'a lekhala o tsamaea ka lekeke joaloka `m'ae/ Ngoan'a tali o tsejoa ka mereto”*  
(The child of the crab walks sideways like his mother/The child of the field mouse is known by the stripes). The first proverb literally means that the young crab is physically like its mother even when it comes to movement, in that it goes sideways like its mother. The second one refers to the young mouse in that it is physically like its mother; even its outward appearance resembles that of its mother because it has similar stripes to those of its mother. The two proverbs, although originating from the observation of animals, are meant for human beings where they refer to the behaviour of the children who have taken after their parents. This might be in physical appearance but mostly refer to the social behaviour where children resemble their parents' mannerisms. In short, they mean like father like son.

The artist uses the two proverbs for emphasis of his message which is spelt out in the first line. One observes the repetition of the meaning from the first line in the second and the third lines. Not only that, but, there is repetition of the word child in the first three lines. This is meant to stress the idea of children taking after their parents. The first part of the first line, which carries the basic idea, is in simple and everyday language, as it says *Ngoana o tšoana le `m'ae*, which can be understood by any Mosotho. But, to add more flavour and effect to the meaning of the statement, he uses the two proverbs that have similar meaning to the opening statement, in order to make sure his message is well communicated. The use of the word “`m'ae” (his mother) is based on a belief among

Basotho that the mother knows who fathered the child and that the child biologically belongs to its mother. This is the reason why, in these proverbs, children are associated with their mothers not fathers. But, contextually, mother in these proverbs means the two parents, that is, the children might resemble one of the parents. The use of the two proverbs enables the artist to clarify his message, which supports Guma's (1967:65) assertion that proverbs are appropriate in that they express homely truth. It can therefore be assumed that the artist in this song felt that proverbs would deliver his message of good morale among the youth even better.

Senone is advising his children advising that they should be well-mannered and behave like their parents. They should also refrain from being influenced by gossip from the villagers as this causes family problems. His concern is within the family context where he is pleading for peace, stability and good relations in the family circle. Proverbs are used here as words of encouragement to his children that suggest a course of action to be taken in life. One, can therefore, say that the two proverbs in this context are used to pass a moral lesson to his children, and that the children are expected to behave properly in a socially acceptable manner. The artist has appropriately and successfully managed to employ proverbs in order to convey his message in a convincing manner.

The second song to be analysed is sung by **Poho-li-matla** (1999) and it is composed and produced by Keketso Mokhiba. It is entitled *Lebelo lea fela* (Speed fades away) and goes:

*Lebelo lea fela he thota e sale!*  
*E sale he thota e sale! (chorus)*  
*Lebelo lea fela thota e sale bahlankana ba heso!*  
*Pelo ea ka e ntse e utloa bohloko,*  
*Ho betere ke mpe ke ichoelle.*  
*Lefatšeng ke tenehile.*

Speed fades away while distance remains intact.  
It remains he it remains! (chorus)  
Speed fades away while distance remains my homeboys!  
My heart keeps on aching.  
It is better for me to die.  
I am tired of this world.

*“Lebelo lea fela thota e sale”* (Speed fades away while distance remains intact), this proverb, literally, means that speed ends but the distance remains. It originates from the action of running where participants, either in a competition or normal life situation would just run or finish a competitions while the athletic grounds will remain as they are, maybe even forever. Figuratively, it means that the world is a stage, where actors take their turns and get off the stage. That is, people come into this world, live their own lives and die while the world which is taken to be a stage remains, and waits for others to take their turns. This proverb is contextually used here by the artist to indicate that he has done his part in life, and it is time for him to leave the world in peace.

This proverb is used to convey a condensed meaning that relates to the life experience of the artist. The word *“lebelo”* in this context can be taken to refer to the speed at which we do things in life. People are always in a hurry to finish or complete projects so that they can embark on others but regardless of that they depart from this world leaving others to fulfil their roles. No matter how dedicated one is in life, the distance which is the world, will still remain. The word *“lebelo”* does not only refer to speed but also to obroad experiences of the artist, his ups and downs in real life. Instead of mentioning all the incidents that affected him during his life-time, he chose to use the proverb that will, in a nutshell, encompass them. The predicate, *“lea fela”*, relates to all the activities he was involved in which, at that moment, had passed, and gone. But, regardless of the experiences he had in life, he will still leave this world just like his predecessors, hence, the last phrase *“thota e sale.”* *“Thota”* refers to the open and wide flat space, in this case, open space usually used for athletic competitions. Contextually, it relates to the mother earth upon which we live our lives and at the end we quit, leaving it for others to perform their roles. The artist has carefully chosen the proverb that has in short summarized his feelings, the proverb that has special words that exactly describe his situation. This is in line with Nketia’s (1958) observation, as quoted by Finnegan (1970:390), that the poet of today who is an artist to him the proverb is the model of compressed language. Keketso (1999), in this song could be said to have been aware that proverbs as compressed language can convey one’s message in a powerful manner. The second line that follows,

stresses the idea that the distance remains, which means that, indeed, the world will remain while we depart.

The song is composed out of depression that seems to hit hard on the artist because of what he experienced in life. He longs for death in order to escape from this world of sorrows. When he released this album the artist had just come out of prison, and when recording this album he had problems with his voice. His message is that, even if he dies, the music industry should be taken forward by other artists. He makes us aware that the world is a stage; we play our parts and exit, while the world remains with other actors who will continue to play their roles. Therefore, we have to accept it as part of life that we shall one day leave this world and that we have to use the opportunities afforded us in a discreet manner. This is in line with Finnegan (1970: 412) when she says:

Indeed, proverbs may also be especially suitable even in everyday situations of advice or instruction where the hidden tensions that are sometimes inherent in such relationships are controlled through the use of elliptical, proverbial speech.

The lead-singer, as an artist, finds himself addressing his conflict through the use of proverbs. During and around the production of the song, the artist had tension that troubled his life to the extent that he preferred death to life.

Last, it can be said that it is through the use of such proverbs that the public learn more about the use of their language and begin to develop interest in accordion songs. That is, one can learn that proverbs can be applied to describe various situations in life.

#### **4.2.2 USE OF PROVERBS**

This part has two sub-topics, namely:

- (i) Proverbs used as titles of songs,
- (ii) Proverbs which do not follow any fixed or rigid pattern.

**a) Proverbs used as titles of songs**

Proverbs as part of language do convey meaning to listeners even when they are sung. That is why artists generally title their songs after some proverbs. Mokitimi (1999:3-11) identified some contexts and situations where Sesotho proverbs have been applied for effective communication. Some of the situations include titles of books, titles of poems and names of societies. She gives the following examples:

Titles of the books;

Mali a llelana Makara M. 1986

Kgabane ha li rwesane mekadi Maake N.P. 1991

Titles of poems

*Ea se nang sekaja, 'm'ae a tele*

*Leshano ha le na mokoka*

Mvula (1985), on the other hand, analyzed the use of proverbs on business premises in Malawi where he discussed the occurrence of proverb names on business shops as a new phenomenon which demonstrates that proverbs are fluid and flexible. He points out that proverb names are used as communicative strategies employed for purposeful reasons in specific contexts and that they share functional similarities with oral proverbs. He gives the following examples:

*Mukono wa Bilika.*

The kettle spout will never change shape to become straight.

This proverb is meant for marketing strategy.

*Ukaipa Dziwa Nyimbo.*

If you are ugly, know how to sing.

This proverb is meant to educate people.

It is not surprising that accordion artists have embarked on a style where their songs are titled with proverbs as it will be observed in the following paragraphs to show dynamism within this oral genre in the modern social system.

Coming to accordion music the first example is drawn from a group named **Selepe** (1996) and the title of the song is “*Taba li mahlong*” (Deeds are on the face/ The face is index of

the mind.) Short as it is, it summarises the idea that could be written in a long sentence or a paragraph. Instead of saying ‘*Motho ha u mo sheba mahlong u ka iketsetsa qeto ea hore na maikutlo a hae ke afe mabapi le seo le buang ka sona*’ (When you look at a person on the face, you can easily judge for yourself what his feelings towards a subject under discussion are). This is in line with Guma’s (1967:65) feeling that proverbs summarise everyday experiences. “*Taba li mahlong*” is compressed though it can be interpreted in many words.

This title, as a complete proverb in its fixed form, is based on the assumption that one’s feeling can be read from his face. That is, for instance, approval or negation on any matter in a discussion can easily be deduced from the facial expression of the person speaking. The artist decided to choose this proverb because it catches the reader’s mind in that the contents of the song will relate certain incidents which might have led to the title. A proverb makes one to ponder, to raise questions as to what the song is about. This is an exciting title that challenges customers to buy a cassette that bears such a song. The fact that the artist has selected special words for the title opens up a wider market for his music, especially because people are eager to learn more about their language.

Another example is taken from the group known as **Seeiso, Tšoana-Mantata** (2003) with its lead-singer Mosotho Chakela, the title of the song is “*Sekhukhuni*” (Crawler) from *Sekhukhuni se bonoa ke sebatlali* (The crawler is seen by the stalker/ Behind every secret there is a witness.) The word “*sekhukhuni*” refers to anybody whose deeds are done under cover or somebody inclined towards nocturnal deeds where he could not be seen. The artist has not used the long form which could be read as *Motho ea etsang liketso tsa hae moo a sa bonoeng* (Somebody who does his deeds where he is not seen by others) but opted for *sekhukhuni* which retains the implied meaning of the proverb.

Currently, the word is used as a political term that refers to a freedom fighter seen from the perspective of those who feel oppressed and are fighting for their freedom and land. On the other hand, it refers to terrorists seen from an angle of those who are attacked, those who justify their oppression on others. Bearing in mind the different connotations

of this word, one finds it to be captivating and leads one to buy the cassette with an intention of discovering its contents. The selection of the word “*sekhukhuni*” can also be attributed to knowledge of one’s language in that, it relates to sensitive issues. As such, it may advance the buying of the music. This may be so, as customers would be eager to learn more about what is contained in the details of a song.

One finds that proverbs used as titles are, sometimes, not in their complete form but only words bearing the basic meaning of the proverbs. Thus, one learns that the artists are also aware of the economical use of words. As part of the language, proverbs are used even in songs in order to add more flavour to the music.

In addition, one may have the feeling that since Basotho love proverbs, the artists have taken advantage of that to have proverbs as names of their songs to attract potential buyers. That is, we could as well say that, even though most artists are not well-read, they have the basic understanding of running their business, thus, making their products marketable. This is in line with Mvula’s (1985) view that proverb names are used as communicative strategies employed for purposeful reasons in specific contexts and that they share functional similarities with oral proverbs. This feeling applies to accordion music where the names of songs are used for communicative strategies for purposeful reasons such as marketing.

It could also be said that the artists are tapping into the sentimental and cultural values of the Basotho and thereby make their product belong to Basotho, and make the Basotho feel that the songs belong to them. Employment of proverbs in accordion music does not only enrich it with linguistic expressions but enables it to be accepted as Sesotho traditional music with which the Basotho can identify as their music. Language is said to be the conveyor of cultural aspects of any society, accordion music is no exception as it carries along cultural aspects of the Basotho making it the Sesotho traditional music.

## b) Proverbs with no fixed or rigid pattern

According to Guma (1967:65), proverbs have a fixed and rigid form to which they adhere at all times. But, there are cases, in some of the songs, where they do not follow the normal structure as will be evidenced in examples below. Artists use them to suit their rhythm without following their fixed and rigid forms.

Tšeole (1999), in his song, *Mokhoka-khoale* says: “*Lefu ha se letho moshanyana oeso, ke ngoetsi ea malapa e ntse e tla, le lapeng la likhorane e kena feela*” (Death is nothing my homeboy, it is a daughter-in-law of every homestead, and it is approaching, even in wealthy families it just intrudes). The fixed form of the proverb is *Lefu ke ngoetsi ea malapa 'ohle* (Death is the daughter-in-law of every homestead). In this proverb Tšeole has inserted “*ha se letho moshanyana oeso*” after “*lefu*” and “*e ntse e tla le lapeng la likhorane e kena feela*” after, “*ke ngoetsi ea malapa.*” In its fixed form, the figurative meaning of the proverb is that, death prevails in each and every homestead, that is, nobody can escape death as we shall all die. This is stressed by the word *'ohle* that means every family, in each and every family death will visit. The proverb is used here to convey the message in a direct manner in few words. He could have used the everyday language and said: *Lefu ke ntho e nyane, ha le tšose uena moshanyana oeso, lefu ke motho e mong e mong le e mong, etsoe motho e mong le e mong o tla shoa ho sa tsoellehe hore na ke morui kapa ke mofutsana.* (Death is nothing, it is not a threat my homeboy, death is meant for each and every person regardless of whether he is rich or poor). This long form is not impressive to the ear, and lacks the melody that is contained in the quoted line.

The word “*ngoetsi*” which means a daughter-in-law is likened to death because marriage is a common practice, and it is through marriage that children are brought forth to this world. It is a common practice that most families have daughter-in-laws who help to produce more of the young generation. But, regardless of that, death takes them away while daughter-in-laws bring them into this world. Death attacks the very same unit that brings forth life on earth, hence, it is said death is the daughter-in-law of every

homestead. In this way, the artist manages to comfort his friend that he should face death as it is inescapable.

We observe the alteration of the proverb through the insertion of the words “*ha se letho moshanayana oeso*” (it is nothing my homeboy). These words indicate that they are specifically meant for the friend or for the one who is being comforted, not anybody else. Death is belittled in order to show that it is common and is not a threat as it has been ages since people have been dying and will keep on dying. In this song, the proverb has been used to suit the specific context of the artist. Other words that have been inserted are “*le lapeng la likhorane e kena feela*” (even in the wealthy families it just intrudes). These words are inserted here as a form of emphasis on the idea that death visits every family and it does not choose whether somebody is wealthy or poor. Therefore, his friend should take courage that should he die, he has to accept it as his fate and that it was time for him to leave this world.

Although, Tšeole has put his own words within the proverb, the meaning has not changed because he has put them in such a manner that the message is even clearer and direct. It shows that he masters his first language and that he can put in any words to give his message the freshness he wants. He successfully employed the proverb to communicate his message of comforting his friend even if the proverb is not in its fixed form.

**Seeiso Tšoana-Mantata** (no date) in its song *Khethang*, the proverb “*Lebele ha le ke be le ikise nonyaneng.*” (The corn never goes to the bird). In its traditional form it is read *Nonyana e ikisa lebeleng* (The bird gathers the corn). In short, it means that the one who has a problem is the one who must go and seek help. The artist has not used the simple language which could have been in this form *Motho ea nang le mathata ke eena ea lokelang ho ea batla thuso ho motho ea ka mo thusang.* (Somebody who has got a problem is the one who has to go to the person who can help him). This simple statement does not have the taste that is contained in *Lebele ha le ke be le ikise nonyaneng.* It lacks the figurative connotation that is exciting to the listener.

Although this proverb has been used in a negative form a negative angle, the meaning that is embedded has not been affected. It is clear that the word “*nonyana*,” in this context, does not refer to the bird but to the artist who is after Khethang, and wants; to win her love. The artist, as the one who needs a lover, must approach Khethang, not for her to chase the proposer. “*Lebele*” refers to the person who is proposed to, in this case, Khethang. The meaning is well contextualised to suit the feelings of the artist. It could, therefore, be said that, by reversing the normal form of the proverb, the artist wanted to display his knowledge of proverbs by playing with words in an unusual manner, while at the same time retaining the basic meaning. His proficiency in the Sesotho language is observed as he makes changes to Sesotho proverbs to communicate whichever message.

In conclusion, this section has illustrated, with examples, the use of proverbs in accordion music. We may say that accordion music contributes to the preservation of oral literature, especially proverbs, which are used in the songs. It, therefore, goes without saying that the use of proverbs is still in place. The artists involved in this music could rightly be referred to as teachers of oral literature in that they apply and use proverbs contextually. It could also be said that artists help the young generation to sustain proper use and application of proverbs in their day to day conversation.

### **4.3 FIGURES OF SPEECH**

Abrams (1999: 96) views figurative language as a conspicuous departure from what users of a language uphold as the meaning of words, or else from the standard order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect. He further points out that, figures of speech are sometimes described as primarily poetic, but, they are integral to the functioning of language and indispensable to all modes of discourse.

Language techniques have various functions either in a written or spoken form. They arouse the reader or hearer’s interest, make one to think deeply, create vivid or graphic mental images, emphasise certain aspects, entertain or amuse the reader, criticise or satirise or evoke certain feelings. ([www.jochen-lueders.de/abitur](http://www.jochen-lueders.de/abitur).) The employment of these features in accordion songs adds more delight to them.

The usage of these features also displays one's proficiency in language, Sesotho, in our case. That is, one is able to play with words in an acceptable manner, at the right time and in the correct manner. This adds more to one's dignity as a Mosotho and shows that one's pride is reflected in the skilful manner of using one's language. This knowledge identifies one as a real Mosotho, a role model that other Basotho can associate with and emulate. Listening to the figurative language in songs also promotes one's language and culture. It gives the impression that, Sesotho, as a language, will not die, as it is not being watered down even in songs, which is the reason why Basotho identify themselves with the accordion music as it promotes their language, among other worthy attributes.

One could say that Basotho accordion music is not only a tuneful sound for entertainment but, oral literature of its kind which needs the attention of Sesotho speakers. It is a language tank which spills over to quench our thirst, especially youths who are dying of thirst for rich Sesotho language. This music preserves and retains the dying flavour of Sesotho language, especially among the youths, who, usually, seem to prefer English to Sesotho.

Although there are many figures of speech, the study has picked only seven as they seem to be common in most songs, they are; apostrophe, euphemism, hyperbole, imagery, metaphor, repetition and simile. The study will analyse two examples under each one of them which will be taken as representative as it enables the researcher to treat each one of them in depth. The analysis will follow this pattern:

- Identification of the figures of speech;
- Definition of figures of speech;
- How and why they are used;
- What message they convey to the public in general; and
- What lessons are learned from the language based on its contextual use.

#### **4.3.1 APOSTROPHE**

Apostrophe is defined as a direct and explicit address, either to an absent person or to an abstract or nonhuman entity. Apostrophe implies personification of the non-human object

that is addressed (Abrams 1971: 271). Analyses will be done on three accordion music songs.

There are instances in accordion songs where the artists employ apostrophe in order to convey their messages. This happens when addressing somebody who is absent as though he is present, or a nonhuman entity as though it is a human being and can respond. This figure of speech enables one to freely communicate his message as he/she wishes. As artists, this is their chance to use their poetic license, where they may criticise or say whatever they like even to those persons that, under normal circumstances, they could not face. In some cases, it gives them an opportunity to express their feelings towards burning issues in their lives. The first example is taken from a song entitled *Kea u hlala* (I terminate our love affair):

*Ha ke sa u rata,  
U ratana le bashanyana ba bangata,  
Maobane mona ba batlile ba ntematsa,  
Ke u hlalla hona mona lichabeng,  
Uena ngoananyana tooe.  
U khutlise lifoto tsa ka.*

I do not love you any more,  
You are in love with many lads,  
This very yesterday they nearly injured me,  
I am terminating our love ties right here in public,  
You girl!  
Bring back my photos.

(Matela: 2003)

Matela, in this song, is complaining about his girlfriend who seems to be in love with many boy-friends. It looks as if he has had enough and could no longer bear it, especially because he was nearly beaten up by these boyfriends. This is so because, normally, the accordion artists compose their songs based on their personal experiences.

Although he is singing, it seems as though he is directly speaking to his girlfriend who is next to him as he is singing. The use of the second person concord 'u' in the first, second, fourth and fifth line denotes that he is talking to her face to face although she is not there.

Apostrophe is further carried on in the fourth line when he says that he is terminating the affair right there in the presence of the public. The use of “*hlalla*” instead of “*arohana*” which means of separation proves the seriousness of the artist and that he is adamant to take the decision at that moment. It looks like the affair comes to an end in the presence of many people and Matela wants the public to know that, as from that day, their affair is no longer in existence.

In the fifth line, the use of “*uena*” the second person, also denotes direct confrontation with the girlfriend. This pronoun is followed by “*ngoananyana tooe*” that proves his anger. The use of the diminutive “*nyana*” shows that the girl is belittled because she is no longer loved. This is emphasized by the word “*tooe*” which is another form of direct confrontation that has derogatory connotation to the person spoken to. “*Tooe*” does not only show anger but also disrespect to the person spoken to. Among Basotho, this word is tantamount to an insult that may result in physical fighting. Therefore, its use reflects deep annoyance in the artist.

The use of the apostrophe, in this case, has helped the artist to express his feelings without any hindrance. It has helped him to share with the public the secret that has been bothering him for some time. Now that he has openly told us of his problem, he may feel somehow spiritually healed.

We may also think that even if Matela was afraid of telling his girlfriend face to face that he no longer loved her, he boldly conveys this message through the use of apostrophe because she is not there to protest. The artist pretends to be addressing the audience while, in actual fact, he is indirectly speaking to his girlfriend. The audience is in a position to learn that there are sour relations between the artist and his girl-friend through the apostrophe that is used. The song gives him the chance to overcome and deal with some of the problems he could not handle under normal circumstances. The fact that he has said what he had wanted to say for a long time leaves him with nothing but a sigh of relief. Therefore, the use of an apostrophe, in some cases, is meant to heal through expressing one’s feelings or off-loading oneself of unbearable burdens.

Another song is composed by Mosiea (2001). This song is a plea to the representative of Lesotho Workers' Party, Billy Macaefa, who is a Member of the Lesotho Parliament, to remember that he represents workers and must try to solve the basic needs of the workers when in Parliament. The song goes:

*Ba itse ke u joetse joale u ba sebeletse,  
U tlohele ho lula mona paramenteng ebe joale ha u  
sebetse,  
U lutse ua ba lebala,  
Jonna! Macaefa he molisanyana Nyaka-nyaka  
U ba hopole ee! U ba hopole.*

They have instructed me to plead with you that you should work for them,  
You should refrain from idling in the parliament doing nothing,  
Idling and forgetting them,  
Joo! Macaefa he me Nyaka-nyaka,  
Remember them ee! Remember them.

Mosia, who is the lead-singer, uses apostrophe as though he is speaking directly, face to face with Macaefa and that he is listening, and ready to respond. The first line uses the “u” of the second person; this is also the case with the second, third, and the fifth lines. In the first line, he points out that he has been asked by the workers to pass on the message that Macaefa, as a workers’ representative should try to serve the interests of the workers. “U” is repeated in the first line in “*ke u joetse joale u ba sebeletse*” in order to stress the fact that he is at that moment, as suggested by the word “joale”, is speaking directly to Billy not anybody else. In the second line, there is a warning that he should not just relax while in the Parliament but do his best for the betterment of workers’ conditions of service. We also find that “u” appears in the second line “*u tlohele...u sebetse.*” It appears in a contrasting version where he is asked to refrain from idling but to work, this done in order to make sure that he understands his responsibility and not forget it at all. This pattern of repeating “u” in a predicate form is carried over to the third line and the fifth line “*u ba hopole*” which reiterates the idea that Billy must remember to execute his duties as expected.

There is a common feeling among the Basotho that politicians become active during the elections where they make empty promises but, once in Parliament, they tend to forget them. Theirs is to relax for the five years, and when the term comes to an end, they seek re-election by making other empty promises. Aware of this common behaviour, the Mosiea group warns Macaefa in time and reminds him of his commitment and service to the workers' group. The reminder is carried forward in the third to the fifth line. According to Basotho, '*Motho ke motho ka batho/Morena ke morena a sechaba*' (A person is a person by people/ A chief is a chief by the people.) With this knowledge in mind, Mosiea feels that there is need to express his feelings towards the LWP leader in order to remind him of his responsibility to the people who voted him into the parliament.

The use of apostrophe, in this song, enables the group to express its views without fear or any form of victimization from the Workers Party leader. Speaking to the leader through the song enables them to get away with whatever embarrassment they could have brought to the leader. The use of apostrophe through the song helps them to avoid direct personal and physical confrontation with this leader while, on the other hand, the message has been conveyed to him the way they had wanted to deliver it. One could also say that this technique enables complainants to have a one way form of communication where the respondent has no chance of defending himself in the accusations leveled against him. Even if he would have liked to respond he has no chance unless he also sings another song as a response or at least to comment when listening to the song even though those who sing it may not be there to listen to him. We are also aware that artists, being the ears and the eyes of the public, use some techniques in their songs to challenge and conscientize people about their rights, and to get people to fulfill their promises.

It could, therefore, be said that, apostrophe as a figure of speech, is employed by accordion music artists to flavour their music in order to communicate their message in a direct manner to the target group.

#### 4.3.2 EUPHEMISM

Another figure of speech that seems common in accordion music is euphemism. Abrams (1971:83) describes euphemism as an inoffensive expression used in place of a blunt one that is felt to be disagreeable or embarrassing.

Moleleki (1993:178) says that something that hurts is put in light words, is put in finer words that lessen the strength it had so that it is easily accommodated by the public.

Basotho are known for being euphemistic when teaching their children to speak Sesotho and when welcoming their daughters-in-law. That is, euphemism, among Basotho, is part of the traditional code of respect which is passed from one generation to another. Concerning children, they are exposed to euphemistic language at a young age so that, when they become adults, they are already encultured to the custom of self-respect and social respect. For instance, parents use the word *kaka* (excrete) instead of *nyela* (excrete), *sesa* (urinate) instead of *rota* (urinate). The first words in the examples given above are said to be polite and show some form of respect while the use of the second ones is said to be impolite, rude and to show lack of respect.

Euphemism among Basotho extends to the *hlonepha* custom which some refer to as avoidance of certain words, especially by daughters-in-law. This custom is also practiced by Xhosa speaking people where it is called *hlonipha* custom. The two nations seem to have similar practices on this custom as they both focus on the daughters-in-law in relation to their paternal relatives. Finlayson (1982:38) points out that among the Xhosas it covers fathers-in-law and their brothers, mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law and their husbands. She goes further to indicate that it is not only restricted to language but to attire, as one has to wear a headdress in the presence of the family. It is also a similar case, among the Basotho, except that it affects the mothers-in-law and their sisters.

Among the Basotho, head-dressing is practiced by daughters-in-laws and mothers-in-laws, especially when they are to meet sons-in-laws and their families. Kunene (1958:159) further indicates that a daughter-in-law should keep her body covered, not suckle her baby, not remain in a room alone, or sit next to her father-in-law. *Hlonepha* custom has an influential role to play in both languages as it brings in new words, or leads to the coinage of words in order to replace the existing ones for the convenience of the daughters-in-law. For example, in Xhosa daughters-in-law have to avoid any syllable that is close to the name of one's in-laws. An example as given by Finlayson (1982: 43) is that, if the name of the father is Saki, instead of saying "*isikolo sam*" she will have to say "*isilerisho tyam*."

In Sesotho, daughters-in-law are expected to address their fathers-in-law with a different name from that of the father-in-law. If his name is *Letsatsi* (sun), he could be called *Lebatama* (something hot), or if he is *Serame* (coldness) should be replaced by *Mohatsela* (coldness). Euphemism is not restricted to *hlonepha* custom but extends to the polite use of language that is acceptable and shows respect in the public domain. That is why speakers have to be very sensitive in public appearance, where they are expected to be selective in their choice of words and address their audience in an acceptable manner. Euphemism is used by some accordion artists as one way of retaining the social respect that artists have towards their clients, as will be shown below.

Accordion artists, like the rest of the Basotho, also employ euphemism in their songs with an intention to have their message suitable for public consumption across all ages. Two songs will be dealt with as examples to show how accordion artists employ it in their music. One such example is taken from '**M'e oa Maphutseng Two** (2005) in her song *U n'u robetse kae?* (Where did you sleep?):

*U n'u robetse kae ntat'a bana?*  
*U n'u robetse kae ka lijo tsa ka?*  
*Utloa bashanyana ha ba e ja khomo bosiu bohle!*  
*Ba e qeta hle!*  
*Utloa bashanyana ha ba e ja khomo bosiu bohle!*  
*Ba e qeta hle!*

Where did you sleep the father of my children?  
Where did you sleep with my food?  
Listen therefore when boys eat the cow the whole night!  
They finish it!  
Listen therefore when boys eat the cow the whole night!  
They finish it!

'Marapelang employs sexual euphemism in the above quotation that cuts across all ages. The husband seems to have slept out in one of his concubines' places and did not return in time, and to express her anger, the wife is asking him where he had slept. It looks like the wife knew where he had gone, and in retaliation, the wife opened the door for the boys to do what the husband ought to have done that night in his house.

The wife is accusing the husband that he slept out to give sexual satisfaction to the concubine while she remained starving. The wife asks the husband "*U n'u robetse kae ka lijo tsa ka?*" which means where had he slept with her food? "*Lijo*", in this case, refers to the male sexual organs, especially the penis which has to be inserted into a woman for sexual intercourse. She avoids saying *U n'u robetse kae ka kooma ea ka?* (Where did you sleep with my penis?). She avoids it because the word *kooma* is not for public use. She could refer to it as *koae*, but even this one is still not acceptable, that is why she calls it food which is more acceptable and cannot be questioned as it has hidden deeper meaning.

The wife finds herself with no option but to snatch the boys to calm her sexual appetite. To show her satisfaction, this idea is repeated in lines five and six. She says "*utloa bashanyana ha ba e ja khomo bosiu bohle.*" (Listen the boys have been eating the cow the whole night.) "*Ja*" refers to the action of sexual intercourse, while "*khomo*" is the wife. That is the boys have been sexually satisfying her appetite as she slept with them the whole night. In an improper language she could have said *ua utloa he ke arolelane likobo le bashanyana bosiu kaofela*. This statement would not be welcomed by the public as it sounds immoral and disrespectful. She goes further to indicate that "*ba e qeta hle,*" that the boys finished the cow. "*Qeta*" may be taken to refer to the total satisfaction she

had from the boys. She prefers to use “*qeta*” which has a hidden meaning instead of saying *ba nkhotsofatsa hona hoo* which sounds impolite to the public.

One might say that the artist’s plea is that husbands and wives have to fulfill their marriage obligations as they have vowed to do so. According to Corinthians (I, 7:3-5), husbands have no direct control over their bodies, and it is the same even with wives, only wives have control over their husbands’ bodies just as it is the case with husbands over their wives’ bodies. It is her right to claim what belongs to her any time she feels she demands it in order to quench her lust. ‘Marapelang touches on the most sensitive issue of sexual desire, because she knows that it is the core of the marriage. She presents it through the angry wife who openly without fear tells her husband that he is cheating on her; and therefore, she has no alternative but to cheat him also.

While other people may blame ‘Marapelang in that, two wrongs hardly make a right, others may say that is a good lesson, cheating should be two way, as it will pull the husband to return to his family. Others may also support ‘Marapelang’s reaction in that this is not the world of men alone but, even women. One assumes that only adults would understand the message embedded in the song while children would appreciate the surface meaning that is communicated. ‘Marapelang has managed to present her euphemism in an appropriate manner.

Another example is drawn from the collection of ‘Motseng le Manoko in their album ‘**Bo-mme ba Mehahlaula** (no date), in their song *Bapala* (Play):

*Ahe bapala!*  
*Bapala hle!*  
*U etsise Tjobolo.*  
*U etsise monn’a ka,*  
*U bapale har’a khitla,*  
*Har’a bosiu.*

Hi! Play!  
Please play!  
Imitate Tjobolo!

Imitate my husband!  
Play in the middle of the night,  
In the middle of the night.

'Motseng and Manoko also address sexual euphemism. In this song, one man who is a concubine is asked by his female lover to perform the sexual game in a manner that her husband does.

The word "*bapala*" is used here to mean to have sexual intercourse, that is, let us play sex and 'imitate Tjobolo,' who is the husband. When using the impolite language she could have said: *nthobale* instead of "*bapala*." *Nthobale* plainly means play sex with me, its use may give the public an impression that the artist is so immoral that she goes to the extent of publicly using such a language. These words give one the feeling that the two lovers were in a relaxed mood, and the husband was not around. This might be so because the second line even says: "*bapala hle!*" That is, the male lover is humbly requested to play sex tactfully in order to satisfy his partner. The word play in Sesotho has no immoral effect; even those who are listening to the song may take it to mean the literal playing, or dancing the night away. It needs a thorough understanding and interpretation of the situation for one to grasp the underlying meaning of the words.

In the third line, this paramour is asked to play sex like Tjobolo the husband especially in the heart of the night. "*U etsise Tjobolo,*" he is asked to imitate Tjobolo to apply all the tactics that her husband uses when in bed. Tjobolo seems to be the husband of the female which is explained quite well in the fourth line when it is said "*U etsise monn'a ka*". The artist has avoided saying *nthobale joaloka monna oa ka* instead she has cut it short by saying: "*u etsise*" which is more acceptable to everybody. The fact that the request is repeated in the fourth line gives us an impression that the husband of the female lover performs sex in an extraordinary manner, in that he totally satisfies his wife. That is, he sexually satisfies her to an extent that even when she is with her lover she still remembers him. The word "*etsise*" also makes us believe that, maybe the male partner performs below standard and fails to satisfy his lover. This being the situation, the female partner feels that she cannot continue having sex with a man who does not satisfy her and, as a

result, she boldly tells him how to perform satisfactorily. This makes us to believe that the female lover might be assisting the man by teaching him some styles practiced by her husband in order to satisfy her.

The last two lines put emphasis on the idea that is picked up in the first four lines although they add “*har’a khitla*” and “*har’a bosiu*” which refers to time, in the middle of the night. The mentioning of time “*har’a khitla*” and “*har’a bosiu*” in the fifth and six lines makes us to believe that they repeatedly had sex throughout the night. It seems as though it was an enjoyable exercise for them in that they sacrificed their sleep for that particular night.

These female artists seem to be breaking the ice as they publicly sing about adultery while it is common for men to publicly speak about it. Among Basotho, vulgar language, even insults, are publicly uttered by males, it is shocking and embarrassing for females to behave like that in public. But, these women do it in style, through euphemism. One might say these artists are calling the females to openly express their feelings regarding romance.

These artists seem to have employed euphemism appropriately to expose the lives of the adulterers because, as one listens to the songs, it is difficult to detect the deeper meaning of the euphemism from the onset. The use of euphemism makes their music socially acceptable as it addresses sensitive issues like extra-marital affairs in a more polite manner and hence, their performance is open to the public domain. It could be said that euphemism still holds even in accordion music where artists have changed their language to suit all levels in life. This is one of the features that changed the Basotho’s attitude towards the accordion music as it employs polite language worth listening to even in official functions.

### **4.3.3 HYPERBOLE**

Accordion music artists employ hyperbole in their songs for different reasons as will be shown in the paragraphs below. When defining hyperbole, Abrams (1971:120) says that

it is a bold overstatement, or the extravagant exaggeration of fact or that of possibility. He further points out that it may be used for serious ironic or comic effect. Through it the speaker communicates his or her message by using words that would be too colourful for the situation that is being described. Sometimes, it may mislead unaware listeners to an extent that they miss the point that is being raised.

Dowling's *Literature Terms* defines hyperbole as exaggeration that puts a certain picture in the reader's mind. It can be used for various reasons such as the following:

- ❖ For emphasis or humorous effect where there is an overstating of a point.
- ❖ It can be used in descriptions where there is over-emphasis on some of the qualities of a person or a thing.
- ❖ It can be used to describe personal emotions by overstating them.
- ❖ It can put a point in light-hearted manner.
- ❖ It can also be used to poke fun at someone or something.

(<http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/Terms/hyperbole.html>)

One would say it is also typical of the Basotho to employ hyperbole in their day to day conversation and even in their poetry. They use it with the intention to emphasize certain points in their discussion or to build vivid pictures of what is being described. For instance, in praise-poetry for chiefs, poets would describe their physical appearance in such a manner that one would build an image of a perfect and most handsome being ever seen on this world when trying to show how good-looking the chief is. Sometimes, when describing the chief's fierceness, the poet would also exaggerate his bravery by overstating incidents that prove that he is a fearsome being. An example is that of Letsie II who is described as:

*'Mamariele oa Lijabatho,  
Seloana se maepho sa 'ma-ma-tšajoa ke batho,  
Motho a tšajoa ke batho kaofela,  
A tšajoa ke bana le bo-'m'a bona.*

The hairy wild beast of the Man-Eaters,  
The long-haired monster which is feared by the people,

Someone who was feared by all the people,  
He was feared by the children and their mothers.  
(Mangoela, 1988: 173)

Letsie II is portrayed in these lines as a fearsome being. The description of his physical appearance sent a message of fear to the public and his opponents. His enemies would not dare cross his path lest they find themselves in trouble. These lines also imply that when it comes to fighting, Letsie II is a skilled warrior who easily overcomes his enemies and wipes them at the blink of the eye. Although in reality this may not have been the case, the weight carried in these words suggest that he is a ferocious warrior.

It is also the case even in ordinary conversation that people flavour their speeches with hyperbole in order to drive home their points. It is common among the Basotho to say: *Koloi e ne e sa mathe e ne e fofa*. (The car was not speeding but flying). When trying to describe the top speed at which the car was driven, it is said that it was flying. The exaggeration is made here to show that car was over-speeding.

Some artists employ hyperbole in their songs in order to convey the messages to the public in a captivating manner. In the following paragraphs, examples to be analysed will be taken from four songs from four different groups.

The first example of hyperbole that overstates in a light-hearted manner comes from the group called Raboshabane (1995). In its song, *Lesholu* (Thief), the artist describes the beauty of his wife, and gives a vivid picture of her physical appearance. He says:

*Mosali oa ka o motle oa mpheta,  
Melomo liphara,  
Nko ekare nalete ea mochini,  
Ke seponono se likoti marameng,  
Ha a tšeha leshome lea oa.*

My wife is more beautiful than me,  
With big lips,  
Her nose is like the needle of a sewing machine,  
She is a good-looking one with dimpled cheeks.  
When she laughs ten shillings fall off.

The artist describes his wife as the most beautiful one. In order to draw us near to her beauty he treats each facial feature on its own, her lips, nose, cheeks and her smile. The description gives us the general picture of the total beauty of the woman. In the fifth verse we find hyperbole that is used to overstate the beauty of this lady. It is said that when she laughs money drops off. The two words “*tšeha*” and “*leshome*” that is laugh and money are brought together to indicate the importance of her beauty.

“*Tšeha*” in this context may be taken to imply happiness, not just a simple and common happiness but total happiness that one gets, especially the husband when his wife laughs. Her laughter contributes a lot to her beauty, it is part of her beauty, not only that but her laughter brings pleasure, satisfaction and total happiness to her husband. This gives us an impression that her husband enjoys her laughter as it brings comfort to his mind.

He goes on to say that as she laughs “*leshome lea oa*,” that is, money drops down. “*Leshome*” refers to ten shillings that makes one rand. This is a reference to those years in the past when ten shillings had value, and could buy a lot. In the sixties, one could buy four cocks for ten shillings, each at a cost of two shillings and five pence. But, at present, one rand can hardly buy one any worthy good as it has lost value. Truly speaking, no money drops off from her laughter but, the pleasure that he gets is likened to money. Money is normally taken to be a solution to most problems, socially, economically even politically. We could say that her laughter is like a solution to social problems of the husband, that even if he is socially demoralized, he gains his strength physically and spiritually at the glance of his laughing wife. It may happen that, even if he is financially broke, he feels uplifted once he sees his wife’s lovely smile.

The artist has exaggerated his wife’s beauty in order to win the hearts of the listeners and to make them feel that his wife is the most beautiful woman on earth. Her laughter brings money which is a solution to most basic problems. The description he has given has aroused love and admiration of his wife. It makes listeners to long to see this beautiful human being, who is, not only just beautiful but, the source of happiness to her husband.

One also observes the adopted description of beauty among modern Basotho nationals, the use of money that falls off and comparison of the nose of his wife to that of a needle of a machine display change and modernity in the lifestyle of the Basotho. Money is one of the most valuable things in the world, because it is core to people's life as compared to animals which in the past were one of the Basotho's assets that served his entire needs. It could also be said that adaptation to new scenarios poses a challenge to the young generation. Thus oral literature is dynamic, as it changes with times to suit societal needs.

With the changing society from the traditional to modern world Basotho have coined expressions that they felt were relevant to their times. The artist employs the type of language that is spoken and acceptable among the Basotho nowadays. That is, he brings along his social background knowledge of the Sesotho norms and values that enable him to express himself in a manner acceptable to Basotho. The fact that laughter and money are merged in her beauty implies the complete happiness that the present Mosotho man feels, because money is taken to be a solution to almost every problem especially when it is flavoured with happiness. Therefore, we could say the use of extravagant exaggeration in the song has been successful as it evokes his love to this particular paragon.

The last song is taken from the group of Motsamai le Chakela (2005) in their song, *Seboshoa*, (Prisoner). The type of hyperbole here can be said to be for emphasis or humorous effect where there is an overstating of a point and also to poke fun at someone or something. The name of the song gives one an impression that the accordion artists are reserve tanks of Sesotho terminology as the word *seboshoa* is rarely used in currently spoken Sesotho language. The word sounds archaic though commonly used by the Tswana of North West Province in the Republic of South Africa. One recalls when, in 1991, the then Chairman of the Military Council, Major General Lekhanya, referred to Colonel Sekhobe Letsie as *seboshoa* over Radio Lesotho. The word became the talk of the day as people kept on asking one another its meaning, and how come that the Major General used it. Most people marveled and felt that the Major General was one of those people whose knowledge of Sesotho vocabulary was regarded as outstanding.

The song relates the story of how the artist and his colleagues were hunted by the police for mishandling one of their friends. Police searched for them everywhere and some were apprehended, except the lead-singer who says:

*Mahlatsipa a tšoarora kaofela,  
'Na mapolesa a ne a mpatla le ka tlas 'a mesamo,  
Ba mpatla ka tlas 'a libethe,  
Ba mpatla le ka har 'a lithuoana.*

All the accomplices were apprehended,  
Me, the police were searching for me even under the pillows,  
They were looking for me under the beds,  
They were looking for me even in the chamber pots.

One observes a lot of humorous hyperbole in the last three lines quoted above. That is, one could say that the type of hyperbole that Mosotho Chakela has employed here has ironic or comic effect and pokes fun at the police.

Although one understands that the police were desperately looking for him, one ends up with laughter when reading line two that they were searching for him even under the pillows. “*'Na mapolesa a ne a mpatla le ka tlas 'a mesamo.* (Me, the police were searching for me even under the pillows.) Normally, pillows are put at one end on top of the bed; nobody can hide under pillows in such a situation let alone, a grown human being. What comes into one’s mind is the situation where police are seen lifting up pillows, throwing them around roughly while trying in vain to find the artist. This becomes mockery as their search does not bring about the expected results.

The search continues from line two to line four through the repetition of the word “*mpatla*” (search) that appears in lines two, three and four. The word “*mpatla*” in the three lines stresses the fact of the policemen’s determination in their search. In line three, the search is carried under the bed which is a possible hiding place, not under the pillow as line two. In short, line three gives us the feeling that police made a thorough search of the bedroom.

In line four, there is another exaggeration where he is looked for even in the chamber pot. “*Ba mpatla le ka har’a lithuoana.*” (They were looking for me even under the chamber pots) “*Thuoana,*” which is a chamber pot, is normally used for waste, like urine, it may be the one that looks like big bowl or a small bucket that some people place either under the bed or next to it at night to dispose of waste. Judging from its size, no person can hide in it, no matter whether it is a big bowl or a bucket. That is no grown person nor even a baby can fit in the chamber pot unless sliced. But Chakela retains the humourous as he refers to it as a hiding place where the police searched for him. This action shows clearly the desperate position in which the police were in their search. But, some people may say that, it shows that police were doing a thorough job, leaving no stone unturned in their search.

The hyperbole used here shows that this artist is a humorous character who wants his audience to be entertained by his music. The fact that he makes this serious search fun shows that he did not take the policemen’s reaction seriously. It could also be said that he mocks the policemen who were looking for him because they searched even at awkward places. He pokes fun at them because they were confused by his elusiveness in that they even looked for him in places where he could not hide. He is pitching his wits against theirs, and invites the audience to see that he is superior and can make a fool of them. He invites the audience to laugh at the policemen. One might say that they lost direction of their search; as a result, they became the laughing stock of those who watched them during the search.

It might also be said that the artist wants to belittle the policemen, not only that but, effeminates them in that they behaved like women who are, in most cases, associated with chamber pots. It is a common attitude among Basotho to want to disgrace a man by likening him to a woman, to show that he is worthless. The fact that they searched inside the house, women’s domain depicts their being worthless, if they were brave they could have gone to the veld to search for him. One observes the lead-singer still retains the mentality that Basotho men have and retains it even in the songs. One could say that

Mosotho Chakela has managed, through hyperbole, to show us that he was wanted high and low by the policemen although it was a futile exercise. On the other hand, it conveys to us the calibre of police that tracked him down; that they were incapacitated as they lacked professional skills to carry out their duty.

#### **4.3.4 IMAGERY**

Imagery is one of the figures of speech that poets employ in order to give a vivid description of objects or events. Basotho use imagery in various contexts such as in praise poems, initiates' praise, animal poetry, *lifela* and even in day to day conversation. It is not surprising that the accordion artists use this technique in their songs.

Imagery refers to words that trigger your imagination to recall and recombine images-memories or mental pictures of sights, sounds, tastes, smells, sensations of touch and motions. The process is active, and even vigorous, for when particular words or descriptions produce images, you are applying your own experiences with life and language to your understanding the works you are reading. In fact you are re-creating the work in your own way through the controlled stimulation produced by the authors' words. Imagery is a channel to your active imagination and along this channel, writers, poets, dramatists...bring their works directly into your consciousness.

(Roberts, 1992: 108)

Imagery is defined by Abrams (1971:121) as mental pictures made from words. He points out that it is used to signify all other objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem whether by literal description or in the vehicles of its similes and metaphors. He goes further to indicate that it includes visual, auditory, tactile, thermal, olfactory, gustatory and kinaesthetic qualities. He says that imagery is also used to refer to specific descriptions of visible objects and scenes especially if they are vivid and particularized.

Wellek & Warren (1978:186) refer to imagery as mental reproduction, a memory of a past sensational or perceptual experience. Okpewho (1992:98) says that imagery deals with the choice of words which are employed to paint mental pictures that appeal to our

feelings and our understanding. These mental pictures are images which may describe a scene or event that may deeply touch people with admiration or shock

Based on the above definitions, one may say that imagery helps to build a vivid picture of anything described. As such, it enables listeners and audience to easily comprehend events or objects that have been referred to. It also makes them to be emotionally involved, and to be closer to the situation under discussion so that they are physically and spiritually affected. The use of imagery in the accordion songs displays the skill that artists have in the Sesotho language. The communicative skill that one has, which is exhibited in his songs, earns him a good reputation among his audience. Though socially, one gets respected and economically expands his market through sale of cassettes.

We have many artists that display much talent in the use of imagery in their songs; one such artist is Famole. This is observed in his song *Ea khaola ea ea*. The song describes the fluency of the artist and how as an influential person, he manages to attract many people; not only that, but both young and old attentively listen to him as he speaks or sings. The song has these words:

*Le utloa le ntse le re khotla ha le tlale,  
'Na ha ke le teng lea tlala.  
U tla bona bahlankana ba hatane holimo.  
Bashanyana ba sutumetsa maqhekoana,  
Joale ka nku li kena tipi.  
Joale ka pholo li kena sekete.  
Banna ba heso ba ntlhoele holimo.  
Joale ka tsoere li aparela mohlaka.*

You always say men's court never gets full,  
When I am around it is filled to its capacity,  
You will see young men having squeezed themselves.  
Boys jostling the old men,  
Like sheep entering the sheep dip,  
Like oxen entering the pound kraal,  
My village men gathered closely around me,  
Like *serinus canicollis* spread evenly on the marsh with reeds.  
(Famole two:2002)

The dominant imagery in the above lines is the visual one from lines three to eight. In the third line, “*U tla bona bahlankana ba hatane holimo,*” (You will see young men having squeezed themselves), one sees young men who are pressed against one another in a very uncomfortable manner. The words “*hatane holimo*” brings to our minds a picture of people who are tightly squeezed against each other to the extent that it is difficult for some to breathe freely. The artist uses “*hatane holimo*” instead of *petetsane haholo*, which is ordinary language, and thus brings forth vivid picture. *Petetsane haholo* simply means too squeezed although there is still a room to free bodily movement and easy breathing. But, “*Hatane holimo*” brings a picture of people who are seated on top of the other not intentionally but have no other option because of the prevailing situation. One sees a picture of young boys whose faces seem to be in agony, whose bodily movement is restricted to one place but, on the other hand, satisfied due to the fact that they managed to make it into the room.

In the fourth line, there is another agonizing sight of jostling between boys and old men. It reads: “*Bashanyana ba sutumetsa maqhekoana.*” One who watches this incident as it happens may find it funny, while others may sympathize with the old men who are roughly pushed by boys who want to find space in the court. The word “*sutumetsa*” means the intentional action of pushing with all one’s might in order for others to give way to the pusher. One sees a picture where boys are roughly pushing the old men in order to make way for themselves into the court. On the other hand, there comes a picture of old men who try to resist the pushing from the boys but, are unfortunately, unsuccessful as the boys swiftly make their way into the court while old men keep on staggering forward murmuring angrily against boys who have no respect for the elderly folk. The artist skillfully combines the “*bashanyana*”, young folk, and “*maqhekoana*”, the old folk, in order to communicate a graphic description of the incident, knowing that the young would overcome the elderly.

In order to emphasize the pushing aspect, simile as one of the vehicles has been used to create another vivid picture of the scene. Line five reads, “*Joale ka nku li kena tipi,*” (Like sheep that enter the dip). Sheep as they get in the dip kraal trample on other sheep

in order to get in, especially when they are forced to do so by people around them. The entrance at the gate is usually small, in that, it does not accommodate as many sheep to freely enter the kraal. As they enter, each has to find its way through pushing others in front. This line puts more emphasis on the pushing of the boys in order to bring a lively picture of what really happens when Famole sings in his home village.

Another simile that stresses the jostling is that of oxen entering the pound kraal which appears in line six that reads: “*Joale ka pholo li kena sekete.*” This line also helps one to create mental pictures of oxen being forced into the kraal. These oxen, like the sheep, do push one another roughly so as to gain entrance into kraal. They may even hurt one another while in the process of getting in. It could be said that the two similes drawn from the animals, heighten the imagery of jostling among the boys and old men.

Another image that comes into one’s mind is that of the men who have gathered around Famole in great numbers, who are so close to him that he has little freedom of movement at all. This imagery is embedded in the words “*ntlhoele holimo*” which literally means standing on or sitting on top of somebody while figuratively it means gathered around somebody very closely. The words are normally used by herd boys when referring to cattle that had gathered around them closely especially when going home. Normally, the herd boys take the lead in front of the cattle on the way home, but as they do so, despite the animals having been trained to follow the boys, they usually gather around them, each trying to be very close to the herd boy. Against this background, Famole gives us the picture of how close his village men were to him. The artist has not used the word *mpoti-potile* a synonym of *ntlhoele*, which means surrounding somebody although it may not be very close. This is because *mpoti-potile* does not have great impact and bring forth the image which “*ntlhoele*” brings to our minds. What comes into our mind is a group of grown males who seem to have squeezed themselves around Famole each trying to be closer to him, so as to rub their shoulders against his. One sees these men who just like the cattle, are pushing one another aside in order to be next to Famole. It could be said the word “*ntlhoele*” has successfully been used to build imagery of men who have gathered around Famole.

The eighth line strengthens the imagery in line seven “*Joaleka tsoere li aparela mohlaka,*” (Like *serinus canicollis* spread evenly on the marsh with reeds). The simile compares men who have gathered around Famole with the birds that are called *serinus canicollis* that are usually found in great numbers in Lesotho in summer. They are mostly seen flocking in the fields or in the reeds. Normally, what happens is that, when they fly, they are scattered in a certain pattern but when they are about to settle they come very close to one another as though they are a single blanket. The artist uses this scenario to describe, in a vivid manner, the group of men who have surrounded Famole. It is as though we see them through the naked eye when they approach “*khotla*” from different angles and come together to sit closely with no space in between them. As they sit, one observes that they cover “*aparela*” the “*khotla*” ground to the extent that one cannot see the floor and, even if something drops, it cannot be retrieved as there is limited movement. The simile has managed to build mental pictures that make us understand better the situation that prevailed during Famole’s performance at his home.

What comes to our minds is the men’s court which is filled to the brim in that there is no space left for any person. Mental pictures of boys, young men and old men squeezed in this men’s court are created. This imagery is meant to reflect the popularity and the fame of Famole. Although it is normally said that self-praise is no recommendation, Famole does it to prove that he excels, and that no other artist can beat him in the music circles. He uses imagery to show that he is a threat to his counterparts. The type of diction that he uses in his imagery also earns respect among the audience as an eloquent artist who is worth listening to. His eloquence, moreover, promotes him to be a role model among his people, a force which aspiring artists and the young generation can reckon with. It can, therefore, be said that Famole has managed to convince his audience that he is popular through his employment of imagery.

One observes the retention of the Sesotho social background of the artist as he refers to the chief’s court in the traditional setting, not the dining room or sitting room. At the local chief’s court, men settle village disputes and discuss administrative matters that

focus on the development of the area. Famole shows that, as a Mosotho child, he grew up at *khotla*, where young men learn a lot from the elders, they learn history, administration, language usage and other relevant traditions that help towards building a real Mosotho child. Famole brings all these to the fore to challenge and communicate to the young generation the importance of growing up in traditional courts, not only that but the value of being a renowned poet and artist in one's village. He is urging the young folk to engage in moral behaviour that may gain them glory and honour in their societies.

In another song by **Chaba sa Matelile** (1999), in its *Ke Utloang* (What do I hear?), the lead-singer informs his audience about a horrible incident where people have been massacred, and are lying helplessly on the streets. This horrifying scenario is described in these touching words:

*Ka fumana e le litopo li rapalletse,  
E ne e le merapalla feela,  
Ho shoele banna le basali,*

I found corpses lying,  
They were helpless corpses lying around,  
Those dead were men and women,

The first line “*ka fumana e le litopo li rapalletse,*” (I found corpses lying.) describes the scenario where the bodies are lying helplessly. In order to make us aware that there was no life in these bodies he uses the word “*litopo*” instead of “*batho ba shoeleng*” (dead people) which is the everyday language. He goes further to say “*li rapalletse*” instead of “*li paqame*” which does not build any mental pictures. “*Rapalletse*” comes from *rapalla* which means lying flat in a manner that shows somebody has no control over his body, maybe due to illness or because he has been attacked to the extent that he is too weak to do anything for himself. It differs from *paqama* which may refer to somebody lying down to have a rest. The word “*rapalletse*” creates a picture of the corpses which have been left unattended with open wounds. One sees dead bodies with arms and legs stretched apart, bodies in a pile, bodies that seem to have been dragged to one place by ruthless people. The sight of these bodies also brings kinaesthetic imagery where one's body is shocked and trembles with fear. One sees the shock that looms within the on-

lookers to the extent that some burst out with loud and agonizing cry. It psychologically torments them and may even be haunted by this scenario for sometime. The artist has managed select very touching words that makes on-lookers to tremble beyond control.

In the second line, the artist reiterates the idea of *rapalla* in the word “*merapalla*” which is a noun: “*E ne e le merapalla feela*” (They were helpless corpses lying around.) This line gives us an impression that the bodies seem to have covered a wide area as they were many. The artist has not used the phrase *litopo tse ngata tse paqameng* but preferred *merapalla* which effectively builds a mental picture of many dead bodies. The artist has used his wide knowledge of the Sesotho diction to use repetition in the words *rapalletse* and *merapalla* to strengthen the idea that these bodies were dead and scattered all over the place. The two words, the first being a verb and the second being a noun, clearly describes the pathetic scenario. One observes that the artist through his wisdom and knowledge of Sesotho selected particular words that would hit hard on our feelings. The words refer to the helpless situation in which the corpses were. The words also show the brutal manner of how the victims were mercilessly mutilated. The artists’ knowledge of their language has played an important role in bringing a vivid picture that is awe-inspiring to the audience when this song is played.

This is a very touching sight that sends fear to the on-lookers. The picture of these corpses that are lying helplessly on the streets quickly comes to one’s mind. One builds images of mutilated bodies and pools of blood next to the corpses. One imagines the open wounds that make on-lookers to tremble to their knees and throws them into uncontrollable weeping and sobbing. From these lines, people may build pictures of boys, men and women who are half naked because their clothes have been torn as they were being hacked by the murderers. This sight sends a terrible shock to them as they imagine it.

The use of imagery in this case is meant to touch listeners’ feelings with shock as indicated by Okpewho (1992:98) above, to the extent that they sympathize with those who are dead and their relatives. The visual imagery goes beyond providing a mere sight;

it goes deep down in our inner feelings where there is a mixture of fear and hatred for the killers, love and pity for the victims. The group has really built a picture that makes listeners to hate violence in all its forms, a picture that calls for humanity among the living. This imagery sends a clear message that people have to stop killing one another and opt for peaceful means whenever there is conflict.

To conclude, it could be said that, accordion music artists, through their wisdom and knowledge of Sesotho diction, select particular words that successfully affect our feelings. The words they use bring forth vivid pictures of the situations described so that the audience can form its own mental pictures. The knowledge of language has played an important role in creating the graphic description of the gathering of males and scattered and mutilated corpses. The words and how they are presented display the eloquence of the artist and also his capability in communication skills, that is, selecting the right words at the right time for the right people. The fact that artists address some of the concerns of their people makes them part of the social structure that has a role to play in the lives of its people.

#### **4.3.5 METAPHOR**

Metaphor is another figure of speech that is commonly employed by the artists in their songs. Metaphor is commonly known as one of the techniques employed by poets, through which they attempt to put across their feelings in a vivid manner. Peck & Coyle (1984:140) indicate that the obvious attraction of metaphor is that it makes an idea vivid. They further point out that critics share the idea that metaphor is an important device because it adds and enriches meaning and weight of poems and plays. According to them, metaphor demonstrates how a writer responds to complexities of experience, for it enables a writer to establish connections between different areas of experience. In other words, metaphor, as art form, allows the artist to connect dissimilar areas of life.

Kunene (1971:37) writing about metaphorical eulogie, says that it identifies or associates the hero with natural phenomena noted for possessing, to the highest degree, qualities observed and praised in a hero. He further notes that, metaphorical names of Basotho

heroes are mainly names of animals, mostly wild and ferocious, but, also domestic animals, especially the bovine. Sometimes, inanimate objects are also used as phenomena of comparison.

Damane & Sanders (1974: 40-41) point out that under metaphorical eulogues the chief may be identified with an animal, a bird, a reptile, a plant, inanimate object, natural phenomena or a monster from a folktale.

Among Basotho, especially poets, metaphor is just part of the language they live with. As they praise or sing, metaphors automatically come in unconsciously. This is, because with the Basotho, devices like metaphors are just like built in wardrobes that are automatically part of the house, while metaphors are inseparable from the rest of the Sesotho language. That is why, with the accordion music artists, metaphor is at the tip of their tongues and found in almost every song. To them metaphors are also used as organs which convey messages in a more meaningful way. That is why this study looks at metaphors from different songs by different artists. The study discusses four types of metaphors namely; animal, plant, material and natural phenomena. These four categories have been chosen to represent the wide scope of the employment of metaphors in accordion music.

#### **a) Animal metaphors**

Use of animal metaphor among the Basotho is very common and indeed part of their culture. Basotho have clan names that are given after different animals that were and are found in Lesotho and beyond in the past days. In Letsie II's praise poetry, he is referred to as *koena* (crocodile.) In Mangoaela (1988:173) it is said: "*Koena e tloha Likhoele e palame,*" (The crocodile left Likhoele on horseback). He is referred to as "*koena*" because he belongs to the crocodile clan.

Basotho's identification with animals makes part of their culture. They identify themselves with various animals known to them to convey their message. Moletsane is called "*kotsoana e sisang* (The pink and red cow that gives a lot of milk). Moletsane, as a

chief is expected to cater for the social welfare of his people just like the cow that feeds its calf. Moshoeshoe is called “*phiri*” (hyena) and “*lefiritšoane*” (spotted hyena) in his praises (Mangoaela, 1988:2&7). Moshoeshoe is identified with these ferocious animals to show his bravery and that he successfully beats his opponents. In some instances according to Damane & Sanders (1974: 40-41) Moshoeshoe is a lion or an enormous cleft in the rocks in which cattle and people disappear. They further indicate that the metaphor is usually sustained throughout the stanza to show the qualities suggested by the eulogie. It is, therefore, not surprising that Basotho identify themselves with animals even when they sing.

The use of animal metaphor may either be positive or negative, depending on the context and the situation as described by the speaker. This section discusses animal metaphors that have been used to show appreciation and those that reflect disapproval.

**(i) Animal metaphors with positive attitude**

Animal metaphors are sometimes used to show appreciation of one’s achievements. It could be said that is a form of self-praise when one thinks highly of himself. Examples are drawn from two songs; the first one is *Khalema kheleke* (Reprimand the eloquent) by ‘**Mutla oa Maloti**’ (1986). The lead-singer says:

*Mataoa a tsohe a utloe, e fetile khanyapa...  
Nke ke be ka pheta lifela e ea kolla khoalibe*

Let the drunkards wake up and listen, the water-snake has passed,  
I cannot repeat *lifela* the black and white ox is excelling.

The artist calls himself “*khanyapa*” which is the mythical water-snake usually referred to as a tornado. He praises himself and compares himself to a particular enormous and powerful water-snake. He likens his power to that of the water-snake. This snake is feared by both children and adults and, therefore, his message is that he is fearful. This is a warning to his counterparts that he is dangerous and they should not attempt to cross his way. He does this by referring to other artists as drunkards who are always sleeping that,

when they wake up he would be miles ahead of them. According to our common knowledge when “*khanyapa*” is angry, it brings about great thunderstorm which causes destruction to human beings, animals and even buildings. In this case instead of harming other artists physically, he would torment them psychology in that he would be far ahead of them in the music circles.

Stories about “*khanyapa*” are mostly told to herd-boys by male adults in the evening at men’s courts. They are told that it lives in big dams. Its face is said to be like that of a horse although it has an eye like a mirror on the forehead. As to how big its size is, nobody seems to have ever seen its full structure. In an interview with the late Ramakhula alias Phallang (2005), he related how, as a herd boy, he personally saw this water-snake in the Phuthiatsana River next to Mapoteng area. He asserted that it looked like a horse on the face, and they only managed to see its face as it appeared from the dam and within seconds it was covered with thick black mist. Soon after its appearance the weather around the Mapoteng area changed as thick cloud covered the sky. Within a few minutes there was a hailstorm but, the thick mist was still coming out of the dam. As it was getting darker and dangerous because of the hailstorm they had to flee for safety and could not see the rest. The lead-singer is assumed to have this background knowledge that Phallang has, that is why he refers to the water-snake which is said to be powerful in his song. In this case, the artist relates his strength to his music, suggesting that he surpasses other musicians of his calibre.

He further calls himself “*khoalibe*,” the black and white ox which excels over others. One observes that the artist relates to herdboys’ experiences, giving an impression that he was once a herd boy. It is common among Basotho to refer to animals, especially cattle. For instance, Griffith is called “*tololi*” (black and brown ox) while Masupha is called “*khomo e tsoana*” (black cow), (Lerotholi 1977: 22 & Mangoaela 1988:46). The artist does not call himself a computer but something that he knows well from his youth, an ox. He knows that an ox is one strong animal, especially when it comes to ploughing and carrying heavy luggage. He knows the difference between female and male, while the male is said to be “*khoalibe*,” the female of the same colour is said to be *khoatsana*. He

uses the word “*kolla*” meaning, moving quickly forward without hesitation. This is the terminology used by herd-boys when an animal refuses to take its grazing slowly in one spot but moves quickly as though it is running for something. The word, *kolla*, provides the message that nothing can stop him from progressing, while his colleagues would be left behind dragging their feet. He asserts that he cannot repeat what he chanted in other songs because that may imply that he does not have enough vocabulary. The fact he chants new praises in every song show that he is artistic and versatile.

In this case it means that his singing cannot be matched by any musician as he is so outstanding when compared to them. He is a tough and talented artist. By so saying, he is buying fame and popularity from his listeners. One also observes that the experiences he refers to would make some of his listeners to recall their hey-days when they were herd-boys and enable them to identify themselves with the artist and his music.

As indicated earlier, artists make use of their environment in order to relate their experiences. The lead-singer in this group seems to have learned about the way the mythical water-snake and oxen behave to the extent that he identifies himself with them. In order to draw the attention of his listeners to the existence of such animals in Lesotho he metaphorically names himself after water-snake and an ox. These metaphors call for the audience to learn more about these animals, especially the water-snake because it is said to still be found in Lesotho. It also leaves a record even for future generations that they must know that water-snakes are still present in Lesotho which is why some traditional doctors still go to some dams in the rivers to meet their snakes who act as their teachers. The artist likens himself to these animals to prove his dedication to the music career because he loves his music and does his best to make sure that his listeners are well entertained.

#### **(ii) Animal metaphors with negative attitude**

Animal metaphors are sometimes used by Basotho to express negative attitude. This happens when a person is identified with a certain animal to show disapproval of certain behaviour. This is mostly done with the intention of making a warning or strong

reprimand against such a misdemeanor. There is one example in this category which is taken from Manka le Phallang (1997) in their song, *Batho ba Kajeno* (People of nowadays).

The line that is quoted says: “*Batho ba kajeno ke linoha ba u bolaea ba tšeha.*” (People of these days are snakes; they kill you while still smiling). In life, there are certain snakes which are dangerous with their fatal bites which appear harmless. One learns of their danger after they have been struck. In Lesotho, there are a variety of snakes; some are harmless while others are dangerous and poisonous. Basotho, having observed some of their mannerisms, have coined expressions which they apply to human beings. One such example is *thamahalinkotsane* (puff-adder) which is said to be male while its female is *marabe* (puff adder.)

There is one proverb which says ‘*Marabe o jeoa ke bana*’-It is said that when the female puff-adder gives birth the newborns eat their mother in order to survive. Basotho apply this practice to human beings both in a positive and a negative manner. They use it positively when they encourage any distressed parent who complains of having spent too much on the care of his children. They will say: ‘*Marabe o jeoa ke bana.*’ This is an encouragement that his children had nobody to rely on except him as their parent, therefore, he must accept that he was executing his duties.

On the negative side, this proverb is used to show how ungrateful children can be to their parents. That is, after parents have worked hard for their survival they turn their backs against them, not showing a bit of thankfulness. It is in such situations that some people would say they are like snakes referring to the puff-adder which is eaten by its young ones.

One finds that there are dangerous snakes like *qooane* (viper) that may pretend to be dead to the extent that even when one is at close range it will remain motionless and will only strike when one picks it up. The researcher once experienced it at a young age when he thought it was a lovely belt. He was about to pick it up when an elderly herd-boy warned

him that it was a viper pretending to be dead. To his surprise, when the older herd-boy began to beat it with a stick, it was then that it started moving.

Phallang (2005) as indicated earlier related many stories to the researcher about snakes and water-snakes during his lifetime as a herd boy. He informed the researcher about one incident at Litsebe area where he used to see a roped horse next to a dam in the Bokong river. He pointed out that the horse would never be seen anywhere except at the same place during midday, it would pretend to be grazing on the sand where there was no grass. People who passed next to that place usually ended up with swollen bodies. He was told that it was the water-snake; it was attracting its victims to it. He said that he was told that somebody once tried to get hold of it. As he did so, the horse ran into the dam and the man was never seen until the next day when his body was found ashore.

Phallang, having experienced these abnormal situations involving snakes, feels that it is worth including them in his music so that even the future generation can learn that snakes, just like people, sometimes pretend to be what they are not if they want to get hold of their victim. It is through songs of this nature that people can understand the history of the Basotho and different types of animals that once lived in Lesotho. This arouses the interest of the audience that accordion music is not just about entertainment but about some social facts that influence the lives of the Basotho. Phallang gives a stern warning to the entire nation that it should be aware of the so called friends. That is, people of these days are not worth trusting. Phallang likens people to snakes because they have lost their humanity; they are liars and are dishonest. It is not surprising that, in most cases, friends indeed are often opportunists who are after their friends' blood.

One is inclined to associate this metaphor with the life experiences of Phallang with regard to witch-hunting. He related incidents of witchcraft that nearly took his life although he survived. Again it could also be said that he was referring to the same people who pretended to be his friends while in actual fact were not. Indeed his life was lost through mysterious illness, which came through wild fire that engulfed his bed. After

escaping from this horrible incident he never recovered until he died. As such, the so-called friends had succeeded to take his life.

#### **b) Plant metaphors**

Plant metaphors refer to a variety of plants that are known to the artist that could be used to describe any aspect that the artist wants to sing about. The use of plant metaphor serves to show that the artist is very observant and knowledgeable about his environment. One of the common plant metaphors in Basotho praise poetry is the tree although not specifying the type. In Mojela's praises it is said "*Morena o siea a hlomile sefate, A siea se makala a matenya.*" (The chief left having planted a tree, He left the tree with ample branches). (Mangoaela, 1988:299). Mojela is called a tree because, as a chief, he protects his subjects from any harm just like the tree that provides shade to people during hot summer season.

The example for this section is taken from **Kutloano Makaota** (1998) group in their song *Haeso*. The quoted line says: "*Ke fate-sa-moea ke ntse ke foka banna ba heso ba Mojela*" (I am the tree of the wind; I blow men of my village of Mojela). The artist calls himself a tree, which signifies shade and sweet breeze. A tree is a form of an umbrella which protects us from the scorching sun, it is protective. Again, people benefit a lot from the products of a tree; it may be used for building, making fire, furniture and many other useful materials. In this case, as a tree, he provides sweet breeze to his people of Ha Mojela. This breeze makes them to be cool and lively, especially during hot summer season.

The lead-singer shows his importance as a musician in that, through his music, he sprinkles the spirit of singing onto other members of his society. Through his songs, he challenges others especially from his region to join in the singing career. The artist makes use of the plant within his reach to show his importance in the society. The fact that trees are everywhere in Lesotho helps the audience to understand their importance. Not only that, but he urges other artists to utilize their environment properly in their music because

that prompts Basotho to love accordion music, as it accommodates their lifestyle and their surroundings.

**c) Bird metaphors**

Basotho are known for their rearing of animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys and horses and these animals are herded by young boys in most cases. It is during this age as herd boys that they learn more about the habits of other living creatures like birds. Their increasing knowledge of different birds enables them to deal with them in a manner that makes their own lives and the lives of the animals easy to cope with. They have to know which birds are dangerous to their animal folk, and those that they can eat. With this type of knowledge young men easily manage to speak and even sing about such birds. The use of bird metaphor in accordion music does not come as a surprise but is part of oral literature.

It is also a common phenomenon among the Basotho praise poets to identify themselves or their chiefs with some of the birds found in Lesotho. In Jankie (1982: 31), Lefeta says: “*Ke pjempjete*” (I am *lanarius gutturalis*.) Lefeta calls himself “*pjempjete*” because it is good looking bird with green colour and it sings melodiously. Lefeta identifies himself with it because of his being handsome. When one listens to this song, one notices that it has got an influence from traditional poetry like initiates and praise poetry where in most cases people employ metaphor in order to liken themselves to objects, birds or animals. Chief Maama calls himself “*lenong*” (vulture) while chief Masupha is referred to as ‘*seoli*’ (hawk). Maama and Masupha are said to be carnivorous birds that bring terror to other birds. The two chiefs are a threat to their enemies as they kill them in great numbers during fights (Mangoaela, 1988: 38 & 96).

Birds that were and are still found in Lesotho play an important role in the social lives of the Basotho, some because they are used for certain medicines, others because of their feathers and others for various reasons such as their behaviour. Under this heading, the song for discussion is titled, *Nong la Lihlaba* (Vulture of the highlands) which goes:

*Ke nong la lihlaba,*

*Ke nong la lihlaba la Ha Tumane,  
Le ka pota-pota sefifi,  
Nong la lihlaba ha le lapa lea solla banna oe!  
Lenong ha le lapa lea solla.*

I am the vulture of plateaus,  
I am the vulture of the plateaus of Ha Tumane,  
Its turns can make circles around the trap,  
The vulture of the plateaus when it is hungry it wanders!  
When the vulture is hungry it wanders.

(Shale: 1996)

The song tells of how the artist fends for himself for survival. As an industrious person the artist does not remain idle but, does his best to make a living. He calls himself “*lenong*” (vulture), which is one of the gigantic and omnivorous birds found in Lesotho although it is very scarce nowadays. He associates himself with a great bird to reflect on his importance, especially in the musical circles. It is not just an ordinary vulture but, specifically from the plateaus of Ha Tumane his village. This shows that he is so attached to his village that he can proudly sing about it. This colossal bird is usually found in the mountains; in the rural areas of the country where it feeds on dead animals, hence the artist words, “*Ke nong la lihlaba la Ha Tumane*” (I am the vulture of the plateaus of Ha Tumane.) As it hardly gets prey, when it has a chance, it is said that it fills its stomach to the brim so that it can last days while it is still searching for another victim to prey on. That is why it is said, “*Lenong ha le lapa lea solla*” (When the vulture is hungry it wanders.) He employs vertical repetition of *lenong* although in its short form of *nong* in four lines to strengthen his position that he is indeed a vulture as he behaves like it as he has to work hard in order to earn a living.

This bird has an influence on the lives and language of the Basotho. For instance anybody who enjoys eating rotten foods is said to be behaving like a vulture *O rata libolu joaloka lenong* (He likes carrion like a vulture). *O meno a bohale joaloka a lenong* (His teeth are as sharp as the vulture’s.) Basotho have proverbs like *Lenong ha le lapa lea solla* (When the vulture, is hungry it wanders) which has been highlighted in the analysis. As observed from the quotation, a vulture is wise; it avoids any trap made for it, it circles around to make sure that its prey is not a trap. Having observed the behaviour of the vulture, as a

herd-boy, the artist brings such experiences into music to show the impact that the vulture plays on the lives of the Basotho in general.

The artist calls himself a vulture because, just like a vulture, he is struggling hard to make a living through his music. It is through the sale of music that he can make a living. He points out that he comes from the plateaus of Ha Tumane in the mountain areas of Botha-Bothe. As he calls himself a vulture, he says that he circles around like vulture before he picks his prey. This behaviour relates to the long process of getting his royalties after recording. That is, it takes some time for one to earn the fruits of his toil once one has recorded an album. Just like a vulture, he has to wander from place to place holding concerts and participating in festivals that will help to meet his economic needs.

Kunene (1971:37) describes this figure of speech as metaphorical eulogie, where the hero identifies himself with natural phenomena that possess certain qualities. Usually among the Basotho, the natural phenomena that they identify with is one that exists or is known to have existed in Lesotho. Shale, in the same manner, feels that he has the qualities of the vulture that fends for itself when it is in need. The message that is communicated here is that people should work hard in order to live, no matter how difficult it may be in life. This metaphor discourages any form of idleness in anybody who is capable of making life easier for himself. That is, people must try to exploit talents that they have in order to survive.

#### **d) Natural phenomena**

Natural phenomena may be described as anything that is natural, that is neither classified as animal nor as plant. Metaphors of this nature are also used by Basotho to describe the character of a person or relate to any situation under discussion. The mostly used, especially in praise poetry, are lightning and hail or deluge. Joel Molapo and Letsie II are metaphorically referred to as lightning. Griffith Leretholi and Sempe are called “*sekhothola*” (deluge) and “*sefako*” (hail) respectively in the first two lines of their praise poems. (Mangoaela, 1988:119, 173, 175 & 245) The four chiefs are named lightning, hail and deluge because they are very destructive to both the environment and the human

lives. These metaphors are used to describe their being fierce while at war and their opponents are warned of their being dangerous.

For this section the example is drawn from the song, *Pholo e tšoeu* (White ox). In this song, the Famole likens himself to hail. He narrates what the hailstorm does to nature and towards the end of the song he says:

*Fako seo ke buang ka sona,  
Le tsebe ke sena,  
Ke ntate Famole oa Matelile,  
Katse e ntšo motobatsi  
Mohlankana oa Selebeli.*

The hail that I am talking about,  
You have to know is this one,  
It is father Famole of Matelile,  
The black cat of motobatsi,  
Young man of Selebeli.  
(Famole Two: 2002).

The first metaphor is seen where Famole calls himself “*fako*” (hail) that destroys plants, animals, birds, human beings and infra-structure. This is what happens when a hailstorm is experienced in the country, it causes havoc to most of the living and non-living things. For instance, if it comes during summer it destroys crops in the fields, kills birds and animals. It is also dangerous to human beings who may be caught in such conditions; it affects their physical and economic well-being. It causes overflowing of rivers that in turn destroys bridges and halts transportation through the use of vehicles. Sometimes, people drown and cars overturn while trying to cross bridges. The hailstorm also poses danger to houses, where some get destroyed and lives get lost in the process.

As much as hail brings about disaster, Basotho have traditional medicines which they use to change its direction or sometimes to disperse it. The researcher experienced this at Bela-Bela area in the years 1976 to 1990 where some fields were not hit by the hail although they were in its path. The point that Famole wants to put across is that, hail has an impact on the lives of the Basotho and they have initiated some tactics to thwart it.

When Famole likens himself to hail, it is because hail influences the lives of the Basotho in general. The researcher, in his teens was taught to use the cobra's fat to disperse hail wherever he was. This practice proved fruitful as no drop of hail would fall on the ground next to him. These experiences and many others of their nature are difficult to believe unless one personally tests them.

Famole, being aware of the terrible effects of the hail, likens himself to it because he feels that he is a threat to other accordion artists of his times. They cannot compete with him; he is too powerful for them. He beats them at almost every angle when it comes to the music circles. Just like the hail that destroys everything that it comes across, he is too talented for his contemporaries to compete with him. Though whatever attempts they try to catch up with him they fail, he always surpasses them.

The metaphor here could be said to have been used to display the level of achievement of Famole as compared with other artists who are still struggling to reach his lofty standard in the music circles. We could say that he is proud of his achievement of having been referred to as one of the outstanding accordion artists in Lesotho. Some interviewees pointed out that Famole was so eloquent and proficient when it came to the Sesotho language when compared to other artists. This feeling was also stressed by individuals over radio stations when listeners passed their condolences just before his burial. Some listeners and interviewees said that they gained a lot from him because he was a talented Sesotho language artist, and he retained that knowledge even when singing. Through this metaphor he is urging other accordion artists to work hard in order to catch up with his standard especially in language proficiency.

In the second metaphor, "*katse e ntšo motobatsi*" (the black cat of motobatsi), Famole calls himself black cat, which, according to Kunene (1971:37) is called naming eulogie that is a clan name. Famole belongs to the clan of Basia whose totem is the cat hence why he calls himself the black cat. He associates himself with his clan as he wants to be known and respected as *mosia*. He encourages people to be proud of their being Basotho,

especially the *Basia*, and to retain and maintain culture. It is also a call to other *Basia* clansmen to join the accordion music as he already represents them in this music.

Metaphors are hardly found in spoken language but, are abundantly found in accordion music. Therefore, one could say accordion music contributes a lot towards inspiring other Basotho nationals to employ metaphor in their writings and even in conversations so that the coming generations will be able to enjoy the beauty of their language.

#### **4.3.6 REPETITION**

Repetition, as one of the figures of speech, is commonly used by most accordion music artists in their songs. Repetition adds melody and emphasis to a song in that the repeated words make one to recall and take note of them. Repetition is one of the most common features of the Basotho songs if not the core of their music.

According to Guma (1967:102), various types of songs may be divided into two categories, namely action songs and ceremonial songs, in these two types the outstanding feature is repetition. This repetition appears in different forms, but the most predominant one is the repetition of a chorus which may be one or four lines. When referring to work songs among the Basotho, Guma points out that traditionally the simplest type was the continuous humming of a solitary worker, which took the form of a single line with a single variation that was repeated over and over. He further indicates that in such songs the leader-singer would chant the first line and others members repeated it after him. It might, therefore be said that, because traditional Basotho songs are repetitive by nature, it is not surprising that accordion songs are also repetitive. This is so because, to a certain extent, it is a continuation of the Basotho oral traditions.

Okpewho (1992:71) refers to repetition as a device that does not only give a touch of beauty or attractiveness to a piece of oral expression but, also serves certain practical purposes in the overall organisation of the oral performance. He further points out that it is sometimes employed profusely to mark a feeling of excitement or agitation, whether in the sense of utmost delight or deepest anxiety and fear.

Kunene (1971:68) writes about aesthetic and unaesthetic repetition. He points out that aesthetic repetition is the one where selected words or phrases are repeated while additional ones are brought in as incrementing phrases to advance the narrative or syntactical order to attain emphasis. Unaesthetic repetition is too redundant where one and the same thing is repeated for several times. According to him, repetition works like a chain in linking ideas, and as such, it unifies them to make a complete narrative.

Another definition of repetition is that it is a major rhetorical strategy for producing emphasis, clarity, amplification, or emotional effect. It is said that there are four general types of repetition, namely;

- Repetition of letters/syllables and sounds;
- Repetition of words;
- Repetition of clauses and phrases, and
- Repetition of ideas.

([http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Figures/Groupings/of % 20Repetition.htm](http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Figures/Groupings/of%20Repetition.htm)).

What we can deduce from the given definitions is that repetition has a role to play in any text where it appears, and that it has various forms in which it can be identified in any given text. It is also the case with the accordion songs where repetition appears at different levels, in different forms. Repetition in Sesotho accordion music, in some instances, is found in the chorus of the song, where different lines are repeated several times. In such cases, the chorus provides a captivating melody that is accompanied by the instruments which may be joined by the audience. In most cases, the chorus bears the theme of the song while the chanted *lifela* expands on the theme. Just like in poetry, where Finnegan (1977:105) indicates that it manifests unity as well as an opportunity for development in the poem, chorus as repetition that appears at the beginning and at the end of the song brings about unity in the song and emphasis on the theme that is being related. The repetition in a chorus puts emphasis on what the song is about. Repetition is also found in the chanted *lifela* where it may provide a certain rhythm that adds more flavour to the tone of *lifela*. Repetition brings about emphasis on an idea that is raised in the *lifela* with an intention of drawing the listeners' or audience attention to it.

The following paragraphs will analyse examples from different songs by different artists. The analysis will base itself on the five forms of repetition as shown below, where two examples of songs will be analysed for each form. The five forms are as follows:

- ❖ -Repetition of chorus;
- ❖ -Repetition of letters and syllables;
- ❖ -Repetition of words;
- ❖ -Repetition of clauses and phrases, and
- ❖ -Repetition of one idea in different words.

**a) Repetition of chorus**

Chorus is normally a group of words repeated by a group of singers in a song. Among the Basotho songs, the chorus is either found at the beginning of the song followed by some form of poetry, or poetry comes first followed by chorus. In games like *selia-lia* and *sephumula* chorus comes first, while ceremonial songs like *mokorotlo* and *koli-a-malla* start with poetry, then followed by chorus.

It could be said that in Sesotho music, repetition of chorus contributes a lot to the structure of the songs. For instance, other songs are: Chorus–poetry–chorus–poetry while others as in the case of *koli-a-malla* and *mokorotlo* may be: Poetry–chorus–poetry–chorus. Chorus becomes a unifying factor as it is repeated throughout the song. As Finnegan (1977:103) observes, one finds that repetition, including the Basotho music, provides structure and coherence. Basotho accordion music, like any other Basotho music, has a chorus that is repeated in the beginning and at the end of songs.

The first example to be discussed in this category is taken from a song by Lehlohonolo (1997), the title of the song is *Mokhotsi* (Friend). It relates the existing dishonesty and untrustworthiness between and among friends to the extent that, in most cases, they stab one another in the back. It goes:

Motho o bolaoa ke motsoalle oa hae jooe!  
*Motho o bolaoa ke motsoalle oa hae!*

*Motho o bolaoa ke mokhotsi ke oa hae!* (4 times)

A person is normally killed by his friend jooe!

A person is normally killed by his friend.

A person is normally killed by his close friend.

The type of repetition in the above lines is vertical line repetition, where the first five similar words “*Motho o bolaoa ke motsoalle oa hae*” (A person is normally killed by his friend) are repeated vertically, and occupy the same slot in the lines. These words are repeated four times at the beginning of the song before the chanting of *lifela*, and are sung again towards the end of the song after the *lifela*. The theme of the song is dishonesty among friends. The three key words here are person, kill and friend. The artist prefers to direct his message to human beings who practice this behaviour to change their minds. In order to communicate his message to listeners and audience, Lehlohonolo repeats these words several times so that we deeply feel their meaning.

One notices that in the first two lines, the word “*motsoalle*” (friend) is used, while in the third line “*mokhotsi*” literally meaning the parents of the children who have been joined in matrimony though informally it is used interchangeably with friend. It does happen that although parents of the two children may become very close because they have been brought together by their children, there are instances when they become worst enemies and sometimes their sour relations lead to breakdown of their children’s marriage. One may take it that the artist is also addressing such situations while at the same time he directs his message to the simple friends.

The artist’s knowledge of Sesotho vocabulary enables him to play with words in order to convey his message to different groups within the social system of the Basotho. As they are repeated, one recalls instances where a friend plotted another friend’s death, or was involved in one way or another to hurt another friend behind the scenes. Repetition, in this case, emphasizes the fact that it is a common practice among friends to be dishonest.

This repetition can be said to be didactic in that the repeated words give a moral lesson to the public. For one to understand and be fully aware of the wrong-doing, one has to be

warned several times until one can be aware of one's mistakes. Therefore, Lehlohonolo warns us through his repetition to refrain from wrong-doings such as plotting against our friends. He proposes happiness and peaceful life where true friendship exists and that we should truly trust our friends.

This repetition helps to bring about unity in the song in that the chorus that bears the theme appears several times at different levels within the song. The *lifela* that follow after the chorus keep on referring to the theme of the song, and so, the theme is sustained throughout the song. One can also say that this type of repetition plays an important role in educating the public in that, even in everyday speech or conversation, they must keep on referring to the topic or theme under discussion as it helps them to confine themselves to the topic under discussion. It is worth employing repetition that will enable one to achieve one's objectives.

**b) Repetition of letters or syllables**

Accordion music, like other genres such as praise poetry and modern poetry, employs similar patterns such as repetition of letters or syllables. This is obvious in a written form where such syllables are found at the beginning of verses, for instance, in the praise poetry of Lerotholi Mojela:

*La heno, Maama le Seeiso,  
La habo Jonathane le Mofoka.  
La benya, la o chochometsa 'mane.*

Of your family, Maama and Seeiso,  
Of the family of Jonathan and Mofoka,  
It shone, it left a flashing trail.

(Mangoaela, 1921:226)

"La" has been vertically repeated in the three consecutive verses in the above quotation. In most cases, such repetition provides a certain melody or rhythm to the song as a whole. "La" refers to *letolo* (lightning); Mojela is metaphorically called the lightning and is associated with some of his relatives. Repetition of "la" emphasizes his being a fearsome person who fatally strikes his enemies like lightning. In the first line, he is associated

with Maama and Seeiso who are his uncles and in the second line he is associated with Jonathan and Mofoka who are his brothers. As lightning, he shines leaving behind a flashing trail, and this explains how he uses his tactics as he attacks his enemies.

The first example is taken from Keketso Mathula's (1994) song *Ho tsamaea* (Travelling). Keketso has cut short the idiom *ho tsamaea ke ho bona* (travelling is adventurous) to *ho tsamaea* (To travel). Keketso gives us the summary of his experiences as he has travelled to many places in Lesotho and in the Republic of South Africa. He points out that there were more sad moments than happy ones, and as a result, he had to give up and return to his home country Lesotho. He sings:

*Re sa tla be re shoele hole,  
La ntšotla fatše la makhoeng,  
La ntabola litlhabela,  
Ho betere ke khutlele,  
Ke khutlele Matelile koana.*

We shall die far away from our homes,  
It mishandled me the world of the Whites,  
It chapped my feet,  
It is better for me to go back,  
And I go back to Matelile.

The repeated syllables are “*la*” (it), in the second and third lines. The two “*la*” refer to the world of the Whites, meaning the Republic of South Africa. In spoken Sesotho, Basotho refer to the world when they mean to say a country. It is not surprising if someone says a world instead of a country. As one repeats the two syllables in the second and the third lines, one feels a certain melody that is retained, a melody of a song, therefore it adds more flavour to the song.

The repetition of *la* brings in a rhythm that brings about change in the movement of the song, a change that adds to the appreciation of the song. It is further observed that, the repeated syllable emphasizes the country that is being referred to in the song, that it is no other country but that of the whites. This repetition helps to convince us that the Republic of South Africa tortured the artist socially, physically and exploited him economically,

hence his coming back to Lesotho. The message is clearly communicated to us through the repetition of the syllables.

**c) Repetition of clauses and phrases**

Artists in accordion music use other forms of repetition, like of clauses and phrases, to emphasize whatever message they want to communicate to their listeners and audience. Repetition of clauses and phrases is also another common feature found in praise poetry, initiates' poetry and *lifela tsa litsamaea-naha* poetry. In one of the initiates' poetry it is said:

*Le leng le leba 'Mamothibisi,  
Le leng le leba Thabana-Morena,  
Le leng le leba ha Ntsi, Lekhalong.*

The other one goes to 'Mamothibisi,  
The other one goes to Thabana-Morena  
The other one goes to Ha Ntsi, at the pass.  
(Jankie, 1939:6)

The repetition above emphasizes the fact that branches had pointed in different directions. The initiate displays his knowledge of places as he recalls names of those that he thinks have been pointed by the branches.

This sub-topic discusses some of the examples where clauses and phrases have been repeated. Some of the repeated clauses or phrases appear vertically, horizontally or in a parallel manner. They may appear at the beginning, in the middle or towards the end of verses.

One example is taken from a song by Mosia Special (no date), entitled *Lesholu* (Thief). The artist relates how different people spread the rumour that he has been to initiation school in different places while in actual fact he has never been to any. In this song, he refutes such allegations, he points out that he intends to go to initiation school when time is ripe for him to do so. He says:

*Bahlankana ba ne ba nketselitse lerata,  
Ba bang ba re ke bolotse koana,*

*Ba bang ba re ke ile Molumong thabeng,*  
*Ba bang ba ntšupela Mathokoane, Ha Tumahole motseng,*  
*Ha ke rate ho bolotsoa ke bashanyana mohla ke hloang,*  
*Mohla ke hloang ke rata ke bolotsoe ke banna.*

Young men have been loudly arguing about me,  
Some said that I have been initiated at a certain place,  
Some said that I have been initiated at the mountain of Molumong,  
Some said that I have been at Mathokoane, in the village of Ha  
Tumahole,  
I do not want to be initiated by young men, on the day that I will go,  
On the day that I will go, I want to be initiated by grown up men.

There is a vertical line repetition from the second to the fourth line of these words “*Ba bang ba re.*” (Some said that) which appears at the beginning of the lines. Kunene (1971:68) refers to this type of repetition as an aesthetic one, where additional words are brought in as incrementing phrases to advance the narrative in order to attain emphasis. The vertical repetition of main clause from the second line up to the fourth line puts emphasis on the fact that the information that has been spread widely is hearsay and not the truth at all. When one takes the first line where he says that young men have been making loud arguments and the fifth one where he indicates that he does not want to be initiated by young men he clearly shows that he had not yet gone to initiation school. These lines prove that it was just a rumour that spread the lies about him. One way or the other he mocks those initiation schools which employ young and inexperienced *mesuoe*-teachers to lead initiates. The word ‘some’ refers to unknown people, that is why those people have not been identified by their names. Mosia in order to make his case quite clear that it is a rumour, prefers to say that ‘some said’ while others said something else. In this way, it is through this repetition that he convinces us that those who have been circulating the information were not even sure of what they said.

As he refutes the allegation, the audience is convinced that he has not been to any initiation school because he repeatedly stresses it in his song. Basically, Mosiea produced the song before he went to the initiation school towards the end of 2005. He publicly confessed at the funeral of Phallang, one of the renowned artists, that he had to go the initiation because some of the artists kept on belittling him even though he was very

popular. One of the artists who poked fun at Mosiea is Moketa, who, when it was his turn to pass condolences in the same funeral, said that he used to say: “*Bashemane ka sekosekareng*” (Boys at the back of the bakkie), while trying to mock Mosiea and other artists who had not yet gone to initiation school. *Bashemane* in this context refers to uncircumcised males. It is derogatory, it means that they will never be real men and will remain boys until such time that they get initiated. This incident shows the strength of the peer pressure in the accordion music circle in the call to retain some of the Basotho customs. Mosiea was not alone in this predicament; there were other artists like Lebohlang known as **Sefako sa Menoaneng** who, although he was also famous and progressive, had to go to the initiation to be socially acceptable among other artists. The rationale is that one becomes even more eloquent and his poetry is sharpened when he has been to the initiation school.

The parallel repetition from right to left that we find in the fifth and sixth lines also emphasizes that the artist has never been to any initiation school. It strengthens what is being refuted in the three consecutive lines. The fact that he says ‘On the day that I will go’ means that he has never been there, that is why he even puts conditions that have to be met when he goes for the initiation school, and that his teachers should be grown up men. It is through repetition that he strengthens his argument so that we believe the information that he communicates to us. Indeed, the day for him to go to the initiation came in 2005, and among those who were his *mesuoe* (teachers) was one bachelor who was over seventy years, who, unfortunately, died after they graduated.

#### **d) Repetition of words**

Under repetition of words, the study discusses how the repeated words are employed in order to stress a certain point. Normally, when people talk, either in everyday conversation or in a speech, and expect their audience to pay special attention to one important issue, they repeat it several times. This is common even in national rallies or any public gathering held by Basotho chiefs or representatives. If the topic of discussion is on ‘irrigation’ everybody who speaks is expected to focus on irrigation and repeatedly say it over and over. It is also the case nowadays with HIV/AIDS, which is the topic at

the tip of people's tongues; they keep on referring to it time and again. Repetition of words is also found in different Basotho songs and praise poetry. Accordion music artists, as Basotho who have inherited some oral traditions, also repeat words which they think are of certain value in their songs.

The first song is selected from the collection of songs by **Chaba sa Matelile** (1999), it is entitled *Mosotho Chakela*. The lead-singer relates how the scourge of HIV/AIDS has hit hard Bekkersdal location in the Republic of South Africa. He says:

*Bekesedale ke e lutse nako e telele,  
Ke lemo li fīfitini ke lula Bekesedale,  
Bekesedale ke utloa ke e tšaba,  
Eitse ea Bekesedale joale kea pheta,*

Bekkersdal I have stayed for a long time,  
I have stayed for fifteen years in Bekkersdal,  
Bekkersdal I am afraid of it,  
AIDS at Bekkersdal now I want to repeat.

The word that has been repeated is the name of the place called Bekkersdal, which has been repeated four times in four lines. This is one of the notorious places for the Basotho who live in Lesotho. According to Lesotho residents, this is a dumping area for all irresponsible females from Lesotho. Nowadays, there is a common saying that any woman who goes to the Republic of South Africa for any reason is said to have gone to Bekkersdal. It is associated with high rate of prostitution, adultery, illegal liquor selling, drug-trafficking, abortion and murder. It is, in short, regarded as the haven for all sorts of criminals. It is commonly said that most of its residents come from Lesotho; it is not surprising **Chaba sa Matelile** sings about Bekkersdal. The lead-singer, who is also a Mosotho, having stayed at this place for almost fifteen years seems to know it thoroughly and looks like he was tired of it because of its reputation, which is why he alerts others about the lifestyle of the place.

The focus of the artist is on this place which he feels is a health hazard to the public because of the pandemic that fatally wipes at thousands and thousands of people from the world. He wants South Africans and people of other nationalities to be aware that

Bekkersdal is a dangerous place for human beings and they have to take precautionary measures if they are to visit Bekkersdal. The repetition of this word instills fear among the listeners and audience concerning this place. The artist is here being educational, he provides us with a moral lesson that we have to be careful with our dealings with this place. It is a free lesson for public consumption.

The way this repetition has been carried along in these four lines makes one to keep the name in one's mind, and makes one to keep on remembering this place. It makes this place to be at the tip of people's tongues and always to remember its status with regard to HIV/AIDS. This repetition spreads terror in the minds of the public in that whenever they hear someone calling the name, they tremble with fear as they recall its status of HIV/AIDS. This is in line with Okpewho's (1992:71) observation that repetition is sometimes employed profusely to mark agitation and utmost fear. Therefore, it could be said that repetition does not only add flavour to the melody of the song but also plays a didactic role as it stresses certain aspects in life worth consideration.

**e) Repetition of one idea in different words**

Basotho are known for their play with words to an extent that one idea may be explained in different words. Kunene (1971:89) refers to this repetition as re-statement of ideas through synonyms and indirect references. He goes on to point out that, thoughts or ideas are repeated without using similar words or phrases. Accordion artists, like other Basotho, sometimes employ similar practice in order to show their Sesotho language proficiency. This repetition of one idea in different words puts emphasis on what is talked about; sometimes it helps to clarify it so that it can easily be understood by the listeners and audience.

One of such songs is taken from **Chaba sa Matelile** (1999) from its song *Ka Shoeloa ke Moholoane* (My elder brother died). In this song, the artist laments the death of his brother. He says:

*Ka shoeloa ke moholoane ka lla ka khathala,  
Hoa e shoa ngoan'a 'm'e ka utloa bohloko,*

*Chakela litsietsi li tsoaloe le motho,  
He Chakela se ka 'na ua lla.*

My brother died, I cried and got tired of crying,  
The child of my mother died, I got hurt,  
Chakela problems are our lives,  
Chakela please stop crying.

When we take the two main similar clauses in the first and second lines, “*Ka shoela ke moholoane*” (My brother died) and “*Ha e shoa ngoan'a 'm'e*” (The child of my mother died), the two phrases in this context mean one and the same thing. That is, his brother is the child of his mother, the child of his mother is his brother. The relationship that exists between the two is defined in two different ways.

One observes the common practice and attitude of the Basotho, that of maternity association by many Basotho young and old alike. Among the Basotho, as will be seen in the coming sections, one's mother is the most precious thing that one cannot dissociate oneself from. Most Basotho children feel attached to their mothers, hence the saying that ‘you can doubt your father but not your mother’. As much as Chakela still has a father, he prefers to ignore him, and he instead says: ‘the child of my mother’ not ‘the child of my father’. This is so because fathers are said to be distant from their children in their upbringing, while mothers are close to them even when in their adulthood. It is very rare among Basotho to have children who are so much attached to their fathers regardless of the paternity practice.

Repetition of one idea in different words is also observed in the subordinate clauses of the first and second line. In the first one it says “*ka utloa bohloko*” (I got hurt), and in the second “*ka lla ka khathala*” (I cried and got tired). In the two phrases the aspect of sadness is retained. They both suggest that the artist was deeply affected by the death of his brother. He was hurt and he cried, profusely because he was deeply touched by the unfortunate incident in his life. There is repetition of the word “*lla*” (cry) that appears in line one and four. One observes that, in line one, the artist relates what he did after the death of his brother in that he cried while in the last line he is consoling himself that he must be courageous as he cannot bring his brother back to life. As a result, he composed

the song in order to express his hurt feelings and make people aware of how he feels about it.

#### 4.3.7 SIMILE

The last technique to be treated is simile. Roberts (1992:117) comments thus about it:

One way in which writers make their works interesting, enlarging and forceful is to use figurative language- that is, replicating patterns of words and expressions (also called rhetorical figures or rhetorical devices) ... devices clarify, illuminate and vitalize one thing by showing that it is similar to or identical with one another.

A simile is a stylistic device that is commonly employed in the accordion music. In defining simile, Abrams (1971:97) says that it is a comparison between two distinctly different things that are explicitly indicated by the word 'like' or 'as'.

Wikipedia encyclopedia defines it as a figure of speech in which the subject is compared to another subject. It further says that similes are composed of two parts namely: comparandum which is the thing to be compared, and the comparatum, which is the thing to which the comparison is made (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>). Simile is also defined as a comparison between different things, designed to create an unusual, interesting, emotional or other effect (<http://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/simile.html>).

Simile, as part of the Sesotho language, is employed in oral poetry and this could be said to have influenced accordion artists to use it in their songs. It helps artists to communicate, in a vivid manner, the message they want to convey to the audience. The commonly used similes markers include *'joaloka, tsoana le, sa* (like). Before analyzing the songs, the study will briefly with examples indicate how simile is used in praise poetry in order to show that accordion music engages features that are found in the oral literature of Basotho. The first example is drawn from Mojela's praise poetry in Mangoaela (1988: 230) that reads:

*Bongata bo a hana bo a latola,  
Ba re o tšoana le mafube hantle.*

Many demur, they dissent,  
They say he is exactly like dawn.

Mojela's light complexion is best likened to dawn which has the combination of reddish and brownish clouds. That is, Mojela's skin colour has similar features to those of dawn.

Again, it could be said that simile in Sesotho brings about explicit clarification on any matter under discussion. In Mangoela (1988:173), Letsie II is described as:

*Linyane la tau le liphaka-phaka...,  
Rope u ka re sa hloaele, Letsie.*

The cub of the lion has mighty shoulders  
Your thigh is like an oribi's Letsie.

Letsie's thigh is compared to that of an oribi to show its thickness which proves that he was huge. The oribi is a wild animal that lived in Lesotho some years ago and was known for its being fat throughout the year. The comparison sheds more light to the understanding of the subject matter, so that through comparison one understands better what is being explained to him, even better than when there was no comparison made with him. The item that is used for comparison adds more to the information that is already provided, especially for those who are familiar with oribi. Again, we observe that simile is used to put an emphasis on what one is trying to communicate. That is the second line puts emphasis on the first that indeed Letsie was a gigantic person.

Last, simile displays a wish by the speaker. That is, the speaker may, at times, use a simile in order to express his feelings on something that he wishes for. Lerotholi (1977: 22) says:

*Koena, moholo oa Bereng, u nkoe,  
U ka nare, moshemane oa Letlama!*

The crocodile, the elder brother to Bereng, you are leopard,  
You are like a buffalo, the son of Letlama.

It is Lerotholi's wish that Griffith should be like a buffalo to complete fierceness. He compares Griffith with the buffalo which is another wild animal that has certain outstanding qualities. He does so because he expects him to behave in the same manner as the model item.

Accordion artists draw their similes from their environment, from the observable and living examples. By so doing, their message is easily understood by their audience and clients. Apart from that, the use of observable similes enables the young generation to learn to employ simile through the simple means of utilizing their environment. It also helps them to be aware that one's knowledge of one's mother tongue is part of one's knowledge of the environment in which one lives as it contributes to one's social life.

The following paragraphs will analyse the use of simile in two Sesotho accordion songs from different artists. The analysis will be contextualized in terms of situations in which each simile is used.

The first simile to be analysed comes from Famole (2004) group in its song *Senyamo banana ba heso?* (Who has feelings of love for me my fellow girls?) that reads:

*Ke cha mpa le seatla likharebe,  
Ke noa metsi,  
Kea noa joaloka ntja,  
Kea noa ka leleme.*

I wholeheartedly love beautiful girls,  
I lap water,  
I lap like a dog,  
I use my tongue for lapping of water.

In these lines the artist indicates to us that he loves girls with all his might to an extent that he could do anything to prove his love towards them. To make his message more explicit he says that he would rather drink water like a dog. He compares himself to a dog because it drinks even in dirty places; it is not as choosy as a human being who will go for clean water. He argues that he is ready to risk his life in that he could even drink

contaminated water in order to prove his love. These lines, to a certain extent, allude to the Sesotho folktales where a girl before accepting a proposal from a boy would draw water that is dirty, mixed with mud and hand it over to the boy to drink. If a boy really loves a girl he would drink such water without hesitation. The one, who would drink such water, would have his proposal accepted, while the one who would not, could have his proposal turned down. This exercise was a test of true love by the girl, while the drinking part by the boy showed true love, that he really loved the girl, and, would do anything to win her. It could also be said that the drinking of water signifies humility, as the male subject himself to the command of the female, and proves that he is prepared to go to any length to show that he deserves her love. As a result the simile that is used in this case is meant to emphasize the true love that the artist has for girls.

In another song, Sanko le Libatha relate the story of how they pursued one of their enemies; they searched for him everywhere until they found him in his home. As they got him the lead-singer says:

*Ka re: Nkoetele ke u koetele, ha ke tloha ke u bolae,  
U tl'o bolle tlhakeng mohoang u tl'o tšoane le seboko,  
Ke tla u phesela sa nta lekokong,  
Helele moshanyana tooe!*

I said: Kidnap me, I kidnap you, from there I kill you,  
So that you'll rot in the corn stalks like a stalk-borer.  
I will crush you like a louse on the skin,  
You boy!

(Sanko le Libatha: 1998)

The comparison in this quotation comes up where the artist says, “*U tl'o bolle tlhakeng mohoang u tl'o tšoane le seboko*” (So that you'll rot in the corn stalks like a stalk-borer.) The wish that the artist has is that his enemy should rot like a stalk-borer in a stalk. The stalk-borer is a pest that burrows into the stalk of a corn and feeds on the inside. Its effects are that the plant will appear wilted or deformed with holes in the leaves or stems. If it successfully attacks the stalk of the maize it kills it. The stalk becomes the host of the borer because it feeds on it for its survival and, when an insecticide is sprayed on the

stalk, the borer dies inside. This is why Sanko says that “*u tl’o bolle tlhakeng*” (So that you’ll rot in the stalk) like the borer.

It is assumed that Sanko was at the home of his enemy and wanted to kill him in the very house that he lived in that is likened to a stalk, while his enemy is like a borer. Sanko, who is a lead-singer in the group, brings his experience as herd boy into the song in order to convey his message meaningfully. It is common practice among Basotho that, in winter, after harvesting especially maize fields, the stalks are left for animals to feed. The owner of the field would announce to the herd boys of his neighbours that the field is free for grazing. The following day village cattle would gather in such a field. At this stage, it is called “*mohoang*” as mentioned above by the artist, the stalks are dry and roots no longer gather nutritive elements, therefore any borer that did not find its way out in time would be found dead inside the stalk.

The artist is familiar with these experiences and brings them along in his music in order to express himself successfully to his listeners. This comparison is meant to express the anger of Sanko as he arrived at the home of his enemy. His anger was beyond control as he wanted to get rid of the other man in his home, in the presence of his family members.

Sanko further goes on to say that “*Ke tla u phesela sa nt’a lekokong,*” that is, he would crush him like lice on the skin. He uses the word *phesela*, which means total crushing, making sure that there is no life left in the body of the victim, instead of *rinya* or *bolaea*, which are common words used everyday to mean to kill, but, do not contain the intensity that is embedded in “*phesela.*” He says that he will kill him like lice on the skin “*sa nta lekokong.*” These hides are usually softened in the traditional ways, some become blankets while others are laid on the floor for sitting on or sleeping on. If they are attacked by lice they normally crush them against the skins. This simile also explains some Basotho customs in that in some Basotho homes, people use hides and skins as bedding instead of beds with mattresses. These hides are usually softened in the traditional ways, some become blankets while others are laid on the floor for sitting on or sleeping on them. If they are attacked by lice they normally crush them against the skins.

There is another interesting part here in that the artist does not use the word kill but crush, in this case, meaning squeezing the lice until its insides come out. This is the common practice especially among the youth who enjoy killing lice or bed-bugs. They squeeze them until the blood they have sucked comes out, and after that they usually bring the dead lice to their nose to smell it.

The lead-singer seems to have experienced this type of life and shares it with us in form of a song. It is through their song that people learn more about the social lives of the Basotho. Those who have experienced this type of life, feel comfortable and identify themselves with the artist and his music as it reflects the real life situation of a Mosotho who grew up in a Sesotho home. Sanko uses this simile to express his anger and that he will mercilessly kill his enemy, and the use of the word crush indicates that he will smash his head with bullets so that his brain will scatter around to make sure he is dead and there is no life remaining in him.

The second simile puts some emphasis on the first one; it stresses the killing of the man chased by Sanko. What we can deduce from these words is that Sanko was determined to kill, no matter what happened. That is, he would try his best to have his enemy killed to quench his thirst for blood. Simile is used here to indicate that the feeling to kill had reached its climax which is why he tracked the victim into his home. The use of two similes in this song help to one to read clearly the fury and deadly feeling on Sanko's face on that fateful day.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has dealt with seven figures of speech which are commonly employed by artists in the composition and rendition of Sesotho accordion music. They are; apostrophe, euphemism, hyperbole, imagery, metaphors, repetition and simile. This section shown with examples how and why they are used in accordion music.

The application of language techniques in accordion music is a challenge for listeners and audience in that they have to learn from the songs the contextual use of the Sesotho

language. That is, accordion music is not just for entertainment but, also provides lessons for improving one's vocabulary and many other aspects that relate to the proper use of the language. It is one's expectation that, as people listen to Sesotho accordion music, they should also try to focus more on the language that is used to convey the melodies. They have to view this music as an oral literature of its own kind that promotes the speaking of the Sesotho language.

The language techniques that have been discussed above are just a few examples that display the richness of the music in terms of its language. These figures of speech enable the listeners and audience to apply them in their day to day conversation and even in speeches. In this way, accordion music can be taken as a reservoir from which learners can tap oral knowledge that they can pass on to future generations.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **THEMATIC ASPECTS OF BASOTHO ACCORDION MUSIC**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is divided into three major parts namely; social, economic and political themes related to accordion music. Thematic aspects refer to various themes or subject matters that artists address in their songs. These themes in broad terms may be said to be social, economical and political. Finnegan (1970:280) refers to these types of songs as topical songs that give vivid personal picture of a general situation and the attitude to it, as well as the events they comment on. Each theme is further divided into topics which are analysed according to the theory of functionalism. It becomes necessary to further sub-divide each category into sub-topics. Again, to avoid lengthy analysis that includes even minor topics, this work limits itself to those aspects that seem common to most of the artists.

#### **5.1 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF ACCORDION MUSIC ARTIST**

In accordance with functionalism as articulated by Parsons (1951:3-6), artists are perceived as a social structure that is part of the entire Basotho nation. As part of the social system, Basotho accordion artists raise and articulate issues that are co-existent with the social system. After all, artists are products of the social system into which they are born and in which they are nurtured. They imbibe and internalize the norms and values of their society through the process of socialization. They become accomplished and acceptable citizens of their social system who through their music retain some of the characteristics of oral literature. This leads to the acceptance of accordion music as Basotho traditional music as it entails some features of the Basotho oral literature such as poetry and topical issues that were also addressed in the past. According to functionalism theory, it could be said that accordion music artists, just like their ancestors, contribute positively to the operation of the social system of the Basotho through raising the concerns of the society and through entertainment. Just as the praise poems, war songs,

work songs and other ceremonial songs had certain functions to the societies at that time; accordion music likewise performs its functions to the societies in contemporary time.

It could further be indicated that the interdependence that existed between the public and the oral poets in the past is also retained even in the context of accordion music. That is, performers of the traditional literature in the past did it for the people of those olden days, while accordion artists perform for the Basotho of today, therefore, there is a relationship between the audience and the performers that leads to interdependence (<http://uregina.ca/~gingrich/n2f99.htm>). Accordion artists, like oral poets are a mouthpiece of the society who become representatives of the community by expressing and raising the concerns of the public. This is in line with Goodwin (1982) as quoted by Moleleki (1988:1) that the African poet is not only the conscience and mouthpiece of his community but also a custodian of its values who expresses the needs and wishes of his society. This is so as artists in their songs touch on social, economic and political aspects of the Basotho society, thus making them representatives of the society who are affected by the life experiences of their people. Interdependence is reflected through reliance of the artists on the members of the society as the market for their music, while in return the society expects them to produce music that will quench their thirst for entertainment.

Another aspect of functionalism that relates to accordion music is dynamism, as it changes with time like any genre of oral literature. This type of change is referred to in functionalism as evolutionary change, a change that is orderly. As change occurs, various parts of the societies become more complex with new institutions and subsystems developing in order to perform new functions that make the society to operate smoothly (<http://uregina.ca/~n2f99.htm>). The current accordion music has changed from its status of immorality to a dignified genre of oral literature. It has undergone a variety of changes such as the type of artists, language, themes and instruments. That is, accordion music has developed to its current status in order to satisfy the needs of Basotho in contemporary times, hence, its proliferation and popularity. We also find that although there is a drift from what could be said to have been pure traditional music in accordion music, the changes engaged are not detrimental to the whole aspect of tradition. It could

be said that with accordion artists, like African poets; manifest a continuity of tradition from the past, through the present, and the future (Goodwin 1982:174). Though the accordion music involves use of modern instruments and it is commercial, these factors relate to new institutions and new functions that help the society to operate smoothly in its own times.

While the topical issues expressed in accordion music, differ slightly from those of the olden days, there are instances where they are similar, and are based on the current affairs of the society. This is what Malinowski (1961:1) refers to as culture change, which is the process by which the existing order of a society transforms into another type. It covers various aspects such as beliefs, systems of knowledge, education, materials and their use. It is influenced by factors and forces that spontaneously arise within the community or take place through the contact of different cultures. One might say that this is the situation within which the accordion artists operate, they are transformed, and their music has transformed to meet contemporary challenges.

## **5.2 ANALYSIS OF THEMATIC APSECTS**

The analysis will follow this format; first, there will be a definition of the general theme which will be followed by listing of the sub-topics to be covered. The second step is that of defining the sub-topics and drawing relevant examples from different songs to substantiate each sub-topic. The approach to be adopted for the analysis of each sub-topic will be as follows:

- i) The context within which it is raised;
- ii) Examples from the songs;
- iii) Commentary on the song; and
- iv) Message communicated.

## **5.3 SOCIAL ASPECTS**

### **5.3.0 INTRODUCTIONS**

This topic is divided into three sub-topics namely;

- concept of self,

- social trends common to accordion artists and
- tradition and change. under concept of self

The section under concept of self focuses on songs in which artists and covers songs in which artists relate their life history. The social trends common to accordion artists deal with a variety of selected topics observed to have been common in accordion music. Tradition and change highlights the popular customs that artists usually refer to in their songs.

### **5.3.1 CONCEPT OF SELF**

This sub-topic refers to those aspects that specifically relate to the artists: nurture of the artists including factors like birth, place of their birth, their chiefs, marriage lives and working experience. These areas though common in accordion music seem to be influenced by the Basotho oral traditional literature such as praise poetry, war songs, initiates' songs and other types of Basotho songs. In most cases, especially in praise poetry, Basotho used to compose poetry about their chiefs, covering aspects such as their birth, physical appearances, their villages, heroic experiences and their governance. In Letsie II's praises as observed by Damane and Sanders (1974:35), it is found that it introduces chief, his character, his home, his parentage, his physical appearance, his going to war, incidents at the battlefield and his coming back home are introduced.

It could be said that accordion artists retain some features found in traditional poetry, thus making accordion music acceptable as another genre of oral literature. That is, as artists compose their songs, they bring along with them the relevant social back-ground they have acquired from their cultural environment. This idea is also observed by Okpewho (1992: 105-106), who points out that during a performance of oral literature, the artist brings along his personal inclinations, family background, and personal experiences, training and working experiences. One can say that Basotho accordion artists display their personal inclinations, family background and personal experiences in their songs.

Despite the fact that this is an emergent genre, one could say that these artists have adjusted to the current changes in order to meet their basic needs and the society they

serve. This is what Radcliffe-Brown (1952: 9) calls an adaptational system where the social life is adjusted to the physical environment and institutional arrangements. It is a scenario where individuals acquire habits and mental characteristics that make them fit in a social life and enable them to participate in its activities. Artists, having drawn their mode of living from the traditional Basotho style, transform into new lifestyles of Sesotho music in order to participate smoothly in the transformed society. That is, whatever they do or sing about reflects their social background, the values and norms which influence their lives as Basotho.

Having gone this far, it is worthwhile to refer to the contribution of these thematic aspects and the role they have played towards popularization and high level of production of the music. It could be said that the change of attitude towards this music has been triggered, by among other things, by the relevance of thematic aspects which address sensitive issues of Basotho social lives. By so doing, accordion music becomes closer to the hearts of Basotho and identifies with it as one genre of their oral literature. Consequently with increasing popularity of accordion music and an increasing rate of unemployment accordion music becomes a popular industry in which capable Basotho personnel who are out of work can participate.

#### **a) Birth**

In their daily lives, Basotho introduce or identify themselves through various ways, one of them being through parentage. Introduction and identification by one's parents is meant to show a sense of belonging that means one has some people with whom one can be associated. Parentage, in this context, means biological and close relatives of the poet or the artist. Among Basotho, a child belongs to the extended family and not the nuclear one alone, that is, one may be associated with grandparents or uncles other than one's biological parents. This practice is obvious in chiefs' praise poetry, initiates' poetry, migrant-workers' songs and even in accordion songs. In Moshoeshe I's praise songs, the first line says: "*Ngoan'a 'Mamokhachane, Thesele*", (The child of 'Mamokhachane, Thesele). Moshoeshe I is associated with his grandmother, the wife of Peete. While, in praise poems of Lerotholi, we have the following examples:

*Mor'a Masututsane 'a Mokhachane...*  
*Lekena la Ranneko 'a Bakoena...*  
*Tšoara thebe, e tiee, oa Rasenate*

The son of the Pusher of Mokhachane...  
Lekena of Ranneko of the Koena...  
Hold your shield firm, the son of Rasenate.  
(Mangoela, 1957: 66)

In the first line, Lerotholi is associated with his grandfather Moshoeshoe, whose is the son of Mokhachane. In the second line, Lerotholi is again associated with Moshoeshoe who is also the father of 'Neko. In the third line Lerotholi is associated with his biological father, Letsie I, who is called Rasenate, Senate being his daughter in the first house.

With regard to initiates Guma (1967: 142) writes:

The reciter may refer to his parentage, members of his family and, usually, his unhappy childhood. This is usually in those cases where the reciter may have lost his father quite early in life and his mother left to struggle alone with the family. The reciter gives a brief account of his life-history, and invariably takes advantage of this opportunity to thank his mother for all she has done for him.

In the migrant workers' songs, an example is taken from Moletsane (1983:18) that reads thus: "*Ngoan'a Tooane teraeshareng koana.*" (The child of Tooane, at the treasury). Pekenenee associates himself with his father Tooane whom he loves and is proud to have him for a father.

The first examples for analysis will be taken from accordion songs where artists associate themselves with relatives. In the song by the group known as **Ba tatile batho** (1996) titled *Ba sola ka 'na* (They intend to threaten me) it goes thus:

*Ke tsoetsoe ke mosali e motelele,*  
*E ne e sa le 'Mampho mosali,*  
*Oa morutlha morontlhotlho,*  
*Mosali oa ntate o motle oa mpheta.*

I am born of a tall woman,  
She was called 'Mampho, the woman.

The tall and hefty one,  
The wife of my father is more beautiful than me.

Tlelase wants the public to know that he is the son of 'Mampho, not only so but that he is proud of her. The fact that he publicly announces her as being attractive, and that she is physically admirable and the most beautiful woman makes us aware of the intimacy that exists between him and his mother. Most important is that Tlelase wants to convey to us that he has a sense of belonging, within the social system; he identifies himself with his mother. He wants to prove that he is the member of a certain social group and should be treated so.

It is common among the Basotho to say '*Joo 'm'e ooe!*' (Oh my mother)! This interjective is normally uttered when one feels pain, is attacked, crying or is in fear. Basotho can hardly say: '*Joo, ntate ooe!*' (Oh my father)! One's mother to Basotho is a symbol of protection, safety and security, not only that but closeness in blood ties. This intimacy was observed during the interviews where most of the artists seemed to have grown up in their mothers' or grandmothers' care. This was the case with the following artists; Sanko Setenane, Apollo Ntabanyane and Puseletso Seema.

Another example is taken from the group that is called **Lekena bohale ba tau** (1997) from their song *Nkhalemele* (Discipline me.) Lekena sings:

*Le ntse le botsa ke tsoetsoe ke mang?  
Ha kea qhoma lejoeng ke belehiloe,  
Ke tsoetsoe ke morali'a 'Mafelleng,  
Ke tsoetsoe ke 'malerata, 'mabohale,  
'Malitlatse, 'mamelilietsane*

You are asking who bore me.  
I did not burst out of the stone, I was born,  
I was born by the daughter of 'Mafelleng,  
I was born by a mother of noise, a mother of valour,  
A mother of ululation, a mother of shrieks to applaud.

It could be assumed that Lekena is also thanking his mother for having given birth to him, and nurtured him. He is proud of her, wants the public to be aware of his close relationship with his mother.

One will note that, as much as it is said that accordion artists have drawn some aspects of traditional culture into their music, there are differences in some cases. In most of the praise poetry for chiefs and warriors, females were not given much attention, but, in accordion music, females, especially mothers, are close to the hearts of the artists. This is exemplified in Maama's praise poems, the poet says: "I was sired by bulls that were strong, I was sired by Peete and Mokhachane," (Damane & Sanders: 1974:52). The poet says Maama was sired by males, while accordion artists in **Ba tatile batho** and **Lekena bohale ba tau** indicate that they were born of females not of males as is the case in praise poetry. Lekena addresses the prevailing situation among the Basotho at the present. This shows the dynamism that prevails within Basotho oral literature and that there is evolutionary change that enables one to adapt to the changing times.

#### **b) Identification by clan**

Among the Basotho, identification by one's clan or totem is one of the prominent factors that lead to one's social identification. Basotho associate themselves with certain animals and they learn to practice their habits, and accord that respect. Ellenberger (1912: 39-39) points out that the Batlokoa chose to associate themselves with the wild cat, and had learned to behave just like it in every possible manner. As to who had authority to select which animal, it is not clear but, it looks like it was a unanimous decision. It is also the case with Bataung (of the lion), who call themselves *Tau* or *Sebata* (lion), Bafokeng (of the hare), who call each other *Phoka* (hare), and Bakoena (of the crocodile) who call each other *Koena* (crocodile). The rationale behind the choice depended on the features and mannerisms of the animal that were appreciated by a certain group of people. This type of identification may be said to be a social group identification which Turner (1982:15) refers to as two or more persons who are socially interdependent for the satisfaction of needs and attainment of goals. He goes further to indicate that such interdependence leads to cooperative social interaction, communication, mutual attraction and influence

between individuals. This form of identification is obvious even in praise poetry. In Lerotholi's praise poems it is said:

*Koena ea sheba ka har'a boliba,  
Ea sheba ka mahlo a le mafubelu.*

The crocodile looked into the water,  
It looked into the water with red eyes.  
(Mangoela 1988: 70)

Lerotholi is called a crocodile because he belongs to the clan of the Bakoena. Although there may be some smaller groups within the Bakoena, what brings them together from the onset is their being Bakoena. This type of identification makes one to be socially secure as one feels that there is a sense of belonging and, more importantly, that one is a Mosotho but, of a certain group.

Accordion artists, like the rest of the Basotho, show this feature of identification even in their music, where they publicly declare their social group identification. They retain those characteristics that make them to be typical Basotho. It also makes members of the clan to which the artist belongs even happier to learn that one of their sons represents them in the accordion music industry. Keketso Mokhiba, a lead-singer in **Poho-li-matla** who is a Motlokoa in some of his songs says that on the day of his funeral all the Batlokoa should attend, should gather in large numbers to bury him, while **Manka le Phallang** (2004) sings:

*Haeso Ha `Mamathe,  
Ha kea ipata ke Mofokeng,  
Jo! Ngoan'a `Mapita.*

My home Ha `Mamathe,  
I have not hidden myself, I am a Mofokeng,  
Jo! The child of `Mapita.

In these three lines Phallang briefly introduces himself by his village which is Ha `Mamathe, second through his clan as Mofokeng and, last, through his mother. It is observed that one's clan is of great importance in one's life, it bears some basics related to one's relatives and genealogy. In Sesotho, Phallang would not have completed his

introduction had he left his clan aside. This is related to the game '*U tsoa kae?*' (Where do you come from?) in Sesotho. In this game one, is expected to recite praises of his clan to prove that he knows it and knows himself. This is because the praises in the game contain certain descriptions of oneself, especially mannerisms related to one's social group. It also promotes one's eloquence and ability to recall what one has been taught. Reference made by the accordion artists to their clans reflects their social identification and, in addition it upholds the culture of the Basotho, and promotes its continuity even in the coming generations.

Mokhiba and Phallang's intention is to make their clan people aware that they are well represented in the music circles, not only that but, they are expected to support them either by buying their cassettes or attending their concerts. The other reason is that they want to express their pride for what they are and, expect other people to develop their love towards their social identification.

### **c) Names places of origin**

When one introduces oneself, one factor that contributes a lot is the place where one comes from. Having been told about the parents and clans of artists then follows the places where they come from, as one way of getting to know them better. This is a common trend globally where humans are socially identified by the places of our origin. Turner (1982:17) defines social identity as the process of locating oneself or another person within a system of social categorisation used by a person to define him or herself. This practice is also common even among the Basotho. It is found in their daily conversation, even in their oral traditions such as praise poetry and *lifela*. The mention of one's place of origin in accordion music is in line with the Basotho lifestyle. In daily conversation, when one behaves in an odd manner, Basotho normally ask derogatory questions like '*Hana u tsoa kae?*' Or '*Motho eo o tsoa kae?*' (By the way where do you come from? or where does this person come from?) This is done with an intention to find the better way of dealing with such a person.

This question is meant to make such a person aware that he is not welcomed at all in that area or in the discussion because he is not knowledgeable about the topic or the lifestyle of those engaged in the discussion. Mention of one's place of origin helps a lot when it comes to one's identity. Among the Basotho, it carries with it a sense of pride that one comes from a certain place. Very few Basotho are shy to mention their places of origin, which is why, even some of those who reside in towns and have built residential houses in towns, still prefer to be buried in their original places of birth. This shows the attachment that one has to the place of his birth or origin of his ancestors. Wells (1994: 275) says that the importance of one's home is to a certain extent a form of a singer's own identity, as it centres on geographical and family background.

Accordion artists, like the rest of the Basotho, uphold this attachment even in their songs, as will be shown in the following paragraphs. Identification with place is also common in praise poetry, especially for chiefs. Poets may mention places of their birth, places under their direct rule, places where the fighting occurred, places they passed on their way to and from a fight. One example worth analysing from the praise poems is that of Letsie II that goes like this:

*Morena ea lutseng lerakong,  
O lutse Likhoele, thab'a Makhatha,  
Lerakong la Mojakisane la khale.*

Chief who resides at the wall,  
Who resides at Likhoele, thab'a Makhatha,  
At the old wall of Mojakisane.

(Mangoaela 1988: 173)

In the above lines we observe that the poet tells us about the place where Letsie reigns, in Likhoele, in the district of Mafeteng.

Accordion artists mention such places because they are their places of origin and they are proud to have been born there. But, since these artists are Basotho, they have adapted tradition into the current situation in which they live in order to continue with oral traditions and to operate smoothly within the society in which they live.

Accordion artists in their music draw their knowledge from oral tradition features that have been mentioned above. The retention of some of the oral aspects makes their poetry acceptable to the present generation because it reflects the traditional style that makes Basotho to identify themselves with. Lead-singer, Koetlisi, in **Monyase No.2** (1997), is one artist who speaks proudly about his places of origin in his songs. He comes from the village of Machoaboleng, in Mapoteng area in the district of Berea. From his song titled *Moletsane* he says:

*Hae, haeso Mapoteng,  
Ke hopotse Moletsane,  
Ke hopotse Mapoteng lingakeng,  
Haeso Ha `Makhoroana,  
Haeso Machoaboleng motseng.*

My home, where my parents live,  
I remember Moletsane,  
I remember Mapoteng, at the doctors,  
My home Ha `Makhoroana,  
My home at Machoaboleng village.

What one learns from the above lines is that Koetlisi informs us of the places around his home, and he is proud that he comes from Mapoteng area, that is why he even acknowledges and sings about it publicly. The mention of these places not only brings glory to him but, to the society that lives around those areas and emphasises, that they have to be aware that they have one of their sons who is an artist, who has made their area popular and famous in the music circles. It also makes the residents to promote him by buying his cassettes and to develop love towards him as he also loves them and sings about their area.

Another example is taken from **Bo-mme ba Maphutseng** (2002) from their song *Se nna le mpotsa* (Do not pester me with questions). The solo goes:

*He se nna le mpotsa ke haile kae,  
Ke haile Mohale's Hoek e tšoeu fate li ntšo,  
Mane Maphutseng pakeng tsa Lesala le `Makhosi,*

Hei! Do not pester me with questions as to where I live,

I live at Mohale's Hoek that is white with black trees.  
There at Maphutseng between Lesala and `Makhosi,

`Marapelang, the lead-singer, like Koetlisi, feels attached to her place Maphutseng, which is between the two villages of Lesala and `Makhosi, in the district of Mohale's Hoek. She gives the exact location of the village to prove that it is her home; she is familiar with the surrounding areas. She wants to prove to the public that she really knows the place as she grew up there.

As Phafoli (2006:3) puts it, artists feel attached to their places, they feel that they belong to the social groups of their homes hence their singing about them. As artists they share common social identification with their fellow villagers, their lives are dependent on them as they lead interdependent lives with them. The fact that they retain intimacy with their places strengthens their relationship with them. Koetlisi and `Marapelang refer specifically to those villages where they were born and grew up. They are attached to the people of those areas. What comes first in their minds is a sense of belonging; they belong to those places physically and spiritually. They are proud to belong to those places because the places contributed a lot to their well-being.

#### **d) Names of chiefs**

Allegiance to chiefs among Basotho is a tradition that establishes close relations between a chief and his people including the poet. In the past, chieftaincy was seen as an institution that provided safety and security and the chief was an overseer of the social well-being of the subjects. It was not surprising that most poets identified themselves with their chiefs as their subjects. This type of association displayed their sense of belonging and attachment to their chiefs. In poetry of Mahe, the warrior of Lerotholi it is said:

*Amporel'a mor'a Mokhachane,  
Thak'a `Moroso ke hloele bosiu,  
Hlaba u tlake motho oa Lerotholi.*

Umbrella of the son of Mokhachane,  
The age-mate of `Moroso I left in the night,  
Pierce and kill the subject of Lerotholi.

(Mangoaela 1988: 164)

Mahe associates himself with Lerotholi, the grandson of Moshoeshoe the son of Mokhachane who is his chief. Being the subject of Lerotholi, he feels attached to him and he belongs to him as such, he is proud of him and publicly announces allegiance to him.

With modern changes, people have mixed feelings towards this institution but, regardless of that, chiefs, even at present still play an important role in administration and provide more basic social help to the public than elected members of parliament. Chiefs are involved in curbing crime, settling disputes at primary courts, providing evidence for national official documents, land overseers and distributors. They are the first people to whom criminal reports are directed. In terms of workload as compared to parliamentarians, chiefs do a lot of work.

Some Basotho still feel that chieftaincy is a traditional institution worth improving and should not be done away with. As an institution that is closer to the people, it is popular and admired by some people like accordion artists who, like the rest of the traditionalists, still feel that it is part of Basotho history that needs to be sustained. Sentle (1996) in his song, *Taung* (At Taung), sings:

*Le mpotsa lebitso la k'hasete,  
Ke motho oa Taung Ha Moletsane,  
Ke busoa ke ngoan'a ka Bulane.*

You ask me the name of the cassette,  
I am the person of Taung Ha Moletsane,  
I am the subject of my child Bulane.

Sentle identifies himself with the Principal Chief, Moletsane and, later becomes specific and talks about his village chief who is Bulane.

**A Matšo Makaota** (1994) from their song *Ea nka bana* (It fled with children) the solo goes:

*Le botsa ke busoa kae,  
Ke motho oa `Makhoabane le Theko,  
Ntate Mathe-a-Lira mochesi.*

You ask me who is my chief,  
I am the person of `Makhoabane and Theko,  
Father Mathe-a-Lira, my friend.

In **A Matšo Makaota** the lead-singer sings about `Makhoabane who is the Chieftainess, Theko being his chief.

The artists are proud of having a sense of belonging, mentioning their chiefs with the respect and pride that they deserve. One will observe that, chieftaincy is another aspect of one's identity, especially among the Basotho. Most Basotho, living in Lesotho, have a negative attitude towards people who live in the RSA locations or towns as one will hear them say: '*Ha ke ngoan'a ntlo ea nomoro*' (I am not a child of the numbered house). The implication here is that somebody who lives in a numbered house has no traditional identity, has no chief or culture; therefore, he is not worthy recognition by the traditional society. That is why there was great resistance to the numbering of houses in Lesotho when the Low Housing Scheme was introduced in the late 1970s, people preferred to be identified by the village or the chief of where the Low Housing Scheme was located rather than numbering them. Some people refused point blank to number their houses. The artists could be said to still uphold the tradition of chieftaincy and would like to see it continuing even for the coming generations.

For one to be a sociable Mosotho, one has to show allegiance to one's chief and provide him with the support he may need, as he is there to serve everybody equally without partiality. For instance, it is the chief who chooses the site for one's burial, it is him also who urges the males to go and do some digging; it is him who sees to it that there is peace and order during the night vigil. That is why, even initiates are taught to respect the chief, the institution of chieftainship as well as the elders. If chieftainship is disrupted or done away with, peace and order at local level may be at stake. The artists, through their music, urge the rest of the Basotho to adhere to and respect this valuable institution.

e) **Nurture of the artist**

Most accordion artists grew up as herd boys, for instance, Puseletso Seema, Apollo Ntabanyane, Mantša Lephoi and many others. Some artists received primary education and very few obtained post-primary education examples are Bokaako Khoatsane, Rethabile Mokete, Justice Kolosoa and few others. This was the situation at the time when the research was undertaken. Artists sing about how they grew up in different situations either under their guardians or parents. This sub-topic adds more to knowing the historical background of the artists. In *lifela*, Motsoahae says:

*Mohla likhomo li tsohang li thobile,  
Borakapane, ha Ramapulane,  
Ke li thole ha Mohlehli mabalane.*

The day the cattle slipped away,  
At Brakpan, ha Ramapulane,  
I found them on the plains of Mohlehli.  
(Coplan 1987:18)

Motsoahae relates his own experience of how as a herd boy, cattle got lost and he had to go in search of them. Looking after animals is one of the challenging experiences among the Basotho boys as it provides them with manly experiences.

In accordion music, as is the case in migrant workers' songs, artists, as composers are also heroes of performance. That is, as Phafoli (1994:29) puts it, the poet in *lithoko* praises chiefs and warriors while in *lifela* they praise themselves referring to their personal experiences. This is the case with accordion music where artists speak about their own personal experiences and, they are the heroes of the composition. In the following examples, the study analyses personal experiences of artists as they grew up.

Our first example will be taken from the group by the name of **Ho checha hoa ramo** (2003), in whose song, *Matsatsi a bophelo* (Days of my life), the soloist sings:

*Matsatsing a bophelo ba ka,  
Ke ne ke e-ja monakalali, lielioetla.  
Khale ke sa le ngoanana,  
Ke ne ke lisa khomo tsa ntate.*

*'Na ke hotse le bashanyana,  
Ke hotse ka thata, ke mang ea hanang oee!*

During the days of my life,  
I used to eat *Cyperus compactus*, *Rynchosia Totta*,  
In the past when I was a girl,  
I used to herd my father's cattle,  
I grew up in the company of boys,  
I grew up in hardships, who negates my statement?

The song relates how, `Mateboho, who is a lead-singer, looked after her father's cattle as she grew up regardless of her being female. This is typical of some families where there is no male child, to look after the animals. `Mateboho relates to us the type of plant foods that she ate as a herd girl and, that she grew up in the midst of boys. One might say these are hardships that she experienced as a girl but, in actual fact, they were not hardships at all, it was just a normal life like it happens with any Mosotho child whose parents have animals. From the experience that one had and from the interviews that one had with other artists, looking after the animals in the company of boys is normal and, girls are not discriminated against, they are just part of the team like anybody else. This was the case with the famous Puseletso Seema who looked after her uncle's cattle while at Mahobong.

The other example is taken from group known as **Haeso Terateng** (2004) from their song, *Likhomo (Cattle)*. The song goes:

*'Na ke holetse koana Ha Mojela,  
Ke holisitsoe ke ntat'a mafahla,  
Ke bua ka ntate ndoda Thabiso,  
Ntat'a `Mapale le `Mapalenyana,  
Ha kea holela tafoleng, ha ke khalase,  
Ke holetse pakeng tsa majoe.*

I myself grew up at Ha Mojela,  
I was under the custodian of the father of the twins,  
I speak of father Thabiso,  
The father of `Mapale and `Mapalenyana,  
I did not grow up on the table, I am not the glass,  
I grew up between the rocks.

The song narrates how the artist grew up and that life was not that easy for him, it was tough, regardless of that he had to make it through thick and thin. Among Basotho, it is a

common practice for one to grow up with one's relatives. There are a variety of reasons for this practice. A few of them are as follows: when one's family does not have a child at all there is a mutual agreement with one family that has children that it should spare one of their children for the sake of the other family. In cases where the family did not have an heir, a boy from one family was transferred by mutual agreement to another family to be an heir in such a family. Although the artist's home is in Terateng on the south-western part of Mafeteng, he had to grow up at Ha Mojela, on the north-western part of the Mafeteng town. He grew up at one of the relatives homestead. His assessment is that life was not easy for him at his relatives' homestead, it was tough, and that is why he says that he did not grow up on the table like a glass but between rocks. Although he appreciates the fact that he grew up at Thabiso's family and, that life was not that easy, he is proud because those difficulties that he experienced made him a real man, a man who could face the world without fear, a man who could make his way through thick and thin.

These songs take us back to our contention that most artists grew up under difficult conditions. These artists find it compelling for them to relate their life history even when singing, that is, they are not ashamed of the type of life they led during their childhood, as experience is the best teacher. Instead, they are proud of their past because it has made them what they are today. The message they want to put across to the society is that one should never feel ashamed of one's past, because it is educative. It is the history that leads to one's future, one's development in life. Reference to one's growth at an early age relates to the history of the Basotho nation, which the young generation has to be familiar with. That is, for one to move forward, one has to be familiar as to where one comes from. It is not surprising that, accordion music is currently referred to as Basotho music or Basotho traditional music because it reflects experiences of Basotho lives in general.

**f) Marriage life**

Marriage is another aspect that artists refer to in their songs. Marriage, among the Basotho, is one of the most important customs as it unites families, leading to an extended type of family. There are many steps that are followed before two are crowned

as husband and wife in a normal marriage process. Among others, the two families have to meet and agree on *bohali* (bride-price), *ho hlabisa bohali* (killing an ox for concluding the marriage arrangements), *litlhobohano* (two families' gathering where the newly-weds are guided on peaceful married life) and *ho isa moroetsana bohali* (to accompany a bride to her husband's home). These steps are still followed even today, although the couple sometimes goes to church but customary practices are still adhered to. In the final step, before a bride goes to her husband's home, the two are briefly cautioned by their family members on how to live together as a happy family. But, regardless of such attempts, problems still arise in marriages. These are some of the problems that accordion artists address in their music, problems that they encounter in their married lives. In songs where the lead-singer is male, he usually addresses the problems created by his wife but, where the lead-singer is a female, she complains about her husband. It should be noted that artists hardly sing about good things that happen in their matrimony.

The first example is taken from **Bo-mme ba Ha Mootsinyane** (2003) from their song, *Ua nkotla, ua nkhakhatha* (You beat me, you beat me repeatedly.) This group is made up of women who originally come from Maphutseng, in the Mohale's hoek district. The lead-singer sings:

*Monna ke enoa oa nqaka,  
Oa nkotla oa nkhakhatha,  
Ha ke robale le bosiu.  
Ke qetoa ke phafa ngoan'a ka,  
O nkile koakoa, o nkile marumo,  
Hoja ke tsebile, nka be ke sa nyaloa.  
Lenyalo ke moleko ke bone,  
Lenyalo moleko oa lihele.*

The husband is here difficult to deal with,  
He beats me, he beats me repeatedly,  
I do not sleep during the night,  
I am finished by the sjambok my child,  
He has taken war-axe, he has taken spears.  
Had I known, I could not have been married,  
Marriage is a devil, I have seen it,  
Marriage is the devil of hell.

The song relates how the husband has repeatedly beaten up his wife to an extent that the wife could no longer bear it. The wife currently stays in the Republic of South Africa where she lives a free life. The lead-singer, `Manapo, informs listeners of how her husband beats her up everyday, especially during the night. ` That is, she has sleepless nights in her house and that affects her life terribly as she hardly takes her rest. She mentions the type of weapons that her husband often uses when he beats her, like war-axe and spear which are dangerous weapons that should not be used to beat a woman, let alone one's wife. She goes on to indicate that, had she known in advance, she could not have been married as marriage is the devil of hell. She brings along her Christian belief that there is hell where demonized souls are dumped for eternal fire.

`Manapo's intention is to display the cruelty of the man who calls himself her husband. It is the type of language that she uses in her song, the type of weapons that her husband uses on her that makes us to sympathize with her and indignantly scorn her husband for his savage cruelty. Indeed, this is how some Basotho men behave towards their wives. `Manapo has brought this issue to the attention of the public and that something must be done about it hence, the Sexual Violence Act of 2004.

The other song that deals with marriage problems is sung by the late Maema, who was gunned down in broad daylight at Lekhaloaneng in the town of Maseru. Maema (1986), from his song, *Moratuoa* (My lover), lodges a complaint against his wife's infidelity. He sings:

*A k'u bone moratuoa, a k'u bone,  
Re loanela masaoana,  
O ratana le bashanyana,  
A k'u bone, a k'u bone hle,  
A k'u bone ntate ngoetsi ea hao,  
E ratana le bashanyana...*

Just see my lover, just see,  
We are fighting over petty things,  
You are in love with boys,  
Just see, please just see,  
Just see my father, your daughter-in-law,  
Is in love with boys.

As indicated earlier it is common for each sex to complain of the other in marriage life. As against `Manapo, who complains about her husband, Maema has a grudge against his wife, and accuses her of extra-marital affairs. His main worry is that his wife does not go out with grown up men but boys. He is even pleading with his father to talk to his wife about this problem. It is procedural among Basotho that when a husband has a complaint against his wife he should call the family including the parents to handle it. Maema is aware of this procedure which is why he is asking his father to intervene. This is also a lesson to other husbands that before expelling their wives, they should consult with their elders as Maema does. The concern raised by Maema is a call for other females to refrain from indulging in extra-marital affairs as that jeopardises their marriage.

**g) Working experience in the Republic of South Africa**

Basotho started working in the Republic of South Africa from as far back as 1867 with the opening of diamond mining in places like Kimberley. Some Basotho men went to the mines to get money in order to buy guns, to buy cattle for marriage, and others to pay hut tax demanded by the colonial authorities. But, of late, with the deterioration of agriculture in Lesotho, most males had to go to the mines for serious economic reasons. It was during this period of erosion of manpower those migrants workers' songs *lifela* emerged. Coplan (1985:17) writes:

In composing *lifela*, migrant *likheleke* (eloquent persons) have developed the potential of forms such as *lithoko* for interpreting and ordering their relationships to family, community, work, and fellow workers. *Lifela* help to resolve the contradictions between village and mine domains of experience, relating self-image to social values in the total environment. As mining replaced the challenges of earlier times, migrants sought poetic self-definition as modern heroes.

One observes that the migrant labour practice by Basotho is one hundred and forty years old and it has had a great impact on the lives of the Basotho in general. It is not surprising that even the accordion artists, just like *lifela* poets who have worked in the Republic of South Africa, raise the experiences they had in their songs. One sees smooth continuity of Basotho oral traditions in different forms from unadulterated praise poetry to *lifela* and

accordion music. In accordion music, we find the mixture of both African and Western cultures. This is what Nketia (1975:17) refers to as the creation of new Western-derived African music, as music that is based on African melody and rhythm but that exploits Western harmony techniques while as well employing both African and Western musical instruments. He goes further to say that knowledge of traditional African music, in its social context, is a prerequisite for understanding the contemporary musical scene and gaining some insight into the musical experience as it relates to Africans' personal and social lives. The artists' contact with the outside world has not brought death to their culture but, has nourished it hence their adaptation to the modern music forms that resuscitate their oral traditions.

To most artists, life in the Republic of South Africa has not been an easy one and this is raised in their songs. One such song is by **Mofata-Seliba No.2** (1996) from the song, *Bophuthatsoana*. The group is led by Puseletso Seema. In the song under discussion, the solo goes:

*E itse ke ea mokoting ka fumana lengolo la 'm'e.  
Taba li ne li le mpe tsa lengolo leo li bua ka tlala, tlhobolo.  
A re le mosali eo o mo nyetseng enoa o setse a kenya  
masoha ntlong,  
Khomo li fula kamora' ntlo ea hao.  
A re: Ha ke u romelle feela ke khenne ee!*

It was when I was going down the shaft, when I got my mother's letter.  
The contents of the letter were disturbing, were about hunger, and lack of clothing.  
She said that even the woman you have married admits the lads in your house.  
Cattle graze behind your house.  
She said: I do not merely send you this message, but I am angry.

The artist received a letter that upset him while about to go into the heart of the earth to dig gold. The letter related problems of hunger, lack of clothing and his wife's infidelity that angered the mother-in-law. Like any other Mosotho male, Thabiso had gone to RSA for economic reasons, to fight hunger and lack of clothing as indicated by his mother's letter. Unfortunately, his family could not escape one of the common social errors of an

extra-marital affair on the side of his wife. This is the problem that is raised by poets in migrants' songs. It is, therefore, a general concern that affects Basotho families. As one of the concerns, the artists find themselves being bound to refer to it in their music so that something must be done to address it. As an example, the National Union of Mineworkers has sought for a solution by requesting mines to allow workers' families to visit them frequently and, to set up convenient accommodation for husbands to stay with their families while at work.

This song shows how sensitive and observant accordion artists are in selecting topics that are suitable to be captured by their music. Since it directly touches on the social welfare of the Basotho, it makes every Mosotho to identify with the accordion music as it highlights aspects that affect his life as a Mosotho.

In another song *Ke siile 'm'e* (I have left my mother) by **Bo-mme ba Maphutseng** (2002) we are told about how the lead-singer left her children in Lesotho in the care of her mother, while she left for South Africa. The song goes:

*Ke siile 'm'e le bana hae,  
Ke ntšitsoe ke mathata a lefatše koana hae,  
Ke siile bana ba ka lapeng,  
Ke ba siile le nkhošo 'Manthabuoā.  
Mpheng chelete ke lebe Lesotho.*

I have left children with my mother at home,  
I left my home because of the social problems,  
I left my children at home,  
I left them with grandmother 'Manthabuoā,  
Give me money so that I can go to Lesotho.

'Marapelang being a female could be said to be representative of many females who have left Lesotho and gone to South Africa to seek employment. This shows that the erosion of manpower from Lesotho to South Africa does not only affect the men folk but, even the female folk. The flocking of Lesotho women into RSA has been the trend for some decades, as they go to RSA to seek employment. Fortunately, for the artist, her life has been uplifted by her involvement in the accordion music production. As she could not

make ends meet to cater for the basic needs of the children, she had to leave them behind to fend for them in RSA. In order to have freedom of movement, she left the children behind this is purposely done as some of these women engage themselves in prostitution activities that need single females.

One of the grandmothers was overheard complaining about her daughter who always brings her young ones and dumps them in her house and returns to South Africa. Her anger was based on the fact that her daughter does not support them and so she was making life difficult for her. The artist raises the point so that authorities in Lesotho do something to curb the erosion of manpower and, alleviate poverty that has hit the country. Although currently there is free primary education that has been introduced, poverty is still an outstanding problem.

### **5.3.2 SOCIAL TRENDS COMMON TO ACCORDION ARTISTS**

Social trends common to accordion music refer to general societal concerns or experiences which affect the Basotho society. Although only one or two songs are given per sub-topic they are considered as being representative of the entire artists' community. Sub-topics to be covered in this section include advice, extra-marital affair, death, portrayal of women, health problems, tribute to accordion artists and customs. Accordion artists are said to have drawn this practice from oral traditions like initiates and migrant workers' songs in that in these genres the composers are the heroes in their performance. Regardless of minor differences, accordion music is accepted as Sesotho oral tradition, like any other types, as it addresses those aspects that affect lives of Basotho, and their experiences as the nation nowadays. Bebey (1975:17) says that music is an integral part of African life from cradle to grave and that African music covers the widest possible range of expression. Okpewho (1992:137), in support of the preceding assertion, points out that there is hardly any occasion or activity in traditional African life that is not accompanied by song and chants. In the same manner, accordion artists try their best to cover different aspects that are directly or indirectly at their disposal. This is in line with their response on the question regarding what their music is about. Although they gave

different responses in different words, the essence of it was that they sing about human experiences in general.

Accordion artists present human experiences in a poetic manner not necessarily as factual accounts. This is in line with the poetic licence that poets have with regard to chanting of poetry or in their songs. Daiches (1981:135) says that the poet does not tell the literal truth about the real world, but presents a picture of an ideal world which stimulates us to endeavour to copy it in our behaviour. This is characteristic of our accordion artists, the realities they present in their music are not the scientific truth, but truth highlighted in a poetic manner to suit one's goal. This is in line with Bebey's (1975:3) view of African music in that its aim is to express life in all its aspects through the medium of sound, and that it expresses the feelings and life of the entire community. In the case of accordion artists they express the feelings of the Basotho nation. That is, as it is described, the African musician is sensitive to a wide range of influences and capable of assimilating them into his own life. With this in mind, the general topics that will be dealt with in the following paragraphs are presented in a poetic style that best suits the artists.

**a) Advice**

As human beings who long for a healthy society that is stable, accordion artists, in some of their songs give advice to different people of different levels. Whatever advice they give, is for public consumption, and people can either consider it or ignore it. One may say that they are aware of the role they have to play in their society, in that their entertainment is multi-purpose hence, their reference to various social aspects. Making a plea or giving a piece of advice in a song and poetry is common among the Basotho which is why even the accordion artists in the present days still practise it. To exemplify in one Mokorotlo-war song, men are advised to be manly and brave when they go to war. They are warned that some will die and others will return home alive. The song informs them that those who die at the battlefield are buried in the veld not at home. The song encourages them to fight skillfully and avoid being killed in order to return alive. In praise poetry, the poet may make a humble request to the chief while at the same time he is still praising him.

In Letsie II's praise poems, where he was fighting with his grandfather Masupha, the poet says:

*Hataka butle, Shoabahla ea Libata!  
Koena tšoela mathe, mor'a Mokhachane!*

Tread gently, Great Soldier of the Beasts!  
Crocodile spit, son of Mokhachane!  
(Mangoela, 1988:175)

Letsie II was angry at the people of his grandfather for nearly killing him in his first attack, he had to retreat and re-organised his army for a second attempt. In the second attack, he managed to override his enemies, and the poet humbly requests him to be cool, not to fight anymore and to bear with his enemies as he has already defeated them. The poet advises Letsie II to spit on them as a sign of forgiveness according to Sesotho custom. This is a common practice among the Basotho; even when one boy has wounded the other in a stick-fight, he is asked to spit on his wound, to show forgiveness and again for a speedy healing of the wound.

Accordion artists also give advice on various topics. The first example is taken from Matsie (1995) in his in the song, *Le thole* (You keep quiet). It goes:

*Le ke le thole hanyane,  
Ke bua le banna,  
Mosali' a ka phutha leleme la hao,  
Hobane leleme le kenya batho litabeng.*

Just keep quiet a bit,  
I am talking to the men,  
My wife holds your tongue,  
Because the tongue implicates people.

The artist is pleading with his wife and other females to hold their tongues while he speaks with the males. He specifically requests his wife because it is not normal for a female to interfere in males' business. Matsie is simply advising his wife to refrain from participating in discussions that may lead her in trouble. He does this because he loves his wife, and wants to retain her dignity and respect among her people. This he does because,

in Sesotho we say *Molomo ha o na khoele* (The mouth has no strings to keep it tight), meaning that it is difficult to control oneself as one speaks. Again keeping in mind the Sesotho proverb that says: *Mosali ha a na morena* (Woman has no chief), meaning, a woman can say anything to anybody at any time regardless of one's status even if one is a chief. Bearing in mind such sayings, Matsie is afraid his wife might say some things that might anger their opponents. He feels he would rather be the one to handle it and protect his wife's dignity.

Although it might seem that the artist is advising his wife, he is also advising the general public in that it should be cautious in whatever it says. It is up to whoever listens to the song to either take it or leave it because, in reality, it is the tongue that becomes the source of conflict and misunderstanding. This shows that artists are aware of how dangerous the tongue could be in people's lives.

In another song, Moeketsi le Sentšo group (no date) gives a general piece of advice to everybody who may listen to their song. In the song *Ha meleko e tla* (When temptations come your way), the group asks people to bear with any temptations that might lead them into trouble because, by so doing, they will be saving their skins. The lead-singer says:

*Ha meleko e tla u iphpanye,  
Ha lira li tla u iphpanye,  
U etse e ka ha u bone,  
Hoba moleko o hloloa ka ho thola,  
Hoba moleko o hloloa ka thapelo.*

When temptations come ignore them,  
When enemies come ignore them,  
Just pretend as though you are not aware of them,  
Because temptation is overridden by silence,  
Because temptation is overridden by prayer.

Maphale, a lead-singer in the group, advises people to try by all means to ignore any form of temptation that may come their way. According to him, silence and prayer are the best solutions to most problems. We may say that Maphale has used his indigenous knowledge of Sesotho customs that silence is the cure to trouble, and supplemented it by

the allusion to Christianity that prayer also solves one's problems. As a peace loving citizen, Maphale wants the Basotho nation to retain its peace between individuals, among the groups even at national level. That is why he proposes possible means of avoiding conflicts that may arise and disturb peace. If people can go by his suggestions Lesotho would retain its status of Moshoeshoe's peace, where he used to say peace is his sister.

**b) Extra-marital affair**

An extra-marital affair is defined as a relationship outside marriage on the part of married individuals. It is not a custom but a human weakness that seems to be all pervasive in its being practised across all ages. This practice seems to be one of those aspects that accordion artists sing about. Some artists seem to condone it while others disapprove. For those who approve of it, they seem to be reaping some fruits out of it, while those who negate it refer to it as a display of loose behaviour and source of conflicts in most families. Some artists sing about it from a distance, that is, it is not their real live experiences, while others seem to have experienced it or are still experiencing it. Among Basotho, there seem to have been some signs of it in olden days, although it was not legalised. We are informed that, when the husband had gone away and returned late in the evening, he would, as he approached his compound, blow a whistle or start by reciting praises loudly. This exercise was meant to warn any man relaxing in his house to quit as the owner was around. If indeed a man was present he would leave the house silently unlike nowadays when most husbands are anxious to catch their wives red-handed with their lovers.

Extra-marital affairs are another topic common in accordion music. In some songs it seems to be influenced by prostitution motives. In many songs, especially those sung by women, there is appreciation of this relationship and they even boast of it. This is the case in the two female groups; **Bo-mme ba Mehahlaula** (no date) and **`M`e oa Maphutseng Two** (2005).

**Bo-mme ba Mehahlaula** (no date) from the song *Mong'a monna* (The owner of the husband), the female artist says:

*Mong'a monna ha a loana,  
Le mo joetse a ipolae,  
Ha a loana le mo joetse,  
A nke chefo a ipolae,  
'Na ke kene ka mahetla,  
Ke ja mafura, ke itholetse.*

The owner of the husband when she fights,  
Tell her to commit suicide,  
When she fights tell her,  
To take a poison and commit suicide,  
I am hemmed in riches,  
I eat what I like silently.

Romantic affairs outside marriage are known to be private matters but, in this song, the female lover publicly sings about it, and proud of it. She is indirectly talking to the wife of her lover that if she feels like fighting she can commit suicide. She uses discontinuous line repetition in the first four lines to emphasize that she does not care whether the wife complains or not. The artist is so arrogant that she does not hide that she is swimming in riches, complaints or not; this is contained in the last two lines where there is a repetition of similar idea in different words. The fact that she is hemmed in riches, and eats what she likes proves that she is really living a healthy and wealthy lifestyle.

In another song of similar nature, *Mahlalela* (Unemployed man) by **Mme oa Maphutseng Two** (2005):

*Mahlalela ha u na thuso,  
Ha u na chelete,  
Ha u na sesepa,  
Empa lerato namba oane.*

Unemployed you are useless,  
You have no money,  
You have no soap,  
But concerning love, you are number one.

Female artist expresses her gratitude to the unemployed man, *mahlalela*, of whom it is said although he does not have money but special love. That is, romantically he is perfect

as compared to those males who have money. Normally, these men are said to be romantically better because they are always available when they are needed as compared to husbands who spent few days at home and after sometime they return to their workplace.

These female artists are echoed by one male group **Tlou Maokhola** (1996), in their song *Ha kea nka mosali* (I have not taken a wife.) In this song, he points out that he has not taken a woman but has taken love and that people should sympathize with him. He even states categorically, may be to the husband, which the wife belongs to him as a husband, while the wife's love belongs to him as a paramour. In his own words he says: "*Ha kea nka mosali, ke nkile lerato, mosali ke oa hau, lerato ke la ka,*" (I have not taken a wife, I took love, the wife is yours, and love is mine.)

One may wonder why this type of behaviour comes from some females, and that they even make it public. Some may say this is due to evolutionary change that seems to be transforming our music. Views on this attitude may vary depending on the target market of the artists. If it is women, what type of women, loose women or disciplined ones? What one could say is that these artists are modern women who are not held down by customs and traditions of their societies; they are free to exercise their rights at any time opportunity arises. As to why they publicly relate these private matters, one might say it is because most of them are in the Republic of South Africa, and have no traditional links with their in-laws who may rebuke them for this type of lewd songs.

The type of life they lead might be said to be loose hence, their reflection of it in their songs. That is, they live in a situation where they make money through prostitution, as they are attached to husbands who have left their wives in Lesotho and are proud of it. Theirs is to display their freedom, and independence from traditional values that pin them down when in Lesotho. Their behaviour is in line with Okpewho's (1992:105) view that, personal experiences and circumstances in which artists frequently work may be said to have contributed to the formation of their personal style. It looks like these females would like other women to follow suit and break the chains of traditional prisons.

### c) Dishonesty

Dishonesty is described as a state of being untruthful, lying, cheating or using ways of obtaining things through fraudulent means. From the information gathered through interviews, radio programmes and in funerals of accordion artists, this is one of the prevalent aspects among the accordion artists and has led to mistrust and conflicts between them.

Dishonesty, as human frailty, is even reflected in our oral traditional genres like folktales and proverbs. There are trickster tales like that of 'Hare and the lion' where the hare cheats the lion by eating butter and later by fastening the lion's tail to the roof of a newly built hut and, having done that, the hare called for the hail that killed the lion. The hare does this after the two had collected enough food for themselves, where the hare had played a minor role in the collection of food but, clever as he was, became the owner of the entire loot. We also have Sesotho proverbs that reflect how deceitful people can be in life, such as; "To smear a person with membrane, To be enticed by a limping blesboek as it passes, A person who helps the chick to sleep, To enter the skin of lion" and many others (Mokitimi: 1997). The folktale and the proverbs show that vices such as deceit or dishonesty have always been a concern of the people. Dishonesty, as human weakness, is part of people's lives, hence, its continued presence, even among accordion artist these days.

Dishonesty among them has led to the break up of many accordion groups, and that has resulted in terrible animosity between artists, in some incidents, there have been plots to hijack or to ambush other artists. For the purpose of this study, not much will be divulged in regarding this aspect; focus will be on the quoted lines. The conflicts seem to be recurrent, as every group that exists faces new challenges and new forms of dishonesty. Artists mirror dishonesty that affects them, or that they have experienced in their lives. To them dishonesty is a burning issue that affects their social and economic lives. It contributes a lot to their survival or death as artists.

The first song is drawn from **Moketa Special** (2005), the song is *U mphetohetse* (You have turned against me). The quoted lines from his song read thus:

*Kajeno lena u mphetohetse,  
Ho tšepa motho ke ho pokotha noha,  
Motho ke senokoane khaitsetli ea Ntsibolane,*

Today you have turned against me,  
To trust a person is to pocket a snake,  
The person is a rascal the brother of Ntsibolane.

Moketa seems to have had a problem with one of his friends, whom people suppose to have been a team-mate in the group. He had his trust in him as a true friend but, all did not go well as expected. In the first line, he uses apostrophe that enables him to directly speak to his friend as though he is face to face with him. At the back of his mind, he knows quite well that his friend would one way or the other, sooner or later, listen to the song and get the message meant for him. In the second line, he uses an emergent proverb that describes how deceitful people can be. Likening a person to a snake shows how dangerous people can be at times. That is, to trust a person is just like putting a snake in one's pocket. A pocket refers to closeness, as if in one's trousers one puts a deadly snake. Oh what a risk! Every trouser has a pocket, having a snake in one's pocket shows intimacy, and attachment to it because one trusts it. But the very snake could be a poisonous enemy which could bite any time it chose. In the third line, he describes a human being as a rascal, something that does not need anybody's trust at all.

These lines could be said to be a reflection of bitterness that looms in the heart of the artist. He felt he could no longer bear the feeling but chose to explode in order to relieve himself of the tension he was going through. He is warning us as the public, giving a free lecture on the behaviour of human beings at certain times. The warning is that, we should be aware that human beings are untrustworthy, and that we have to be careful in our dealings with them. That is, we need to have our reservations when it comes to friendship.

A similar concern is raised by Moeketsi le Sentšo (no date) group in the song, *Motsoalle* (Friend), when the lead-singer sings:

*Motsoalle, mokhotsi,  
Ke sa tla u tšepa joang,  
U mpuo a hampe,  
U ntšenya lebitso,  
U nqabanya le batho.*

Friend, friend,  
How will I ever trust you again,  
You speak ill of me,  
You vilify my name,  
You put me at odds with people.

Just like Moketa, Maphale in this group is disturbed by his friend; he is worried about the sustainability of their friendship. One observes that, from the second to the third line, he complains about his friend's defamation of character.

The problem of dishonesty is of great concern to artists, and their plea is that, something good must be done for them to have long term working relations. They are pleading with the supporters and the public at large to help to restore love and trust among them for the betterment of their social and economic status.

#### **d) Death**

Death is one of those aspects that artists sing about in their accordion music. Death is part of life in that each and everybody is destined to die when his time comes. Among Basotho death of a relative is one of those painful experiences, the most touching day is on the funeral day. Okpewho (1992:157) points out that death occupy a crucial position in the cycle of human life. He further indicates that it inspires a variety of reactions from despair to resignation and even courage. As much as death is a threat to human beings, songs are usually composed about it in order to offer condolences to those affected, or sometimes to describe its effect. Basotho used to sing *kolia-malla* (dirge or lament song) after the death of a loved one. It was mostly sung by women, by a lead-singer followed

by the chorus from others who would have joined in the mourning period. One common dirge goes:

Leader: *Ke mohihi, mosala-suping,  
Ke mohihi, mosala-palapaleng.  
Ana ke setse hokae?  
Ka rare ke setse le mang?*

I am a stupid person who remains in ruins,  
I am stupid person who remains in a bare, open field,  
Where do I remain,  
By my father, with whom do I remain?

Chorus: *Ha e-shoa batho, ra sala le mang?  
Ha fela batho, ha sala liesola.  
Ha fela banna, ra sala le mang?*

People died and with whom do we remain?  
People departed and only weaklings remain.  
Real men departed, with whom do we remain?  
(Guma, 1967: 110)

Basotho, in keeping with their eloquence, even compose poetry when death has visited a member of their families. They sing when they are happy, working, playing and even when mourning. On the funeral of Paramount Chief, Griffith, one of the poets composed praise poetry for his son, Seeiso, in these words:

When news of the death arrived in the Maloti,  
Arriving at Motete, at the home of Lelingoana,  
Arriving at Mosuoe of Lelingoana,  
The chief had already saddled up.  
(Damane & Sanders, 1974: 258)

Accordion artists, like the rest of the Basotho who are poetic, continue to sing about death in a poetic manner. One of their songs *Ha Ramarou* says:

*Ntho e hlahileng koana Ha Marou,  
Ha e-shoa Bafokeng, Bakoena,  
Bakhatla ha ke sa bua,  
Tšelisehang 'na ke se ke tšelisehile.*

What has happened at Ha Marou,  
The Bafokeng, the Bakoena died.  
I cannot say anything about the numbers of Bakhatla,  
Be consoled, I am already consoled.  
(Tšeole:1999)

The lead-singer narrates how death attacked different clans at Ha Marou. Different clans suffered great loss of their loved ones, Bafokeng, Bakoena and Bakhatla included. Death kills everybody without discrimination regardless of the clan from which one comes.

It is observed that, even though the artist has been terrified by the death of many people from different clans, he still manages to compose songs about the incident. This is because, as a Mosotho, he has learned from his predecessors that music is one of those genres that relieve pain and stress at times.

In this song, there is an urge to comfort those who have lost their beloved ones and to encourage them to go on with their lives. He speaks to the public in general that it must learn to accept death as a natural phenomenon that will always snatch beloved ones and, as such, we have to adjust to it. That is why in Sesotho it is said that '*lefu leholo ke litšeho*' (that is even in times of death we still laugh), that is we still have to be normal and go on as though nothing has happened.

#### e) **Portrayal of women**

The portrayal of women confines itself to the perception of males towards females. It may relate either to their appreciation or a negative attitude towards them. Before going to the analysis, the study highlights the status of women among Basotho.

Among Basotho the perception of inferiority of women is instilled in the minds of the young males during their growth. This is reflected through the type of language used when some weakness is observed among young males. Any form of weakness is termed effeminate, thus, giving them the impression that females are weak and, they should not in any way, identify themselves with them. We have common sayings like *Ke mosali* meaning that he is a woman, thus referring to a man who is weak. It is no wonder that

Achebe, in *Things Fall Apart* (1958), has Okonkwo who, in his anger, says, “this meeting is for men” while referring to one weak male. It is also worth noting that Okonkwo, during his life, is haunted and tormented by fear of being thought weak as any form of weakness is effeminate just as his father was. The Sesotho language carries along the culture of undermining females. Machobane (1996:34) highlights this point when analysing Sesotho proverbs under Gender Stereotypes. She has the following examples about men: *Monna ke nku h'a ka lla* (Sekese 1975:135) meaning a man is a sheep, he never cries. *Mosali ke pudi, monna ke nku o llela teng* (Sekhukhune, 1989) meaning a woman is a goat and a man is a sheep that bleats inwardly.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned points, it is not surprising to learn that males hardly show appreciation of their female relatives in public. One such example can be found in the anthology of *Lithoko tsa Marena a Basotho* by Mangoaela (1957). In the opening lines or introduction of many praise poems, chiefs and warriors are associated with their grandfathers; fathers or paternal relatives while about three of them refer to their female relatives, among them are those of Moshoeshe 1 and Molomo Mohale. Moshoeshe 1 praises start thus: *Ngoan'a `Mamokhachane, Thesele*, (The child of `Mamokhachane, Thesele), and Molomo's read: *Mor'a `Malibe, Koena ea Matlisa* (The child of `Malibe, the crocodile of Matlisa), (Mangoaela 1957: 5 & 62).

It is worth noting that, even in *lifela*, males still retain a negative attitude towards females. They blame them for social problems such as desertion and infidelity during their absence while they are in the mines. Mokitimi & Phafoli (2001:227-228) refers to a *lifela* poet who complains of his wife, who, on his return from the mines, had deserted the family. The poet complains about his wife because, when he came back home, his family was in ruins, children were like orphans, and there was not even a single domesticated animal. The blame is put on the women while men are not aware that the long periods they spend in the mines leaves women with no option but to go out to make a living. Thus, men are the source of these social problems, had they been in contact with their families, such problems could have been avoided.

With regard to accordion music, Phafoli & Shava (2006: 53-62) observe that there is some form of dynamism in that some male artists publicly appreciate females, although some still hold on to the negative attitude in their creative compositions and artistic renditions. The first two quoted lyrics refer to the negative portrayal of women by male singers and will be followed by two that relate the appreciation of women.

The first one that shows negative feelings towards women reads thus:

*Mosali ke ntja o qeta banna.  
Mosali ke phate, o aloa ke bohle.*

A woman is a dog, she eats men.  
A woman is a bed, she is laid down on by every man.  
(Rutlha Masupha: 1984)

In these lines, the singer disapproves of this behaviour of some women who take pride in misusing their male paramours. According to him, women even take the last cent from male lovers. When it comes to money, their humanity gets lost and they turn out to be vicious night beasts. In this case, one observes that, women are in some cases, thought to be people without moral values by some men. To them, women have no sense of humanity and self-respect; they are a folk of low moral status.

Another quotation comes from *Makhasumane* (Home-brew) by **Tau-ea-Matšekha** (1980) and reads:

*Ntšang likhomo le nyale basali,  
Le tle le bone ha meleko e ata,  
Mosali oa likhomo o kentse meleko sakeng,  
Mosali ea ratanang le bashanyana.*

Take out the bohali cattle and marry women,  
So as to experience the multiplication of wicked deeds,  
Woman married by the cattle has brought wickedness in the kraal,  
The woman who falls in love with the boys.

In these quoted lines, we also observe the negative portrayal of women by men but, this time married women, those staying with their husbands. What annoys this artist is that

these women are formally married, where *'bohali'* has been paid but, they still turn out to be disloyal to their partners. They bring about all sorts of troubles; they fail to meet the expectations of the society. That is, women are traitors who want to finish the male folk. Their husbands, as life-partners, do not quench their lust to devour men, which is why they even extend their love to young male folk.

It is worth noting that the artist quoted above is polygamous with over ten wives, while women are denied polyandry among the Basotho. Ntarangwi (1999:43-45) observes that, even in the Swahili culture and, among some religious sects, men are allowed multiple relationships through polygamy. He is concerned that, songs by male musicians often tell women what to do, and are blamed for the woes of the society, those which befall women and men. His assertion is that, men accuse women of promiscuity though they are also promiscuous. Thus, men maintain double standards and it is not uncommon to find the notion of an unfaithful woman and a virtuous man in many songs.

Then now follow examples that show some form of appreciation of women. This appreciation is limited to certain wives and not to women in general. The fact that there are some artists who admire their loved ones, especially their wives, for whom they find sweet words to express their love, is an acceptable social behaviour worth commending.

Matsie in his song *Lerato la ka* (My love) (1995) goes:

*Oa ka o motle oa ba feta,  
O beleha joaloka khomo ea lesika.*

Mine is the most beautiful of all,  
She gives birth like a thoroughbred cow.

In this song, this artist admires his wife. He even indicates that his wife is the most beautiful of all women. It is not just mere admiration but, it is coupled with love to show that he really cares for his wife. He even praises her because she has bore him children, she is not barren. This is the point which spices his love for his wife. It is of course encouraging for artists to admire other human beings because, by so doing, they

challenge others to sing love songs and admire beauty where it is due. Women, like men, are human beings who have got their own weaknesses and strengths and have to be treated with respect.

On the other hand, the mentioning of the fact that she begets children in great numbers goes back to the understanding that husbands love wives who are fertile and productive. One wonders what would be the reaction of this artist if the wife were unfortunate with regard to bringing forth new life on this earth. Basotho say that '*Botle ba mosali ke ho atisa leloko*' meaning that women's virtue is to bring forth lives. Women who happen to fail to meet this requirement are usually looked down upon and hardly receive respect from both the husband and his relatives. Anyway, this singer has all the reasons to be proud of his wife.

In another outstanding example, the **Tokoloho Band** group's (1993) soloist sings:

*Ke mochesi oa me, ke moratuo,  
Ke mosamo sa ka, ke lerato la ka,  
Boteng ba hae kea futhumala,  
Ke setofo sa ka,  
Bosieong ba hae kea hatsela.*

She is my lover, she is a darling,  
She is my pillow, she is my love,  
In her presence I feel warm,  
She is my stove,  
In her absence I feel cold.

In these lines, the wife is portrayed as a loving woman (*molleloa*), an exemplary and romantically unique wife. The artist is so much attached to his wife, even in practical life. He is so proud of her to the extent that he has composed a song dedicated to her. This artist promotes love within families. He is challenging those husbands who are at loggerheads with their wives. He proposes to them the best ways of handling a love partner by outlining basic approaches to a harmonious relationship.

These artists pose a challenge to other men out there emphasizing that women are important beings with dignified social status and are worth treating as human beings. The artists are indirectly inviting them to be close to their wives for them to feel the warmth and love as they are experiencing it in their families.

**f) HIV/AIDS**

Artists, in accordion music, like the rest of concerned Basotho, are also contributing towards the reduction of the spread of HIV/AIDS through their music. Some of their songs bear a message of AIDS awareness that helps listeners and audience to take necessary precautions in order to avoid being infected. This is in line with Phafoli's (2005: 103-113) observation that, accordion artists raise the national concerns of the society in their songs inclusive of HIV/AIDS. He highlights how accordion artists address the scourge of HIV/AIDs, showing its causes and its impact on the Basotho nation. Before analyzing the songs, the study will briefly provide an account of HIV/AIDS in Lesotho.

The first case of HIV/AIDS was reported in Lesotho in 1986. Since then many attempts have been made by the government, non-governmental organisations and the public either collectively or individually to engage in a campaign against AIDS. To show that HIV/AIDS is Basotho's great concern, His Majesty King Letsie III when opening the parliament in 2002 said:

The cost of HIV/AIDS pandemic in human, social and economic terms is indeed very high. Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa have the highest incidence of infection among people between the ages of 15 and 24 in Africa, according to recent data presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Conference held in Barcelona, Spain. To address the pandemic HIV prevention needs to be a priority for the youth, my government has developed a national policy and strategic plan and has established Lesotho AIDS Prevention Coordination Authority....

The Lesotho Aids Programme Coordinating Authority (LAPCA) was established within the Prime Minister's office to coordinate and implement the National HIV/AIDS Policy

Frame-Work and the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan in Lesotho. The wife of the Prime-Minister, Mrs. `Mathato Mosisili, runs the office. One of LAPCA's duties is to hold workshops for different groups of the society on AIDS awareness. This is in line with the United Nations' concern on National Responses: Turning commitment into action or Political Commitment: where deeds and gestures meet. This is a call for all political leaders to get involved in the fight against AIDS, which is based on the Report on the Global HIV/AIDS 2002 (p.174) and reads;

Presidents and prime ministers throughout Africa, the Americas, the Caribbean, Asia and Eastern Europe are publicly displaying personal commitment to the fight against AIDS. They have recognized that AIDS is not just a health issue; it is fundamental to development, progress and security.

The Lesotho government has shown its commitment and it has instructed each and every ministry to allocate 2% of its budget to AIDS awareness. The Ministry of Education is particularly engaged in the awareness campaign as some of the prescribed texts in schools address issues such as effects and prevention of AIDS. The various forms of mass media also speak freely about the pandemic in different programmes. This is evidenced on different radio stations and in a variety of printed materials. The Ministry of Health working through the government and church hospitals has also embarked on AIDS awareness in Lesotho. In 2005 two prominent contractors donated five Mercedes Benz mini buses worth two million rand to church hospitals in order to help people living with HIV/AIDS. (Radio Lesotho News: 2005).

The first song to be analysed is sung by Mosotho Chakela (2000) and is titled *Lefu le sehlooho* (Terrible disease). The song gives general advice to the whole of Africa about the presence of AIDS and its effects. People are advised to avoid being infected with AIDS in every way, and the artist finds that there is a need to raise awareness, knowledge and HIV prevention. He sings:

*Chaba sa Africa le mamele melao, le mamele likeletso,  
AIDS ke lefu le sehloho, sechaba se felile,*

*Tichere lia ruta le likolong koana ka lefu le sehloho ....  
Liboholi lia bua le lia-le-moeeng,  
Lingaka lia bua lipetlele koana ka lefu lena,  
Baruti ba ea ruta likerekeng Ma-Africa,  
Babusi ba a bua le mamele melao le likeletso.*

African nations be respectful and take heed of advice,  
AIDS is a terrible disease, people are dying,  
Teachers are teaching about this terrible disease,  
Radio announcers are also talking about AIDS on air,  
Doctors talk about it in hospitals  
Church leaders also preach about it in churches  
Political leaders talk about it, listen to advice. `

The song addresses the nations of Africa. As an African, Chakela wishes that his fellow Africans may listen to any piece of advice and avoid being victims of AIDS. To show that it is a general concern, he refers to different people who are engaged in the fight against AIDS such as radio announcers, doctors, church leaders and political leaders. His plea is that, people should listen and consider mending their ways in order to avoid AIDS. Chakela wants to raise the awareness of the listeners or the public to recognize that AIDS is no common disease and has to be avoided by all means. According to the 2002 UNAIDS Report, by the end of 2001 HIV prevalence rate in adults in the age range 15-49 in Lesotho was 31%. Lesotho was in position four worldwide. The situation was as follows: Botswana – 38%, Zimbabwe – 33.7 Swaziland – 33.4 and Lesotho 31%. This is an alarming situation, especially when one compares the figures globally with those of Lesotho. It is found that, globally, by 2001 people living with HIV/AIDS were 40,000,000, in Sub-Saharan Africa 28, 500,000 while in Lesotho there were 360,000 (UNAIDS, 2002: 82).

In another song, *Qoba AIDS* (Avoid AIDS) a group known as **Likheleke tsa Lesotho** (2001) sings:

*Qoba lefu lena mocha oe!  
Ke utloa ba e bolela ha ke batle le ho e bona ka mahlo,  
Haeba u Tomase u bone u tla e bona ka mahlo...  
O joetse le bacha holim'a lefats'e ba qobe lefu le sehlooho.*

Avoid this disease you the youth,  
I have heard about it I do not want to witness it,  
If you are Thomas you want to witness it for yourself you  
will see it,  
Tell the youth the entire world to avoid this terrible disease.

The artist's focus is on the youth who are said to be our future leaders and of course parents to be. These are the people whose lives have to be moulded in such a manner that the world would have a society free of diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The song advises the youths to take care of themselves by refraining and abstaining from sex. The youth are warned about the disease because, at their age, there is a strong urge for sexual activity, and their indulgence accelerates the spread of the pandemic. The artists want the youth to change their behaviour as it is recommended that "knowledge is not enough, but the means of prevention and motivation to change behaviour" (UNAIDS, 2002: 81).

One observes that there is a great concern about the youth infected with AIDS, to an extent that even accordion artists sing about it. This is because statistics show that young men and women aged 15–24 globally are the most affected group and, therefore, countries have to focus on them. When looking at the figures, one observes that by the end of 2001 Lesotho had a population of 984 000 aged 15-49 of which 330,000, that is 31% were living with HIV/AIDS. The figures between 0-14 living with HIV/AIDS read 27,000 by the end of 2001. These figures challenge the nation to embark on strategies to combat the spread of AIDS in every possible way (UNAIDS, 2002: 83).

Accordion artists like the rest of Basotho, are perturbed by this alarming death rate of Basotho nationals and feel obliged to contribute towards educating the nation about HIV/AIDS through music. It is their wish that the message they convey should not fall on deaf ears and that everybody takes precautions against the epidemic.

#### **g) Tribute to accordion artists**

In the previous sub-topics this study discussed death in general terms, but there are instances where accordion artists compose songs in honour of late artists. Artists normally pay tribute to those artists with whom they sang or to any artists who was

known to them who happened to have been loved. This is done with the aim of sharing the artist's importance and the loss encountered by their colleagues. As a token of appreciation and remembrance other artists compose songs about the deceased artist. In Sesotho there is a saying that '*Morena oa shoa lebitso le sale, le sale rehella litlohooana*' (The chief dies but his name remains and it is given to his grandchildren) or '*Pelesa lia shoa meja e sale, e sale bofa lipelesana*' (Donkeys die but straps remain, remain strapping the young ones). In short, these sayings convey the message that, even if one has passed away, his deeds would be remembered, or sometimes to show his importance the young generation may be named after him.

In some cases, a cassette is recorded as tribute. These are intended for fund-raising and monies collected are given to the family of the artist. This was the case with Chakela after the death of Sanko Setenane. It also happened with Lehlohonolo after the death of Tšeole Senone, while Selomo and Mantša made tribute cassettes to Famole Lesia and Thabo Lesholu. In this manner, accordion artists, like other Basotho, still fulfil their Basotho obligations of paying tribute to their loved ones.

Our first example is drawn from the group **Ho checha hoa ramo** (2005), which pays tribute to three artists namely: Thabo Lesholu, Famole and Seputsoe. In the song 'Mateboho, the lead-singer sings:

*Hee! ntate Thabo Lesholu,  
Mafube a letsatsi ho likela,  
Oa se ka ntšiea, Jo! ngoaneso Famole!  
Ho re ke itšoare ke ipolae!  
Ho shoele motho oa koana,  
Jo! Ngoaneso Seputsoe.  
Ke tla shoa le ntebale.*

Hee! Father Thabo Lesholu,  
Aurora of the setting sun,  
You left me, Jo! my brother Famole,  
I feel like committing suicide,  
Somebody from a certain place died,  
Jo! My brother Seputsoe.  
I will die and you will forget me.

ˆMateboho, as one of the accordion artists, feels affected by the deaths of three artists and decides to mention them in her song. The fact is that they belong to one social group of artists and share common problems. As a result, she identifies herself with them although she never sung with them in any band. It is because of social group identification that she feels she has to pass her condolences to the bereaved families and even to the departed souls. She is so hurt by these deaths that occurred within a short period of time, she feels like committing suicide, to show how close the departed were to her. Seputsoe died in September 2003, Famole in December 2004 while Thabo passed away in June 2005.

Matsie (1995) laments the death of Samuele Motho who was fatally stabbed in the town of Maseru. He seems to have been very close to Matsie, this is displayed in his song, *Ba bolaile*-They have killed, he says: “*Samuele Motho ba bolaile lerato la ka, Hee! Ba bolaea lerato la ka.*” (Samuele Motho they have killed my love, Hei! they killed my love). He wants to convey his sympathy to the family by showing that the deceased was a lovely person whose friendship cannot easily be forgotten. He also wants to comfort the spirit of Samuele so that it should rest in peace wherever it may be, and recall that he has left his friends behind.

### **5.3.3 TRADITION AND CHANGE**

Tradition and change refer to the norms and values that formed part of Basotho cultural practices and were upheld in the past but, with changing times, there are mixed feelings about them. Some people want to retain them while others want to discard them.

The following quotation focuses on the fact that one’s culture contributes a lot to human development. As such, it needs to be considered even in the national development of each and every country:

Cultural liberty is a vital part of human development because being able to choose one’s identity-who one is-without losing respect of others...is important in leading a full life. People want the freedom to practice their religion openly, to speak their language, to celebrate their ethnic or

religious heritage without fear of ridicule... People want the freedom to participate in society without having to slip off their chosen cultural moorings (UNDP Report, 2004:1).

This is because it has been observed that imposition of foreign cultures on any developing country derails its national development as it is met with passive resistance. Customs, as part of cultural diversity, also play an important role in social, economic and political development of every country. It is not surprising that accordion artists call for the preservation and practice of some Basotho customs.

Customs are referred to as generally accepted behaviour or practices in a certain society that help or guide it to deal with certain aspects in life. Customs, as one sub-topic within culture, constitute a vast apparatus by which man is put in a position to cope with concrete problems which face him in his adaptation to his environment in the course of the satisfaction of his needs (Malinowski, 1961:42). Customs may also be viewed as traditions within a society that are passed from generation to generation as practised behaviour. More importantly, customs are dynamic, not static, that is, they change with times, depending on the situation and lifestyle of the people at the given moment. In dealing with customs, there are those that are worth preservation and practice, and others which because of time are deemed to be out-dated. Again, there are those customs that could be said to be popular and generally practised, and there are those that are less liked and hardly practised.

Basotho had various customs that they preferred, that distinguished them from other tribes and those even today are still upheld; there are others that, because of changing circumstances, have long been forgotten. Accordion artists, like the rest of Basotho descendants, uphold some of the customs, and urge that they be practiced, while they aspire for the revival of other customs in the contemporary times. Customs, as forms of social identification, to some extent bring about social solidarity, ethnic cohesion and patriotism among their subjects. That is why Basotho describe anything that identifies them from other nations as Sesotho. Coplan (1995:3) defines Sesotho as social identity, and its entitlements, reciprocities, and their resources, investments of the self and substance, a personal as well as communal, genealogical and national history. He further

points out that what ties Basotho together is Sesotho in its cultural dimension of self-expression, ways and ideas. He also suggests that Sesotho could be said to be a set of concepts, practices and relations expressed, and symbolised in performance.

As much as there is a feeling for what generally is called African Renaissance, there are instances where some artists display a negative attitude to some customs, with the feeling that they are behind the times, as indicated earlier with chieftainship. Although custom is a broad topic, this section confines itself to a few examples that seem popular with artists and those that are disliked. It does not discuss custom as a topic but, its reflection in accordion music with certain limitations as is the case with other topics.

There is a belief among the Basotho of the present that their forefathers were better than them in terms of social, economic and political aspects. This is reflected in some accordion songs where artists seem to long for the olden ways of living. A song by **Manka & Phallang** (2004), *Litaba tsa banna* (Men's business), where it says "*Litaba tsa banna ka khoaling khotla, Li tla buuoa li fele*" (Men's business at men's court, they are deliberated and decided upon). Phallang is concerned about the way men these days handle administrative and even social issues. They hardly settle their problems amicably as sociable beings, but always run to the magistrates' court that lacks the Sesotho ways of solving problems. He is calling for the Basotho to return to their olden ways of settling disputes and other ways of living that could seem profitable to the present Basotho.

Mantša (2005) makes a general statement in his song *Boulelang meetlo* (Preserve customs), that is, he encourages Basotho to preserve their customs so that they cannot be swallowed up by foreign cultures. He says:

*Le tšoare Sesotho se tiee hantle,  
Sechaba sa Peete le Mokhachane.*

Uphold the Sesotho custom firmly,  
The nation of Peete and Mokhachane.

He goes on to indicate different customs that ought to be maintained, such as traditional food, clothes, games and initiation school. He accuses those traditionalists who have commercialised initiation and they are tampering with its nature and says they must refrain from such a practice. One observes that it is common among the Basotho to associate themselves with some departed chiefs of Basotho. This is done with the understanding that they symbolize oneness and unity of the Basotho nation. Therefore as they keep on referring to them, it is a call for a unified nation, with one major language, Sesotho, as the medium of instruction under one King.

**Chaba sa Matelile** (2003), in his song *Na ke 'nete?* (Is it true)?, criticizes the men of Ha Mojela who arrive late at funerals, and as though that is not enough, after funeral services they do not wash their hands, they leave without having abided by the custom. His concern is that these men have failed to fulfil their obligation as Basotho. In Sesotho, if people go to a funeral they are expected to arrive on time before the service starts, and be part of the service from the beginning to the end. They are also expected to participate in any activity that requires them as Basotho to assist in. On the funeral day, after speeches of condolences, men are expected to carry the coffin to the cemetery, at the cemetery, they are to shovel soil back in the grave, go back to the bereaved family and wash hands and, last, eat any food meant for the funeral. This is the Sesotho custom with its procedures that one is expected to follow. Chakela wants these men to behave like Basotho men so that the Sesotho customs can be kept alive and be passed on to the coming generations.

Why should this custom be upheld? It should be noted that death, among Basotho, unites enemy and friend. People attend the funeral of those people that they know and even those that they do not know at all. In life, one is expected to complete the work or a course he has enrolled in, not to do half of it. Thus in Sesotho, it is binding for one to be part of funeral service from the beginning to its end. This practice encourages people to do everything involved in its completion. The washing of hands symbolizes cleanliness, cleaning oneself of *sesila* (bad omen). Death, among Basotho, is a bad omen that needs cleansing, that is why a traditional aloe is put in such water as it is believed to be an

efficient plant for cleansing purposes. The artist does not only address these men from Ha Mojela, he is also warning other people who behave like them to stop it. He is also giving a free lesson to those who are not familiar with funeral activities of the Basotho. He is calling for every Mosotho man to be a Mosotho and live up to the expectations of the Basotho, especially at funerals.

Having given these few examples, it could be understood why some Basotho identify with accordion music, and label it their oral traditional music. The call by artists that Basotho should stick to their customs makes one to realize the important role played by them in the revival and continuity of Sesotho customs with the aim of preserving them for the future generations.

## **5.4 ECONOMIC ASPECTS**

### **5.4.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this study, the economic aspects relate to the lack of certain needs that ought to be achieved in order to survive. The most wanted need according to this study is financial muscle for Basotho to progress in their lives. This section looks at how accordion artists express their feelings towards poverty in Lesotho and other factors that impoverish some Basotho. The section is divided into three sub-topics, namely: poverty in Lesotho, exploitation by coordinators and record companies and protest against Chinese firms.

#### **5.4.1 BACKGROUND**

Basotho are known for their devotion to work. They are people who hate being associated with laziness. This is reflected in many of their proverbs, such as: *Sekhoba se batola leloala ka ka lenala* (A lazy person is never serious about his work). *Ke mokotla o mahlo mohlohloa o rapame* (A useless, lazy person. People have to do everything for him). (Mokitimi: 1997) Lazy people contribute towards impoverishing the country as they play no productive role which is why Basotho have negative expressions for them. Basotho further say: “*Mphe-mphe ea lapisa molekane motho o khonoa ke sa ntlo ea hae*”. (One has to refrain from regular begging, instead, he has to fend for himself for survival).

On the contrary, Basotho prefer industrious persons who devote their lives to improving their standard of living. They encourage everybody to work hard in order to lead a better life and they have proverbs like: *Hlapi folofela leraha metsi a pshela o a bona*. (Make use of whatever is available for survival) *Phuthi e tsoha kameso e anyese*. (Early bird catches the worm (Mokitimi: 1997:45). The above proverbs suggest a way forward towards overcoming poverty in our families. If one follows and implements the instructions as suggested there is a likelihood that our economy can flourish.

It could also be said that Basotho oral literature suggests explicit measures to be taken in order to overcome some economic problems. This comes as a response to the saying that *Pharela ha e eo banneng* (Each and every problem has an existing solution). That is why Basotho will say: *Letšoele le beta poho* or *Ntja-peli ha e hloloe ke sebata* or *Ba ka ba babeli bana ba monna, mong a bolaea, mong a tšoaela, mong a kha metsi ka sekhono* (Unity is strength). In short, it means that when many people are involved, the job is made lighter and is easily and quickly done. This feature shows that Basotho have always appreciated communal labour as one strategy that helps to improve their economy. This feeling is raised by Mphanya (2004: 34-36) who indicates that the colonial rulers discouraged Basotho from communal labour because it contributed to their resistance to work for the whites. It, therefore, goes without saying that communal labour was the best strategy for poverty reduction, which is why accordion artists come together to form bands in order to generate income.

It is against this background that accordion artists are engaged in fighting poverty through their music by making authorities and the public aware of its effects. They want measures to be put in place in order to reduce poverty.

Furthermore, through their music, they fight for their people as they protest against any form of exploitation that affects the Basotho. Their understanding is that the lives of the Basotho have to be improved not be downgraded as that leads to the downfall of the economy. They want to promote the trend that is embedded in Basotho proverbs such as

*“Ngoana ea sa lleng o shoela tharing* (People must speak in order to get what is rightfully theirs). Sometimes they say: *“Tsa habo moshemane ha li jeoe, u li je u li siee masapo hobane mohlang a holing o tla tseka.”* (Never cheat or deny the young male his rights because when he grows up he will demand them). As representatives of the people, they feel they have to fight for the survival of their people by exposing the malpractices and injustices by the business people who take advantage of some Basotho. They feel that it is high time that Basotho are vigilant and fight for what is rightfully theirs in order to improve their standard of living, thus boosting the economy of the country.

The fact that accordion artists show protest in their music is a continuation of Basotho’s approach which is reflected in their praise poetry. In Moshoeshoe I’s praises, Damane and Sanders (1974:31) indicate that the poet chants the lines of protest in this form:

Black-white-spotted ox, though you’ve come with  
gladness,  
Yet you have come with grief,  
You have come with cries of lamentation,  
You have come as the women hold their heads,  
And continually tear their cheeks.  
Keep it from entering my herds;  
Even in calving, let it calve in the veld,  
Let it calve at Qoaling and Koro-koro.  
To these cattle of our village it brings distress,  
It has come with a dirge, a cause of sadness.  
Thesele, the other one, where have you left him?

The poet is protesting against the death of Makhabane who died in the Thembu war in 1835. It is alleged that Moshoeshoe could have saved him but neglected him. The poet does not shy away from leveling his criticism against Moshoeshoe despite his status as the king. That is why he feels that even the booty should not be allowed to mingle with other Basotho herds because they are not welcome.

Bearing in mind that it is their duty to speak on behalf of the public, accordion artists continue to do so through protest as will be seen in the paragraphs that follow. It is hoped

that their outcry, individually or collectively, will end up being taken care of or those responsible will heed their plight and have the Basotho standard of living improved.

#### **5.4.2 POVERTY IN LESOTHO**

Poverty in simple terms is a standard of living where there is little or nothing to live on. Basotho do not want to be identified with poverty hence, the composition of some proverbs that have negative feeling towards poverty. They have proverbs like: *Bofutsana bo jesa ntja/likatana* (The poor has no choice and can eat anything,) and *Bofutsana bo ja kobo maaparo* (A poor person keeps on putting on one type of cloth until it is tattered.) With this scenario in mind, Basotho try their level best to distance themselves from poverty by finding means to overcome or reduce it. It is not surprising that accordion artists address it in their music with the intention of finding ways to deal with it.

It is worthwhile to contextualize the state of poverty in Lesotho as it is addressed in the accordion music. According to the *Central Bank of Lesotho Quarterly Review* (2005), Lesotho's economy seems to rely on tax collections from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) that constitutes 54.7%, income tax with 24.6% and value added tax with 17.6%. There seems to be an imbalance when it comes to exports and imports in Lesotho, for instance, within the merchandise trade about 2.2 % are exports, while imports constitute about 27.6%. Most exports seem to be from the textile and clothing industry where the United States of America is the largest recipient of Lesotho's exports.

Concerning employment, the same report of 2005 gives three structures that are the main employers of the Basotho:

- Employment in the mining industry in South Africa was 54,171;
- The manufacturing sub-sector was about 41,985; and
- The government had about 36,710 employees.

One thus observes that, in a country with about 2 million people the majority of the people within the country are not employed, as the country does not have a large private sector that can accommodate the rest of the unemployed people. Unemployment could be said to be one of the most disturbing factors in the economic lives of the Basotho.

The document further states that, since 1990, there had been a drastic decline of migrant workers due to retrenchments. In 1994, there were 96,623 migrant workers, in 2000 about 64,907, while in 2005 it was 54,171. The decline resulted in large numbers of unemployed people, and this was aggravated by poor agricultural conditions, poor grazing lands due to overgrazing, a high rate of stock theft and terrible droughts that led to poor crop production. Although there were textile and clothing factories that were established, that could not help to alleviate the serious poverty situation facing the country. These being the appalling conditions observed by the accordion artists, they compelled to address them in their music with the aim of challenging those in power to strategize in order to implement poverty reduction plans.

The theme of poverty is divided into three sub-headings namely state of poverty, poverty alleviation and unemployment.

**a) State of poverty**

The study will first deal with songs that address the state of poverty in Lesotho. The first song to be analysed is sung by the group **A Matle Majantja** (2002). In their song *Hase tlala Lesotho* (The famine in Lesotho is shocking), the soloist says:

*Hase tlala Lesotho,  
Basotho ba phela ka ho sokola,  
Ba phela liotlong seka maeba,  
Ho ja e ne e se ka mathata ana,  
Re ka be re se khauteng maboneng.*

The famine in Lesotho is shocking,  
Basotho are striving hard to make a living,  
They live in a threshing floor like pigeons,  
If it were not for these problems,  
We could not have been at Gauteng in the lights.

The title itself suggests that there is a real problem of starvation in Lesotho that is very disturbing and that needs to be addressed urgently.

While **Manka le Phallang No.23** (2004), in their song, *Rea sokola* (We are striving), says:

*Rea sokola ntho e malapeng mona,  
Hase lefu hase tlala,  
Re phela ka thata,  
Banna ntho e malapeng mona.*

We are striving, what we experience in our families here ,  
There is death, there is famine,  
We are striving,  
Men what we experience in our families here.

The song tells of the effects of poverty that have hit hard on most families in Lesotho. The two groups seem to be concerned about the general poverty that prevails in the country. Since poverty is a general problem, it affects all the Basotho, and accordion artists even use similar diction to express their feelings. Phallang focuses on the serious famine in Lesotho with focus on the living standards of Basotho families. He does this the living standars are easily measured when one concentrates on the analysis of every household. **A Matle Majantja** (2002) gives a general overview of the state of poverty in Lesotho. The lead-singer further indicates that he could not have gone to Gauteng had it not been for the poverty that they experience in their families. As eyes and ears of the public artists feel duty-bound to speak on its behalf, not only that but to express the feelings of the people. They want to alert those in power about the plight of the nation.

#### **b) Poverty alleviation**

With regard to poverty alleviation, some accordion artists suggest solutions to curb it in the country. Artists feel that they must also play their role by providing a way out of national problems, with the view that they can be of great help to their people.

Mokitimi & Phafoli (2001:232) refer to one song by Mantša which gives a specific solution to the unemployment in Lesotho. The artist calls for the retirement of those who have been working for a long time and their replacement by young blood. He further suggests the re-opening of Lesotho diamond mines to cater for those who have been retrenched.

Another song that provides a general solution to unemployment in Lesotho comes from the **Mahosana a ka Phamong** group (2001), in which the lead-singer points out that:

*Ha ho na tsuonyana phatela 'ngoe,  
Ha ho na khomo sebeletsa pere,  
Motho o phela ka mofufutso oa phatla ea hae.*

There is no chicken that digs for another,  
There is no cow that works for the horse,  
Every person has to sweat in order to survive.

His view is that, in life, everybody has to work hard to make a living, and nobody should turn out to be an idler who expects to be spoon-fed. He informs us that, for one to survive, one has to struggle and fend for one's family.

This is a view also shared by the Moketa group (no date) in a song, *Khomo ea boroko* (Sleepy cow). Moketa says:

*Khomo ea boroko ha e eo,  
U ikentse mokotla o mahlo.*

There is no sleeping cow,  
You turned yourself into a bag with eyes.

Moketa's message is that, people should wake up and work, and not spend their time sleeping, because nobody will work on their behalf. Again, they should use their minds properly in order to be constructive in life and refrain from being like bags which always expect to be filled with food not worked for. He also urges people to engage themselves in projects that would solve their economic problems instead of idling and moving up and down streets.

The striking feature about these two artists is the application of proverbs in their pleas, which enables them to easily convey their message to the public. It is observed that the two artists are totally against those lazy people who cannot exercise their minds in a manner that helps them to cater for their economic needs. They are pleading with other

artists as well as the entire Basotho nation to engage themselves in developmental projects or to effectively use their talents to make a living.

### c) Unemployment

The last song highlights the unemployment problem which also aggravates the poverty in the country. Monyase (1997), in the song *Ha re sebetse* (We are not working.), requests those in authority to offer them jobs as they have been unemployed for some years. He directs his plea to the then Prime Minister of Lesotho, Dr. Mokhehle, to offer employment to them. His worry is that poverty has hit hard on their families because there is lack of job opportunities and that is why they become accordion artists to fight hunger. He pleads with the Prime Minister because, like other politicians, he promised them jobs if and when in office, but to the artists' surprise, even in Mokhehle's fourth year in office, the artist was still without a job. He takes the song as an opportunity to express his inner feelings which he could not express when face to face with the Prime Minister.

### 5.4.3 EXPLOITATION BY COORDINATORS AND RECORDING COMPANIES

Accordion music, to most of its artists, seems to be the only source of income that supports their households. Many aspiring artists are also coming up, thus making the music industry one of the fast growing sources of income. It should be noted that even other genres of music, such as gospel, are assisting many Basotho who want to make their living out of music. The situation in Lesotho is in line with Mai and Kirkegaard's (2002: 8-10) view about music and its economic impact in Africa that:

Apart from minerals the music industry is the only area in which Africa as a continent seems to have an opportunity to make money at present. Because of this the World Bank has launched a programme on commercial music development as it realised that the music, so vibrant and alive in spite of the downfall and economic depression of most African nations in which Africa had a potential for making money. But it is also a way of living for many-combined with the hardships of making ends meet and its performers are often met with the double sword of both being needed and respected and at the same time deeply feared and mistrusted.

The above quotation, although too general, summarises and the economic impact of music in Lesotho. Even though the music industry seems to be progressing well there are various problems that the artists encounter in their career as musicians. One of the major problems is that of exploitation.

Most artists have been complaining and keep on doing so because they feel that they are being exploited by recording companies and their coordinators, though some people prefer to call them promoters. For the purpose of this study, they will be called coordinators, as they link the artists and recording companies. The views of the artists are reflected in most of their songs, their concern is that, they sometimes get very small amounts in terms of royalties from their masters, while, in some instances, although rare, they are not paid at all.

During personal interviews, radio and television interviews, it was observed that each and every artist has his story that points to exploitation. Although there are different forms of exploitation, the study will combine the two types, those being exploitation by coordinators and that by record companies.

**a) Exploitation by coordinators**

Coordinators could be said to be some well-to-do people or those who are familiar with the music recording venture that are approached by artists for assistance. Most of them are based in Lesotho and help to provide artists with financial assistance so that they can go and record in South Africa, since there are no recording studios in Lesotho. For instance, people like Paseka Selonyane, Jakobo in the Leribe district, Matebesi Matebesi and Motseka-papa Mohapi in the Maseru district, Marcus Sidney in the Mafeteng district as well as Edward Vereira who has worked with many artists since 1980's until 1990's.

Complaints about coordinators are observed in the song *Machaena* by the group **Ka sotleha Hatlane** (2001) where it sings:

*He! ntate ke itse u nthuse Ntate Paseka,  
Ntate Paseka Selonyane...,  
Na ha ke re ke etsa kh'asete,*

*'Na ke re ke e rekisa mashome a mabeli a liranta,  
Eena o etsa fong-kong ha a tloha,  
O e rekisa R10.00 molisanyana Hatlane.*

He! Father I asked you to help me father Paseka,  
Father Paseka Selonyane,  
When I try to make a cassette,  
When I try to sell it for R20.00  
You make it fong-kong from the start,  
You sell it R10.00, the shepherd Hatlane.

Hatlane's complaint is that Selonyane sells a cassette at a lower price almost half price, while the artist sells it at R20.00. This is a pathetic situation for our artists, when the very people who are said to be helping them, cheat them in broad daylight. That is, if the artist wants to make some profit from his cassette he cannot do it because in Lesotho where most of the coordinators have music shops, and sell a cassette at a cheaper price. It is obvious that the cassettes that are sold by the artists will not sell as expected. The plea is that, fair play in the deals is required if accordion music is to be promoted.

It is observed that artists who request this form of assistance are those who do not have any connections with recording companies and are highly dependent on the coordinators. With only verbal agreement, the coordinator caters for all the costs, inclusive of accommodation, food and lodging, rehearsals, the recording process and the product and transportation of the group to and from RSA. Having completed the process, when the cassettes are out on the market, the coordinators are said to sell a certain number to recover costs. As they engaged in a gentlemen's agreement, the total costs are hardly disclosed to the artists. After sometime, the artist may be given a certain portion of money as his royalties, and may be given another at any time it suits the coordinator. It is never known to the artists as to how many cassettes were paid for, and how many sold, let alone, how much the outstanding balance is. In some instances, artists are given a certain number of cassettes to sell, the collection belongs to them, to some artists, and this becomes their only payment in the form of royalties. Artists' complaint is that they are never clear about what is due to them and when and why? It seems that most coordinators have taken advantage of this ignorance and exploited most accordion artists (Radio and television interviews 2000 – 2005).

## **b) Exploitation by recording companies**

Recording companies means centres that are engaged in producing the finished product which is in the form of cassette, CD or DVD. There are two kinds of artists that deal with these centres. The first group is that of the artists who are directly in contact with recording companies or studios. These are some of the experienced artists who manage to pay for all their costs, and enter into an agreement with the recording companies. The other group is that of inexperienced artists who are financially frustrated and need to be boosted for the payments of their dues. These two groups approach the well-known and popular recording studios for accordion artists such as EMI, SM and TAKK.

It is at this stage that artists also cry foul because the contract that they are asked to sign is written in English and as most of our artists are not sufficiently fluent they become victims. They complain that some companies cheat them by reproducing their cassettes under different names. That is, since the companies are familiar with recording technology they easily manage to complicate matters in such a way that those who are ignorant cannot easily comprehend. Sometimes they are said to charge large amounts with the aim of forcing the client to owe the company. This is when the company gets its chance of producing as many cassettes as possible that out-number those given to the client. Since they know their tricks, they easily and quickly distribute them so that, by the time, the artist comes along with his package of cassettes; the shelves are already full of his cassettes at cheaper prices. This means a total loss on his side as he suffers on the market, while, on the other hand, he still has to pay back the money he owes the company.

Some of the songs to be analysed are specific about the company or the person that exploited the artists while others are general. The first one comes from Lehlohonolo (1997), its title is *`M'e le Ntate* (My mother and my father). The soloist, Tšeoale requests one of his friends to talk to Edward who seems to want to turn people into living ghosts. He warns Edward that he has been in music circles for some years, and that he has worked with EMI Company owned by Solly whom he left because of some differences. He threatens Edward that he is likely to part with him if he continues to treat him like a

ghost. **Tšeole** means that Edward wants to turn him into a ghost although he is still alive. That is, he is killing him economically, as he does not provide for his basic needs. He is financially frustrating him, since money is everything, he feels like a ghost because, much as he sings, he never gets what is due to him, he is dead-alive, and cannot be treated like a respected human being.

Sanko (2002), in his song, *Mophaphathehi* (Refugee) also complains about Edward and SM recording company. At the time the album was recorded he was working with a coordinator by the name Pulumo who resides in the Free State Province. As he expresses his disappointment, he points out that he had been cheated by white men from SM Company and later by Edward, and he peacefully settled with Pulumo's contract. Artists, like the rest of the Basotho, use the word *jeoa*, *jele* and *ntja*- that means cheated or exploited. As indicated earlier, Edward has worked with many Basotho artists and they left him due to misunderstandings on the settlement of finances.

Our third song is taken from Keketso and Moketa (2003). In their song *Likhapha tsa mofutsana* (Tears of the poor), the soloist complains about exploitation by one coordinator in the Free State Province. When expressing his bitterness, he says that he was cheated of his monies and dispossessed of his clothing; his anger arises from the fact that he was given only R50.00 for an album.

**Manka le Phallang** (2004), in their song *Sello sa monna* (The complaint of the man), directly attacks Edward for having exploited him. Phallang's complaint is that Edward has stripped him of his toil by cheating him. He says:

*Lea 'mona ke eo o lutse Cape Town,  
O lutse holim'a mahlabathe,  
Joale o ja matla a Phallang.*

You see him there he is residing in Cape Town,  
He is on the shore,  
He is eating the fruits of my toil.

The mention of the name in these lines show how deeply hurt the artist is. One might also say that the artist seems to be knowledgeable about Edward regarding his character and his dealings with the artists. This was one of the songs that were played at the funeral of Phallang where there was an outcry about the artists' exploitation. One radio presenter from Leseli FM, Mosololi Mohapi, confirmed how some Basotho accordion music is hijacked through fraudulent means by recording companies. He advised artists to take precautionary measures.

The last song is taken from the group **Seeiso Tšoana-Mantata** (2004). In the song *Lenong lea solla* (The vulture wanders). He sings:

*Ho neng ke theosa le lifeme tsena.  
Ke ne ke qale femeng ea Pita,  
Ka kena e sa le Eric.  
Ka tloha ka leba RPM,  
Moo ke ileng ka tloha ka leba DSM,  
Ka bua le ntate Emeka Londao.  
Ke hopola Jack a mpha 67 maloti ea cassette.  
Hele! Meleko! Ka tsamaea ka leba EMI,  
Ha e le Edward eena e sa le a e-ja Basotho ba bangata.*

For how long have I been working with these firms?  
I started at the firm of Pita,  
I joined it at the time when it was Eric.  
I left and went to RPM,  
There I left and went to DSM,  
I talked to father Emeka Landao.  
I remember Jack giving me M67.00 for the cassette.  
Hei! What a hell! I went to EMI,  
For Edward himself has always been exploiting many  
Basotho.

The soloist narrates how he has worked with different coordinators and companies that exploited him to the extent that he once got R67.00 for a cassette. Basotho have a saying that '*Morena ha a se na tjako u mo tlohelle u e'o jaka ho a mang mahosana*' (When a chief has no site for you, leave him and go and find a site from other chiefs). This means that if your chief is not hospitable, leave him and find space from other chiefs who may be more welcoming than him. The lead-singer in this group seems to have put this into

practice, as he seems to have changed from one company to another with the hope that he would find his home. This is a reflection of the inhospitable conditions under which accordion artists operate. For one to be given a mere R67.00 for his album is a disgrace, not only that but, an insult to one's dignity. If one cassette at the music shop sells for an average of R40.00, one may wonder how R67.00 can be paid for an album that has been multiplied to make as many copies as possible.

As a result of exploitation, misunderstanding between artists and companies or coordinators ends up with threats and sometimes deaths. This was the case on a live Lesotho Television programme in September, 2006 where Paseka Selonyane, a coordinator, and artists like Chakela and Selomo were brought together with the aim of encouraging them to sort out their conflict peacefully. One of the concerns was that Selonyane owed some artists huge sums of money. In his defence, he pointed out that he had paid them and some of them still owed him for giving them some assistance to record their albums. The coordinator was threatened, and one wondered what would be the next step after the programme.

As though that was not enough, one coordinator by the name of Marcus Sidney was gunned down in early October of 2006 by two gunmen in Maseru City. This happened after, in March, 2006, Sidney was accused of having taken copyrights of one Famole, (Teboho Lesia). But when Lesia's wife was sick Sidney did not offer assistance. It developed to the extent that there was a tense atmosphere at the funeral of 'Masechaba Lesia, the wife of Teboho Lesia. (Mosotho, Tlhakubele: 2006). One observes that different forms of exploitation, if not addressed in time, may bring chaos in the accordion music industry.

#### **5.4.4 PROTEST AGAINST CHINESE FIRMS.**

Artists seem to touch on every issue that hinders economic progress of any Mosotho, which is why they even compose songs about under-payment of Basotho who work in Chinese firms in Lesotho. Most textile factories in Lesotho are owned by Chinese people. There are concerns about the terrible working conditions in these factories, among which

are the low wages of about R500.00 per month, lack of heating systems, especially in Winter, protective equipment, leave days, dismissals, poor working relations between management and workers and others.

Manufacturing sub-sector has been the pillar of economic growth in Lesotho, since its inception of Africa Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) initiative. Although its contribution to GDP has slowed down in recent years, it still remains the largest formal sector employer in the economy. It consists of textile and clothing, food and beverages, leather and footwear.

(Central Bank : 2005).

As indicated earlier, the manufacturing sub-sector by 2004 had about 48, 809 employees but it dropped to 41, 985 by 2005 due to closure of some factories. These factories are found in the district of Maseru at the railway station and Ha Thetsane, while others are found in the district of Leribe at Maputsoe. Ninety-five percent of the working force is women who are semi-literate.

There are instances where some companies close down without notifying workers and the entire management leaves the country without paying the employees as it happened in 2004. In some cases, employees had to negotiate for their salaries at the end of the month because the management had told them that there was no money. One may say that it looks like there is no clear policy regarding the contract under which these foreign factories operate in Lesotho. This is so because management of different firms consistently close down without either notifying the relevant Lesotho authorities or employees, although they operate legally within the country. Due to poor working relations, there are annual strikes where workers fight for increments and improvement of working conditions. Aware of these problems that face their fellow citizens, accordion artists compose songs that inform the public about the pathetic conditions under which factory employees operate. They identify themselves with them, and make pleas to authorities to effect changes that might bring harmony at a work place.

Mosia (2001) composed a song titled *Thusang batho ba lifemeng* (Help the people in the firms). The song goes on to say:

*Ntate buti Macaefa, u mamele seboko,  
Se hlahang ka mona ka lifemeng Ha Thetsane.  
He! Ntate ndoda Mosia, u mamele seboko se hlahang,  
Mona Maseru ka seteisheneng,  
Se seng se nyoloha Maputsoe mona teropong,  
Motseng moo ke lulang...  
Ba sebetsa ba sa pataloe ntate buti Macaefa,  
Bana ba batho hoba ba entsoe likatana.*

Father brother Macaefa, listen to the plea,  
That comes from the firms at Ha Thetsane.  
Hi! Father Mosia, you are listening to the plea,  
That comes from Maseru at the station.  
The other plea comes from Maputsoe town,  
The village where I stay...  
They work without being paid,  
The children of the soil have been turned into non-entities.

The song asks Macaefa who was then Secretary of the workers' union and is currently the leader of Lesotho Workers' Party, to do the best he could for the workers. He is asked to intervene between the factories' management and the employees, and improve conditions at the work place including wages.

The three places that have the majority of people that work in the firms are; Ha Thetsane, Maseru station, and Maputsoe, which is why he refers to them in his song. His major concern is that they are not being paid satisfactory wages based on the inflation rate as they are being given R500.00, which cannot sustain them for the whole month. For instance, mathematically, for the whole month, for those who stay in Maseru and work at Ha Thetsane:

-Transport to and from work for six days a week a month at

$$R3.00 \times 2 \times 6 \times 4 = R144.00$$

$$\text{Average rent} = \underline{R100.00}$$

$$R 244.00$$

Therefore, if R500.00 – R244.00 is R256.00, how does one cater for items such as food, clothing, health and maintenance of children? With this simple mathematics, one wonders how people can survive on a mere R500.00 as a monthly wage! That is why Mosia says that they are turned into non-entities that work just to survive and are not able to cater for other basic needs.

Macheli (2002) also raises his concern about the ill-treatment of Basotho females who work in Chinese firms in Lesotho. He says:

*Melata ke ena e sotla ka basali ba lifemeng  
Pelo ea ka ha e bohloko le khale!"*

Here are the foreigners that ill-treat females in the firms,  
My heart is so painful it hurts!

The artist feels for females who are regularly expelled for illness, even when one has gone for child-delivery. The artist feels for these females who, even when they get ill as a result of being affected by factory chemicals, are not given their packages but, are dismissed to go and die in their homes. This situation seems to be aggravating as more and more people struggle for employment in the firms. Some firms' workers are not on contracts but are treated as temporary and remain in the daily paid roll because the management is reluctant to pay all the dues payable to fully employed personnel.

From the interviews that were held with workers at the firms it was established that most top management from different firms ill-treat their employees and pay them low wages. They do so because when they were lured to Lesotho, they were told that as long as they could be employed, Basotho have no problem with wages. The management being aware that there are many people waiting to be employed by their gates does not bother to consider employees as human beings who deserve dignified treatment. This is so because once they kick one employee out, a new one comes in within seconds. (Radio interviews Macaefa & others 2000-2005).

Artists embark on exposing these atrocities so that those in authority can revisit their working relations with Chinese firms. Not only that, to do all that they can to protect the rights of Basotho citizens in the labour force. They compose this type of songs to show that they feel for the employees at the firms and are observant of their problems and would like them to be dealt with by those who have the responsibility to do so. Artists' feeling from the interviews is that they are not against Chinese firms but, their concern is their violation of human rights and workers' rights. They understand quite well that there is a crisis of unemployment in Lesotho therefore; proper channels and procedures should be followed when dealing with workers. They are aware that Chinese firms employ large numbers of Basotho females and, that their firms contribute a lot to the economy of the country and, that should not be done at the expense of basic human rights of the Basotho, since the Lesotho Constitution says: "No person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading punishment or other treatment" (Constitution of Lesotho, 2002:20).

## **5.5 POLITICAL HISTORY**

### **5.5.0 INTRODUCTION**

Since politics is a very broad topic, with different interpretations, this study will confine itself to what may be called political events that are raised by the accordion artists in their songs. They are said to be political in the sense that they highlight incidents or events that could be said to contribute towards the history of the country at national level. These incidents fall within the period between 1980 and 2005. A selection of these years has been done at random from 1986 until 2000, which include 1986, 1987, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1997, 1998 and 2000. This was done with the intention to limit the number of historical events and to fit the section within the thematic aspect chapter lest it constitutes its own chapter.

#### **5.5.1. BACKGROUND**

Among the Basotho, before the arrival of the Europeans, records of historical events were orally transmitted from one generation to another through narratives, songs or poetry.

With regard to narratives, there were legends which are said to be historical stories or narratives that contain a nucleus of historical facts. Concerning songs, they had *likoma* which were sung by boys undergoing circumcision; some of the *Likoma* briefly gave the historical excerpts of the Basotho from the past. Coming to poetry, there was praise poetry which sometimes gave an account of the life history of the chief or the warrior, his war experiences, issues of governance and physical appearance.

It was found that accordion artists, like their predecessors, the traditional poets, want to preserve the history of their country through their recorded music. Though their predecessors focused on warriors and chiefs, and events of their own times, artists also feel that in contemporary times, they still have to preserve their history through their accordion music. Asked as to why there is a focus on some national events, the general response was that they provide the history of their nation and their country. When asked about what contribution reference to historical events plays in their music, the general response was that it is contemporary, it promotes their music, and it makes their cassettes more marketable, thus boosting their economic life. That is, as much as people prefer to listen to news over radio stations, watch television news and read newspapers, they also enjoy listening to historical events when in music. This is because, in music, there is a change of tone, of language, of style and sounds of instruments that add more flavour to the news that is already known. That is, as Finnegan (1970:272) indicates, songs can be used to report and comment on current affairs or in some instances can take the place of newspapers among its people; so is accordion music among the Basotho people nowadays.

For the purpose of this study, the selected historical events will be chronologically analysed. Although we shall start from 1986 it is useful to give a brief summary of what transpired before those years that led Apollo Ntabanyane of **Tau-ea-Matšekha** (1980) to say “*Ha ke otloa ke bana ba Manasi nke ke be ka re ke otluo nka mpa ka re...*” (If I am beaten by the children of the National Party I cannot say that I have been beaten but...). The song stems from the fact that in 1970 when Lesotho went to the polls for the second time, having attained its independence in 1966, the then Prime Minister of Lesotho, Dr

Jonathan, who had lost in the elections, refused to hand over power and instead, he declared a state of emergency, and suspended the constitution. Machobane (2001:24-26) writes:

The MFP- the supporting party of the king ...earned 1 seat in The BNP got 23 seats in parliament. The BCP got 36 seats. Rudely shaken but accepting defeat, Jonathan got ready to hand over power..., The radicals within his party, notably chiefs Peete Peete and Sekhonyana 'Maseribane, quite pugnacious by disposition...Hence they were strongly opposed to their leader's preparedness to accept defeat.

Scott & Weisfelder (2004:17) go further to add the name of chief Majara to the two names of the two chiefs mentioned above, and that they were supported by the expatriate leadership of the paramilitary police mobile unit. For him to be in full control of the government Jonathan imprisoned opposition leader Ntsu Mokhehle, and some of his followers. To add more salt to the wound, he dismissed about 1000 civil servants that were BCP supporters. Indeed he had seized power and he was not ashamed of it as used to be repeatedly said by the BCP members.

Machobane (2001:24-26) goes on to point out that in 1972, Jonathan allegedly called for a government of national unity which would be established in his terms, but the move was not welcomed by some members of the opposition. He opted for what he called interim government which was still disputed and left the country in a tense atmosphere. This matter dragged until 1974 when the Basutoland Congress Party plotted to overthrow Jonathan's government. They attacked police stations at places such as Mapoteng, Peka, and Monontša on the northern side of Lesotho, but, suffered heavy casualties and lost. After these incidents there was a manhunt for BCP members in the country, since then every BCP member was regarded as an enemy to the Basotho National Party interim government. The researcher was informed that in the area of Bela-Bela, Ntabanyane's home, next to the St Theresa RC Mission, in 1974, some BCP members were gunned down in daylight, in the presence of students. Some were severely beaten in one stream that separate the mission from the village of Ha Mahlabachana. Jonathan's interim

government remained in power from 1970 until 1986 when it was overthrown by its own army.

### 5.5.2 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1986

In 1986 on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, there was an announcement over the only Lesotho National Radio Station that Dr. Jonathan's government had been overthrown by his military personnel. To many Basotho, it came as a shock, especially when a new government of the BNP had just been put in place. *The Nation*, the most active newspaper at that time, had written on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1985 that: "The Basutoland National Party has been returned unopposed as the government of Lesotho after all opposition parties boycotted yesterday's nomination courts for general elections." Regardless of the new government, the military junta took power and held the reins of power in Lesotho from the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1986. The executive and legislative powers rested with the King, Major General Lekhanya became the Chairman of Military Council, assisted by other military councilors, namely: Colonel Sekhobe Letsie, Colonel Thaabe Letsie, Colonel Phisoana Ramaema, Colonel Khethang Mosoeunyane and Colonel Nkhahle Tšotetsi. The Basotho nation applauded the new government of Major General Lekhanya and prayed for its success, peace and stability after having been under the oppressive government of Dr. Jonathan, whose youth terrorised most civilians who were not BNP members. Ululations and praises were sung in honour of the Major General for having saved the Basotho from the reign of terror (Gill, 1993:238-241).

One of the accordion groups, '**Mutla oa Maloti** (1986), composed a song in honour of this momentous epoch. It goes:

*Ngoan'aka Lekhanya le joale ea `majoale,  
Rea u leboha morena.  
U joetse Morena Bereng u thusitse sechaba se bolaoa.  
Re batlile re shoa,  
Re shoela `muso oa motho eloa,  
Le Basotho ba re ba ea leboha.*

My child Lekhanya even now,  
We thank you,

You tell King Bereng that you rescued the nation  
We nearly died,  
Dying for the government of that person,  
Even the rest of the Basotho say that they are thankful.

Most Basotho gave thanks to the Major General because they knew quite well that the king was said to be above politics, but, little did they know that Sekhobe Letsie was the mastermind of the plot according to Machobane (2001). The soloist in this song is relieved that Dr. Jonathan's government is no more and indirectly requests Lekhanya to instill constructive changes. The artist feels that he speaks on behalf of the entire Basotho nation, which is why he uses the pronoun 'we'. He says that the Basotho nation is thankful for the turn of events and that Lekhanya should pass the message to His Majesty that he saved the nation from extinction at the eleventh hour.

In the same year, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November, two former Ministers of Dr. Jonathan's government, namely Desmond Sixishe and Vincent Makhele, together with their wives were brutally murdered at the Lekhalong la Baroa on the mountain road to Thaba-Tseka. They were picked up at Roma in the evening together with Mr. and Mrs. Lelala who mysteriously escaped the massacre. It is said that they had just come from Quthing where they had attended a funeral of one former Deputy Prime Minister Sekhonyana 'Maseribane. They were said to have been destabilising the military regime government and had to be removed from society (*Lentsoe la Basotho, Pulungoana*:1986). These killings were worsened by the deaths of Mrs Makhele and Mrs Sixishe that horrified most of the Basotho nation. Most people felt that had it been only the husbands, it could not have aroused fear and shocked the country. This is because it was alleged that the two ministers, while still in power, also engineered and effected *koeoko* that ate some prominent political persons. The mission was said to have been undertaken by soldiers with the directive from their seniors who felt threatened by the presence of the two ministers. This information was disclosed in the high court proceedings in Maseru where the researcher used to attend and follow the proceedings of the case until its end.

**Manka le Phallang** (1991), in his song *Khalo la Baroa* (Bushmen Pass) says:

*He! Koeeko ea ja batho,  
Khalong-la-Baroa,  
Jo! Ra makala.  
Ea ja Sixishe le Makhele,  
Le basali ba bona.*

He! Fabulous animal has eaten people,  
At Khalo-la-Baroa.  
Jo! We were perturbed,  
It ate Sixishe and Makhele,  
And their wives.

This was one of the first shocking incidents under the military regime where husbands and wives were killed by unknown people, referred to as a fabulous animal. *Koeeko* to Basotho is similar to ‘unknown monster’ and, has, for some years, been ‘eating’ political figures in the country. For instance, it ate a well-known and renowned editor of *Leselinyana La Lesotho* newspaper, Edgar Motuba in 1981. To date, at the writing of this study, his killers have not yet been arrested. (*Leselinyana, Loetse*:1981). In the case of the ministers, their killers were not known nor arrested; therefore, it was obvious that they were eaten by *koeeko*. It was only in November of 1989 when an inquest into their deaths began and, in 1990, those responsible for the deaths were arrested and sentenced.

One former minister in Jonathan’s government, Patrick Lehloenya in an interview, disclosed that the two ministers were once called by the Prime Minister to be reprimanded. Lehloenya said that upon their arrival, Dr. Jonathan said: “*Sixishe le Makhele ke utloa ho thoe le ntse le bolaea batho mona ka koeeko, joale le tla busa bafe? Haeba ke ‘nete, le tsebe le tla shoa le bolaoa ke batho, ‘na ke tla ichoella lefu la Molimo.*” (Sixishe and Makhele I have heard that you are killing people here with *koeeko*, now which people are you going to lead? If that is true, you must know that when you die, you will be killed by people but, me I will die a natural death).

Phallang in his song is appealing for peace and stability in his country, and that horrible killings of this nature should be stopped directly or indirectly. He is calling for peaceful negotiations and prays that our ancestors guide us to do the right things.

### **5.5.3 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1987**

Towards the end of 1987, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, the 30 year old proposed project which had been sidelined by Dr. Jonathan's government due to their misunderstanding with the apartheid regime, later known as Lesotho Highlands Water Project, was signed. The South African government was represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pik Botha, while the Lesotho Military regime was represented by Colonel Thaabe Letsie (Machobane, 2001: 99). The agreement was that Lesotho would sell water from dams constructed to South Africa that would be transferred through tunnels. The affected areas were some rural parts of Leribe, Butha-Buthe and Thaba-Tseka districts. The main camp for the construction was at Katse and the main dam was named Katse Dam.

This project attracted large companies from the rest of Africa and from as far as Europe, as it was also assisted financially by the World Bank. Basotho nationals benefited a lot from this project in terms of employment, road networks, rentals, communication, tourism and other major services. Although the country was to benefit so much, the project was accepted with mixed feelings by Basotho, some welcomed the benefits it would provide to the country, while others were against it. Those who were against it pointed out that it was a master-servant type of agreement, as Lesotho would have little say in it, while South Africa, the buyer had more control. They considered that it should be vice-versa and that Lesotho ought to have full control of the project as it is on her soil.

These feelings were captured by accordion artists, who expressed the dissatisfaction of some of the Basotho. Phallang (1991), in his album *Maluba-lube No.10*, highlights this matter, where he pleads with the forefathers to save our country from mismanagement by the military regime. In his song *Metsi a lihlababa* (Highlands's waters), he sings:

*Ntate Morena Moshoeshoe,  
Metsi a rekoa ka lichelete.*

*Ke ale a theosa,  
A leba mose maoatle.  
Bana ba Basotho re sala re lla.  
Itlhakoleng meokho le thole,  
A leba mose likotase,  
A leba metseng ea baikhantši.*

Father King Moshoeshoe,  
Water is sold for money,  
There it goes along,  
It goes to the seas.  
Basotho children we remain in tears.  
Wipe off your tears and stop crying.  
It goes to the quarters,  
It goes to the villages of the hypocrites.

Phallang stresses the discontent of some Basotho when he says that they remain destitute while their water is being sold. The blame is put on the military regime that failed to consult the entire Basotho nation before it embarked on the signing of the agreement. He is asking Basotho to be cool because the signing has already taken place. He goes on to point out that the water will be used by hypocrites, referring to the apartheid regime that was still in power in South Africa at that time. They are hypocrites in the sense that, although they seemed to be improving the standard of life in South Africa, blacks who form the majority were discriminated against and stayed in match-box houses and shacks while whites lived in opulent houses with servants' quarters. The message conveyed by Phallang is that the agreement was not entirely appreciated by the Basotho nation; therefore, something had to be done in order to revisit the agreement so that it could serve the best interests of the entire Basotho.

#### **5.5.4 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1991**

1991 saw another turn of events in the political administration of the military regime. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, the Chairman of the Military Council, Major General Lekhanya, was relieved of his duties by junior army officers. This happened as he read the message at gun-point over the national radio station that he was resigning as Chairman of the Military Council with immediate effect. The military council was now left with only one council member of the six who assumed power after the military take-over in 1986, who

was Colonel Phisoana Ramaema who became the next chairman. As though he was towing the line, Lekhanya left the office together with another military council member, Nkhahle Tšotetsi, and two of his strong ministers, Tom Thabane and Retšilisitsoe Sekhonyana (*Moeletsi Oa Basotho, Motšeanong: 1991*). This incident took place within twelve months after the same chairman dethroned His Majesty, King Moshoeshoe II, and relieved the other three military council members namely: Colonels Sekhobe Letsie, Thaabe Letsie and Khethang Mosoeunyane and eight ministers, of their duties on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1990. Major General Lekhanya strategically used the junior army officers to arrest their seniors in 1990, oblivious of the fact that what turns around also comes around. When commenting on this event Machobane (2001:125) writes:

In the end the Major-General was forced to eat the humble pie...He had been a victim of disturbing insubordination within the military, yet partially unwittingly promoted by himself. His cunning strategy for the removal of Sekhobe Letsie from the military council significantly became his own stumbling block.

Having heard and observed the situation within the military administration, the **Mahosana a ka Phamong** group (1992) composed a song *Mosebetsi ha se lefa* (Employment is not a life-long deal). In the song the lead-singer directs his satire to Lekhanya, Tšotetsi, Sekhonyana and Thabane that no one can be in power forever, so they are not exceptions, they have to welcome the situation they are facing. He goes on to mock them by saying that even Jonathan, when he died, was no longer Prime Minister, therefore, they do not have to bother, especially when they were his special subjects. At same time as the song seems to satirize these leaders, it sends a clear message that leaders should treat other people fairly, with the respect, they deserve to avoid an embarrassing scenario like the one experienced by Lekhanya.

As though administrative troubles were not enough, Lesotho experienced another blow on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1991. It is said that one woman had a baby on her back and went for shopping at one Harties shop in Maseru. As she was about to go out, she was taken to the search room by the security who found a R3.99 skipper taken by her baby. The woman

who was known as `Manthabiseng was brutally beaten by security and workers, and held a prisoner from 9.00am to 10.00 am while police were called. The woman was left by the door half-dead and, unfortunately, she passed away while her baby, unaware of the fatal beating, kept on playing next to her. Passers-by and angry citizens stormed the shop, and wanted to revenge her death. When they could not get hold of the workers, they stoned every foreign owned shop, especially Chinese and Indians. Within a few minutes, rioting had spread throughout the whole town of Maseru, and spread to other districts like Teyatyaneng, Leribe, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and others. Many shops and businesses were burned down, cars stolen and some Chinese citizens were killed during the riots (Gill, 1993:244). One of the reasons that led to the looting and burning of the Chinese businesses was that Basotho had, for sometime been complaining about the ill-treatment they received at their hands. Having contained their anger for so long, Basotho exploded. As a result of that, some foreign business people left the country, while many buildings were in ashes. The Maseru bus-stop was relocated to the southern part just outside the main town, it was called `Manthabiseng bus-stop. Later in the 1990s the Lesotho government erected a state hall that is currently known as `Manthabiseng Convention Centre (*Moeletsi oa Basotho, Motšeanong*: 1991).

After this terrible incident that affected the economy of the country many accordion artists composed songs that described the situation. However for this study one song has been selected. The title of the song *K'hipha sa e-ja motho Maseru* (The skipper ate a person in Maseru) by Phallang (1991) some of its lines are as follows:

*He! K'hipha sa e-ja motho Maseru, oe!*  
*Kh'ipha sa e-ja motho ra makala.*  
*Ke re sa nka mosali,*  
*Sa siea ngoan'a hae ee!*  
*Ngoana ke enoa o sala a lla.*  
*Toropo ea e cha batho ra makala,*  
*Li ea cha li leba holimo.*  
*Li leba Smart Centre, T.Y. e tšoeu,*  
*Li ea cha li leba Leribe...*  
*Li leba Mokhotlong Thialala!*  
*Ke re jo Makula le Machaena,*  
*Kannete lea makatsa.*

He! Skipper ate a person in Maseru, oe!  
Skipper ate a person, we were surprised.  
I say it took a woman,  
It left her child, ee!  
The child is here, left crying.  
The town burned, people we were surprised,  
They burn going to the northern part.  
They go Smart Centre, T.Y. the white one,  
They burn going to Leribe,  
They go to Mokhotlong, Thialala!  
I say jo! Indians and Chinese,  
Truly speaking you are surprising people.

Phallang relates this incident vividly as though he is not singing but narrating a story. He makes us aware of the place where the burning occurred, that it began in Maseru, followed by Berea, Leribe until it reached Mokhotlong. He mentions the districts in the northern part of Lesotho because he comes from Leribe district. As indicated people's focus was on the Chinese and Indians' businesses that were said to be manhandling the Basotho nationals in their own country. It is surprising that, instead of appreciating Basotho hospitality for allowing them to establish their businesses in Lesotho, some foreign business people ill-treated them. The song sends a message to all foreigners who have businesses in Lesotho and even those who intend to have them, to have good working relations with the Basotho to avoid incidents of this nature.

### **5.5.5 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1993**

Lesotho returned to democratically elected government after twenty-three years, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1993, when the BCP had a land-slide victory by sweeping all the sixty-five constituencies in the country. Its immediate opposition did not succeed in winning even just one constituency; therefore, BCP went to the parliament unopposed. (Gill, 1993:248) Basotho had high expectations about Mokhehle's government as it had been hijacked in 1970. To many Basotho, Mokhehle was their idol, a highly educated and an intelligent man who conscientized many Basotho about politics during the struggle for independence before 1966. He founded the Basutoland African Congress which later became BCP. Machobane (2001:2) comments thus:

The BAC was a political product of Clement Ntsu Mokhehle, a graduate of Fort Hare in the Union of South Africa. Ntsu Mokhehle had been in the political company of Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo. He was even a member of youth league of the African National Congress. He held a Bachelor of Science and a Masters in Science... The B.A.C. was militant and intolerant of all colonial abuses and racist tendencies...

After the 1993 elections, many songs that praised Mokhehle were composed and recorded, and could be heard in almost every shop and supermarket in towns. One such song is by the **Sefofane** group (1994), saying:

*Ke itse le tlohelle Mokhehle a buse,  
Mokhehle ke lehatammoho,  
Le 'na ke lehatammoho.  
Ke re le khumame ka mangole fatše,  
Le rapelle Mokhehle a buse.*

I have said let Mokhehle govern,  
Mokhehle is a BCP member,  
I am also a BCP member.  
I say kneel down,  
And pray for Mokhehle to govern.

Mokhehle's popularity among the Basotho in 1993 could be likened to 'Mandela's popularity among the South Africans in 1994. Most Basotho, as the 1993 election results show, felt that he was the right man, at the right place. That is why the song pleads with the public that Mokhehle should be given a chance to lead the country without any form of obstruction. The lead-singer identifies himself with Mokhehle because they both belong to one party. His plea is that the Basotho should pray for Mokhehle's success while in power, so that the country could benefit from his wisdom.

#### **5.5.6 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1994**

This was a year in which Lesotho experienced some forms of instability that threatened the young democracy. The four outstanding ones were: in-fighting within the Lesotho army, the murder of Deputy Prime Minister, Selometsi Baholo by members of the army,

the national police strike and the downfall of the BCP government. Accordion artists composed songs about each of these incidents, but for this study we shall select one that relates to the downfall of the BCP government in 1994.

Pule (2002: 201-203) points out that His Majesty, King Letsie III wrote a letter to Prime Minister Mokhehle on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1994 in which the king informed him that he was relieved of his duties due to the deteriorating political situation in Lesotho. The letter further indicated that for the sake of peace, unity, stability and reconciliation he was asked to step down with immediate effect. On the following morning, the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1994, it was announced over the national radio that His Majesty King Letsie III had dissolved the government and the parliament. The news was received with anger by most Basotho, who gathered at the palace demanding an explanation for the downfall of the government. About three people sustained injuries when they were dispersed by the soldiers.

His Majesty established a provisional government that would lead the country to general elections. The interim government was headed by Advocate Hae Phoofolo, and among his ministers he had Retšelisitsoe Sekhonyana, the leader of the Basotho National Party, who had lost dismally in the 1993 elections. The provisional government remained in power from the 17<sup>th</sup> August to 14<sup>th</sup> September of 1994, when the BCP government was reinstated.

It is alleged that the main cause for the overthrow of the government was the refusal the BCP government to heed His Majesty's request to reinstate his father Moshoeshe II as the king of Lesotho. The BCP government's argument was that it respected the monarch in office. After negotiations by a troika of countries; Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the BCP came back to power and His Majesty King Moshoeshe II was reinstated on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 1995, under Act number 10 of 1994. The act read: "The king could be reinstated immediately after Letsie III had stepped down as the king" (*Moeletsi*: Phato - Loetse 1994).

Moeti (1995) is one of the artists who recorded a song that captured the overthrow of the government; his song *Litaba li thata* (Matters are tough), says:

*A k'u bue le Sekhonyana,  
A tlohele ho ferekanya sechaba.  
Ke bona joale ba liha 'muso.  
A k'u bue le Sekhonyana,  
A tlohele ho etsa mofere-fere.*

Please talk to Sekhonyana,  
Tell him to refrain from disturbing the nation.  
I see that now they overthrow the government.  
Please talk to Sekhonyana,  
To refrain from causing disturbances.

Sekhonyana referred to here was once a strong man in Jonathan's government as Minister of Finance until 1986, when the military regime took over. He had the good fortune to be in cabinet again as Minister of Finance for the military government. When the BCP government was overthrown, he was yet again in cabinet as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Some people felt that he was behind the overthrow, especially because he had just lost in the 1993 election. The irony is that, if Sekhonyana was behind the reinstatement of Moshoeshe II, it ought to be recalled that he was Lekhanya's strong man when they deposed the very same King, Moshoeshe II. Moeti feels that Sekhonyana disturbed the peaceful atmosphere that prevailed after the election, and had to be strongly advised to desist from such practices. He calls for peace and stability within the country, and to politicians and the rest of the Basotho people to settle their differences amicably without endangering Basotho lives.

### **5.5.7 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1997**

1997 was the year in which some political analysts say history repeated itself directly or indirectly. This was so because, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 1997, the ruling BCP government was tactically overthrown when its faction, called the Lesotho Congress for Democracy, declared itself the government in parliament as it had the majority of the members. The newly formed party became the government instead of being the opposition. It was said that BCP had a succession of bad fortune, because in 1970 when Mokhehle's BCP had

won elections, Jonathan hijacked the government; and it was so even in 1997 when BCP which had fairly won general elections was strategically kicked out of government by its very own members.

This was a result of a long dispute within the ruling party, where there were two main factions; the pressure group and the leftists fought for the leadership of the BCP. The courts' rulings to settle the dispute did not seem to work out well for the ruling party that seemed to be composed of factions that did not intend to settle their differences amicably in the interest of the peace of country. The situation in parliament became worse as BCP members refused to cross over to the opposition seats, citing the fact that they won the general elections that voted them into parliament under the banner of the BCP. They argued that LCD members were the ones to be on the opposition side regardless of being the majority. Unfortunately they had to be removed by police to their opposition seats (*MoAfrika, Phuptjane: 1997*).

Aware of this disarray among politicians, accordion artists recorded songs that highlighted the situation. **Mahosana a ka Phamong** group (1997) in its song *Motho eo ke mang?* (Who is that person)? sings:

*Masholu ana a utsoitse 'muso,  
Le ho khethoa ntho tsena ha li ea khethoa.  
Re fumane li nkile 'muso oa rona.  
Ntho tsena li utsoitse 'muso,  
Le lebokose la likhetho ha ba ea.*

These thieves have stolen our government,  
They have not even been elected these things.  
We find that they have taken our government.  
These things have stolen the government,  
They have not even gone to the polling boxes.

The LCD members are accused and are said to be thieves because they have stolen the BCP government. Truly speaking, they could be called thieves but, legally and politically they were entitled to be the government because they commanded the majority in parliament. When the BCP members challenged this situation in the courts, it was said

that, what LCD had done was morally wrong but, legally right. To show his anger, the artist addresses them as ‘things’ no longer human because they lack moral values. Indeed, they had not won any general election and their party had not been voted into parliament through moral and legal means. The appeal here is that politicians should engage in moral and legal means to achieve their objectives as they are the leaders and role models to the society.

### **5.5.8 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 1998**

1998 Lesotho experienced yet again a political turmoil after an election. The election was peacefully conducted, in that, even on the voting day, there were no reported cases of violence or criminal offences that could have disturbed the process of voting. In this election, LCD won 79 constituencies while BNP won only one. The main problem arose after elections when the opposition parties protested and wanted a recount of ballot papers. Protesters requested permission to hand over their memorandum to the relevant offices including to the King on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 1998, and later decided to stay at the palace gates for days. Justice Langa’s commission was established to look into the matter including the recounting of the ballot papers. Langa submitted his findings which, through delaying tactics, did not reach the opposition parties promptly. *Africa News* (4<sup>th</sup> October 1998) writes:

August 26–Langa commission releases an interim report confirming irregularities and say elections are 98% fraudulent. It recommends that elections be declared null and void...The ruling party rejects the interim report and say it is not acceptable. The report is held back from public consumption by South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki who was chairing the meeting of the presentation of the report.

In actual fact, the then Deputy President of South Africa came to Lesotho to deliver the report, but did not do so. It was stated that it would be discussed in Mauritius in the SADC meeting, but, that did not happen either. Meanwhile the situation was getting worse in the country especially in Maseru. Government vehicles were hijacked and parked at the palace gates.

There was tension within the army, to the extent that 29 top senior officers including the army commander were arrested by junior officers. Later, the commander was coerced to announce over the national radio that he had fired 28 senior officers and he himself had resigned.

There was also further tension between the army and police to the extent that they exchanged fire next to the palace gates where one policeman lost his life. On some days businesses were closed, including government offices, and there was a volatile political atmosphere (Radio Lesotho News, September: 1998).

The Minister of Defence in South Africa was asked to come and negotiate with the army officers regarding the situation but, his coming was not hospitable at all, so was his departure (*Mirror*, September: 1998). Finally on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1998 the South African army entered and attacked Lesotho. Some of its members stormed the palace and exchanged shots with army officers at the gate and ended up hoisting the South African flag in palace grounds. All hell broke loose as protesters went on the rampage, looted businesses and set alight most of them. The Ratjomose and Makoanyane barracks were attacked by the South African army and, it is alleged that there was considerable loss of life on the SANDF side in the Makoanyane camp. Some of these foreign forces attacked the Katse Dam camp where Lesotho army members were on guard, and brutally killed fourteen of them in their sleep.

The two districts that were hit hard by these riots were Maseru and Mafeteng. Ntabanyane (1999) captures these events in his song *S.A.D.C. Lesotho* where he says:

*Ke bua le uena ngoaneso, Mohato,  
Sheba Maseru u bone,  
Kajeno e fetohile lesupi.  
S.A.D.C. e kene ka Maseru.  
Sekoting mona Ha Ratjomose,  
Bana ba batho ba shoele ka sehlooho,  
Ba bolailoe ke mefuta esele.  
Sheba holim 'a lihlabana Mohato,  
Letamong la Katse ka mona,*

*Thabeng bana ba batho ba shoele ka sehlooho.  
Ho shoele eitini ea batho.  
LDF ba ba nketse lithunya,  
Ntoa ke ea melamu feela e seng Basotho ba thungoe.*

I talk to you my brother Mohato.  
Have a look at Maseru and see,  
Today it has turned into ashes.  
S.A.D.C. has entered in Maseru,  
In the gorge here at Ha Ratjomose,  
The children of the soil have been brutally killed,  
They have been killed by foreign forces.  
Have a look at the highlands,  
In this dam of Katse in the mountains,  
The children of the soil have been brutally killed.  
Eighteen people have been killed,  
At LDF they have confiscated their guns.  
Fight is the stick fight not that Basotho should be shot at.

Ntabanyane first starts by pleading with His Majesty King Letsie III, whom he identifies with as his brother as they both belong to the *koena*, clan, to heed his humble request for peace and to intervene in the political conflict. He goes on to relate the after effects of the South African Defence Force's entrance into Lesotho, attacking the Ratjomose camp and the Katse Dam where some Lesotho soldiers, as explained earlier, lost their lives. It was reported over the national radio that Basotho citizens that lost their lives were fifteen soldiers and three civilians totaling eighteen as referred to by the artist.

It was after some few days that all Lesotho army members were instructed to assemble at the Ratjomose barracks. Each army officer was expected to bring along the official guns in his possession that particular day. As they reported, they were easily disarmed and became prisoners in their camp for a week. Ntabanyane highlights this incident when he says at Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) they have confiscated their guns.

Having described this pathetic situation he appeals to those in power to avoid such massacres and calls for negotiations when there is misunderstanding. He values the lives of the Basotho as precious stones which should not be lost. That is also why he calls for the traditional stick-fight that is not fatal as compared to gun-fight. According to him, life

comes but once, therefore authorities should do all that is within their jurisdiction to save the lives of the Basotho people.

### **5.5.9 POLITICAL EVENTS OF 2000**

This is a year which could be said to have been a peaceful year for the Basotho in Lesotho. It was marked by King Letsie III's wedding and by the outstanding performance of Likuena (Crocodiles) the national football team of Lesotho. Concerning His Majesty's wedding, arrangements started in 1999 when, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 40 head of cattle were sent to Karabo's family in Leribe. The wedding took place from the 18<sup>th</sup> –19<sup>th</sup> of February 2000. The ceremony was held in a fully packed Setsoto Stadium where different guests of honor represented their countries. Among them were Prince Charles from Britain, King Mswati III of Swaziland, President Chissano of Mozambique and many others. Basotho were pleased to have a queen after having waited for so long for her. The nation had been concerned that His Majesty was ageing. Fortunately their fears were allayed when at the age of 37, he tied the knot (*Lentsoe la Basotho, Hlakola*: 2000).

Various types of songs that graced the occasion were composed by different artists from many genres such as choral, *monyanyako*, *mokhibo* and accordion music. Some choral and *monyanyako* songs were sung on the great day to welcome Her Majesty to the royal family. The **Matšoara** (2001) accordion group, like others, recorded a song titled *Khosi oa nyala*. The song describes the happiness of the Basotho during the wedding because Basotho could then boast of their Queen who would bear them another king. It has words such as: “*Mofumahali ke eena 'Mabasotho, Motlotlehi 'nake Rabasotho*” (Her Majesty is the Mother of the Basotho, His Majesty, my brother, the Father of Basotho).

To Basotho, the monarchy is a symbol of unity; they always feel that they must appeal to the king to intervene in order to bring peace and stability in the country, although he could do little as the constitution has silenced him when it comes to decision-making. All the same, the Basotho nation, just like the lead-singer does, refers to Her Majesty as the mother of the nation, His Majesty is the father of the nation from whom they expect protection and safety. They are respected and loved for what they are by the nation. All

these songs and others described the mood that prevailed among the Basotho during the Millennium wedding of His Majesty, as it was called. Above all they show the love and respect the Basotho have towards their monarchy and, that they expect them to feel for them as their people.

Another historic event that brought Basotho together in 2000 was the outstanding performance of the Likuena national football team. The team had not been doing well in international matches for some years, but, it pleased all the Basotho by beating other teams as from June 2000 until November 2000. It first happened when it was invited to the King's Millennium Cup in Swaziland at the beginning of June 2000. The results were as follows; it beat Swaziland 1-0, drew 1-1 with Botswana and drew 0-0 with Mozambique, and took the second position and pocketed R60, 000.00.

The second good performance was displayed in the Confederation of Southern African Football Association Cup in mid June, when Likuena knocked out the powerful Zambia 3-1 in the quarterfinals. In their confrontation with Angola, in the semi finals Likuena beat them 2-1. They also played Mozambique in the Africa Cup of Nations and crushed it 4-2 (*Lentsoe la Basotho, Phupu:2000*).

At this time, the Basotho nation was behind their team wishing it all the best. Whenever it played, the stadium was full to the brim. It was no wonder that some businessmen volunteered to buy cell phones for the players, and provided transport for the team to Port Elizabeth to watch the semi-finals between South Africa and Zimbabwe. At the same time, the artists were busy composing songs that showed their appreciation of their team. Although Likuena lost to Zimbabwe in the finals 3-0, indeed the team had surprised many people, which is why the Federation of International Football Association record of 1999-2000 showed that it was among the 23 countries that were improving in soccer. It had moved from rank 154 to 144 by December 2000 (*Lentsoe la Basotho, Phato: 2000*). Many accordion groups composed songs about this spectacular performance. One such song is found in the album **Thutsoana ea Chesa Naha** by Famole. Its title is *Likoena*

*Khaoletsa* (Crocodiles Cut it Short). The song is a tribute to the national soccer team that performed quite well in international games as explained above. The artist has this to say:

*Morena Molimo a k'u re bolokele Likoena, lilemo-lemo,  
Hoba ke bona e kopantse bana ba Basotho,  
Likoena ke ena e tlisitse khotso Lesotho,  
Poho ea nyolosa ea theosa Likoena,  
Ke bona e ntse e betla linaka mabopong,  
Naka tsa poho li chorile, li bohale,  
Poho e tiile molala e lisistsoe.*

Almighty God spare the life of The Crocodiles, for years,  
Because it has united all the Basotho,  
The Crocodiles has brought peace in Lesotho,  
The bull is going up and down the Crocodiles,  
I see that it is sharpening its horns,  
The horns of the bull are pointed, are very sharp,  
The bull has thick neck it is well-taken care of.

Because Likuena's performance brought Basotho together, the artist finds himself duty-bound to spread the good news of unity among Basotho. On this point, Okpewho (1992:111) indicates that the sense of rivalry in oral literature asserts patriotic or nationalist feelings. He goes further to say that love for one's land often disregards qualities or merits of other people from different lands. This is observed in the quoted lines, it is as though the performance of other teams is below standard, while *Likuena* is the best team in the Southern African region.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has dealt with the content of the accordion music which is referred to as thematic aspects. As an oral genre, accordion music seems to have drawn its basis from traditional oral literature such as praise poetry for chiefs, boy-initiates and other types like war songs. These types of songs entail economic, political and social aspects that influenced the life of the Basotho in general, which is why similar features are found in the accordion music. This music addresses major concerns of the Basotho nowadays, and thus could be said to be the mouthpiece of the people, as it used to be the case with traditional poetry.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 FINDINGS AND OTHER POSSIBLE AREAS OF RESEARCH**

##### **6.1.1 FINDINGS**

Findings in this study are based on the status of the artists, reception of their music and the function of their music in the society. Information was obtained through personal interviews, radio and television interviews, analysis of songs and writings from various authors.

One of the findings is that most artists are either illiterate or semi-literate. There are various reasons for their level of education; one of them is that some artists did not receive formal education because they came from destitute families. Others only received primary education and could not further their studies as their parents could not afford to pay their fees, and while a very few indicated that they dropped out because they had no interest in formal education. Most of them indicated that they had to look after animals that belonged to the family or relatives. In some cases, they were employed by other people to look after their animals and they were in return rewarded with animals at the end of their service. Some regretted having been unable to have formal education, which they regard as key to success and would like their children to be educated and join the ranks of the professional elite. Some felt that had they gotten an opportunity to further their studies, they would not have been accordion artists. Even though they have accepted their status as musicians, they still feel that they could have attained better positions in life other than being musicians.

Another finding is that accordion music artists do not write down their music because they have never been to any school of music, but rely on informal and on the job training. Informal training involves one's keen interest in playing a certain instrument such as the

accordion where he may practice on his own and later team up with those who are interested in singing. There is oral practice which is based on the recall, not on reading the words and musical notes on paper. It is worth noting that nobody graduates from accordion music as artists start recording the cassettes when they feel that they have groomed themselves enough to do so. Therefore, there is no formal structure that is followed when one is said to be a qualified artist who can record one's songs.

It has also been observed that accordion artists, through their songs, seem to be vigilant and observant with regard to Basotho national concerns and have embarked on addressing them in their songs to show that they are part of the society and that they feel for it. They address both the problematic and pleasurable concerns of the society with the aim of giving credit where it is due. Some of the main aspects that they address pertain to economic, political, religious and social concerns of the country. They seem to be overseers of the nation who pick on sensitive issues with the aim of making the authorities aware of such concerns and urge them to implement strategies that would help to counter them. In some instances, artists refer to national historical events in their songs. Such songs benefit the young generation to learn about incidents that occurred in their country. Therefore, accordion music, like traditional poetry, preserves the history of the Basotho nation and, as such, should receive the appreciation it deserves among the Basotho; hence it is regarded as oral traditional music of the Basotho.

It is also through this music that one learns about the historical background of the artists. In some of their songs, artists highlight incidents concerning their birth; they sometimes refer to their parents and other relatives, places of birth, their upbringing, education, marriage and other experiences that affected their lives. These points help us to know more about the artists; we get to be familiar with their character, what they appreciate and what they dislike and why they embark on certain styles of singing.

It has been found that accordion music contributes towards the economic development of the country through poverty alleviation and curbing unemployment problems in the country. According to functionalism, each and every aspect in the society is evaluated

according to its function in the society within which it operates. In the breath as accordion music has on economic role to play within the Basotho society. It helps to improve the lives of Basotho.

Most artists rely solely on the production of accordion music in order to make their living, and, very few have permanent jobs or other sources of generating income. This leads to intensive production of the music as some artists prefer to produce as many cassettes as possible within a year with the aim of making more money, on the probability that one of them may sell more copies and bring satisfactory income into the family. This practice is common because most of them do not have reliable jobs and have time on their hands to compose and practice their songs. Some of the musicians, after having collected royalties, utilize such moneys for opening businesses such as shops while others join the developing taxi industry.

One of the findings is that coordinators are generating income through assisting artists with the hope of taking their shares at the end of the recording process. They have music shops where they have employed Basotho nationals who get paid at the end of the month and, by so doing, help to create job opportunities and alleviate poverty. There are hawkers who sell on the streets and make their living by selling this music. Instead of shop-lifting or being engaged in anti-social or criminal activities, hawkers keep themselves busy fending for themselves through acceptable means.

One major set-back that was discovered is exploitation of artists by some coordinators. That is, instead of contributing towards the economic development of the nation exploitation promotes the enrichment of a few individuals, while others, especially musicians, remain poorer. This is a sad situation which ought to be eliminated so that all stakeholders can benefit.

This music plays an important role in the social life of the Basotho nation. It calls for patriotism among citizens, with the aim of developing love for one's country. When one listens to some of the songs, one learns that they plead with families to remain united and

develop trust among themselves as one salutary element of the entire society. As the Basotho nation is built of different clans, artists call for ethnic solidarity thus advocating self-awareness and social identity of members of various clans to remember their roots. All these build a united Basotho nation, from the family, clans and the entire nation, which contributes to peace and stability among the Basotho, thus adhering to the Basotho slogan *Khotso, Pula, Nala!* (Peace, Rain, Prosperity).

Accordion music promotes customs, norms and values of the Basotho nation. Each and every nation exists as far as it retains its identity, and one of the characteristics is that of upholding customs which are unique and distinguish it from other nations. Accordion music seems to encompass the Basotho customs that enable many nationals to identify it as Basotho traditional music. It provides information with regard to how Basotho should live and retain their norms and values which are known to be the basis of their social life. That is why some artists, especially male ones, feel duty-bound to under-go the traditional initiation in order to be socialized into some basic aspects of the society such as language proficiency and customs. Accordion music calls for a retention of these constructive norms and values that contribute towards the progress of the nation.

Another important conclusion is that accordion music promotes or helps in the aesthetics of the Sesotho language. Accordion music helps listeners to learn the contextual use of the language, such as proverbs, idioms and other language devices. As one listens to it, he is able to learn a lot about how to use Sesotho language techniques properly at given situations. We could say that this music teaches skill on the Sesotho language and urges its clientele to develop more love towards it.

Last, it was found that Basotho attend accordion music concerts and festivals in large numbers. They do so because they love it, and like to witness its live performance rather than listening to cassettes or watching it on television sets. To show their great support to this music, they feel bound to take trips where they incur transport expenses in order to attend such concerts or festivals. It is during such functions that the public shows their appreciation by either participating or being attentive as the songs are played. In their

enthusiastic participation they may ululate and blow whistles during the performance to show their satisfaction. Sometimes, they express their dissatisfaction through silence and being unresponsive to the music. All these factors and those mentioned earlier contribute towards the reception of accordion music and its acceptability among the Basotho nowadays.

### **6.1.2 POSSIBLE AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH**

Although this study has analysed accordion music, there are some areas that still need to be researched that may benefit scholars and the entire Basotho nation. Areas that need to be researched include the life history of the accordion artists, classification of accordion songs, the social and economic impact of the accordion music and, gender aspects in the music.

Accordion artists play an important role in the Basotho society and, as such, their life history should be documented for future reference as they are part of Lesotho history. There is a need to make a thorough research on all the artists because they have contributed towards the development of the music in Lesotho. It is disappointing that there are no writings about Basotho musicians in Lesotho while some countries are far ahead with documenting the history of their musicians. Ngcanga (1995) has made a valuable contribution when it comes to some Basotho authors in his text Mabalankwe ka Bangoli. The research has contributed much and continues to do so in helping both the learners and teachers of modern Sesotho literature as it covers the life history of the authors and their works. Even though most of them are late, their documented history enables us to easily teach their works. Embarking on the research that pertains to the life history of the artists is one valuable project that would benefit different sections of the society. Life history can include the following: date of birth and place of birth, family background, upbringing, education, employment, and marriage life and music career. Under music career, areas such as when the artist started singing the accordion music, what influenced him, cassettes released, advantages and disadvantages in the music career may be covered.

Another area worth researching on is the transcription and classification of accordion songs. This is an important aspect that would contribute towards the development of music in Lesotho, especially when accordion songs are not written down. Scholars could learn a lot from the language and topical themes of the music. Transcription of the music will improve the status of accordion music in that, the public could read for themselves the words without having to listen attentively to what is being sung. There are many writings on Basotho poetry, like the collections of Basotho praise poetry by Mangoaela (1921) and Damane and Sanders (1974). On emergent poetry of *lifela tsa li-tsamaeana*, there are collections by Moletsane (1982) and Mokitimi (1982). There are also oral traditions like proverbs and idioms documented by Sekese (1992) Guma (1967) and Mokitimi (1997). Apart from these works, one finds that when it comes to music, Mohapeloa, the renowned choral artist in Lesotho, has documented five works in the form of books for his songs; Meloli ea Lithallere tsa Africa I, II, & III (1935, 1939 & 1947), Khasima-Nosi tsa 'Mino oa Kajeno (1951) and Meluluetsa ea Ntšetso-pele le Bosechaba Lesotho (1976). Mohapeloa's works still play an important role in the history of music in Lesotho even nowadays because they are documented. Documenting and classifying the accordion songs would benefit students, teachers, academics and the entire Basotho nation, especially because they will be written in Sesotho, the language that is understood and can be read by many Basotho. Classification of the songs enables one to discover that the accordion musicians have composed songs for different situations such as sad or happy moments, and it also helps scholars to easily find themes they would like to analyse. Documented songs would be of great importance for future referencing, as cassettes, compact discs and DVDs easily get destroyed, while artists also die, thus, making it impossible for one to obtain the words of the song when needed.

The third possible research area is the aspect of gender in accordion music. Globally, this is one of the world's sensitive topics as it relates to women's rights and women empowerment. It is worthwhile to look into accordion music to investigate how much it addresses the gender issue.

The fourth area that could be researched is the social and economic implications of accordion music. That is, given that accordion music is now accepted as Basotho traditional music, what does it mean and hold for the Basotho nation? Does it pose a threat to other traditional genres of Basotho music or not? At present, accordion music is played when Basotho women do their traditional dance like *mokhibo*. This is one of the Basotho female dances which, when performed, is accompanied by a song and clapping of hands. In 2005, during the graduation ceremony at the National University of Lesotho, the *mokhibo* dance group of the University played two songs from one Sefako sa Menoaneng accordion group as they performed the *mokhibo* dance. It was also the case with the *ndlamo* group from the Leribe district in the area of Tšehlanyane which was captured by Lesotho Television. Instead of the normal singing accompanied by clapping of hands, one artist played an accordion song. Participants performed according to the well received innovative rhythm of the accordion instrument. Taking into consideration such examples, what are the implications of the accordion music in relation to traditional genres? Will the accordion replace the human voices and thus enable the wide spread of the accordion music in social functions?

These are but a few of those areas which could be looked into for further research into accordion music while other research may come in the form of critiquing the already written studies. Documenting various aspects about this music contributes much towards its development and it may also play an important role in the future generations who could refer to the written works for substantiation of their arguments.

## **6.2 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED**

Having identified stakeholders, different questionnaires for each category were designed; this was followed by making appointments with different stakeholders. Stakeholders had to be interviewed personally either places of work or during their concerts or festivals. Some of the interviewees expected some rewards for responding to the questions, while others freely responded without hesitation, bearing in mind that their cooperation would lead to the marketing of their music. Most of the responses were relevant although some

did not really address the concerns specified in the questions; this might have been due to the fact that the questions were open-ended.

Another taxing exercise was that of listening to different cassettes and categorizing the songs according to the language techniques and thematic aspects. This was tough exercise where one had to play each and every cassette, and listen to it throughout and identify the major two aspects according to different sub-topics. Some of the experiences were that other songs played seemed irrelevant. In short, sifting for relevant information in the music was tedious, time consuming and expensive financially.

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

Basotho accordion music is said to be rooted in Basotho oral literature in that it retains some cultural aspects that are familiar to Basotho and, regardless of its new styles it is seen as promoting the oral traditions of its people, hence its wide popularity at present.

This feeling is shared by Tracey (1945:4) who comments that:

If music is to give the greatest pleasure, it must be expressed in terms familiar to the listeners. This does not mean that music can never alter; it means that new styles of music can be introduced only slowly, so that people may get used to them gradually...Even then the new music that springs from the old music of our ancestors will always have a deeper effect upon our emotions than new music which reflects the hearts of and minds of foreigners.

This is characteristic of Basotho accordion music nowadays as it is accepted as the oral traditional music of the Basotho. It has wide and positive reception among the young and the old alike and among the literate and illiterate. One could say that Basotho, having realized the problem of association with immorality have opted for the current accordion music which is more appreciative and welcoming. That is, the accordion artists have adjusted to the generally appreciated form of the music that has led to the present status of accordion music. This is in line with functionalists' concept of the state of equilibrium which is a normal state of affairs where different parts function smoothly for the operation of the society. The present accordion music could be said to have reached the

normal state in that generally, both the artists and the audience seem to be working towards the smooth operation where each group appears to satisfy the needs of the other.

This research has argued that, accordion music is currently considered as oral traditional music of Basotho because it bears some aspects that are embedded in Basotho oral traditions. As a way of building the argument up the study analysed the language techniques and thematic aspects to detect the embodiment of orality features in accordion music. The analysis was contextualized by providing information regarding characteristics of various oral traditions and genres in order to show that accordion music bears some of those oral literary features.

Having analysed accordion music and observed the retention of some oral literary features it could be concluded that accordion music qualifies to be considered part of Basotho traditional music. In brief, this is based on the following observations:

Accordion music employs the language that is rich in language techniques such as euphemism, imagery, metaphor, repetition, simile and many more that add flavour to the music. Its language contains figurative expressions, idioms and proverbs. These language aspects are common in Basotho oral traditions.

Second, it could be said that accordion music is Basotho traditional music because it embraces thematic aspects which are found in oral traditional genres of the Basotho. The music captures social, economic, political and religious aspects that affect the lives of Basotho. That is, accordion music addresses issues that reflect the lifestyle of the Basotho as is the case with other traditional genres.

Third, accordion music meets the social functions of Basotho oral literature. It provides entertainment for the entire Basotho nation. It encourages ethnic solidarity in that it enables listeners to associate with their relatives, clans, chiefs and places of origin.

Accordion artists like praise poets could be said to be the representatives of the society. They are the eyes and ears of the public in that they address the concerns of the society which they serve. The music mirrors the social virtues and vices of everyday life in Lesotho. It preserves history by capturing important historical events as well as prominent personalities.

Accordion music should have to be accepted as Basotho traditional music as it shows that oral literature is dynamic, and changes with times. Much as it retains some of the Basotho cultural aspects, it places them in the modern context of Basotho. It could be said that it preserves the Basotho cultural aspects such as customs, norms and values that identify Basotho from other nations.

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Having researched on the accordion music and seen the advantages and disadvantages of this music, the following two-fold recommendations are worth consideration for the future. These are recommendations related to artists and academics.

##### **6.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARTISTS**

Artists should form an umbrella body that would protect their rights. Such a body may act as a representative of all the artists in the matters that relate to their welfare. The representative body may also help artists to retain social ethics as public figures. That is, it can help to mould them in order to become dignified persons through engaging them in workshops that improve their social status. The existence of such a body may also help to provide guidance, especially when it comes to signing contracts with recording companies. It can help with legal interpretation of contracts.

##### **6.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMICS**

Academics should ensure that this music is preserved so that future generations can read about it. It can be safely kept in libraries where scholars can have access to it whenever they need it for analysis or reference for their academic work. It can also be transcribed and be collected in different volumes.

Since accordion music is currently one of the popular genres, it should be included in the school curriculum. This may help students to learn more about various aspects contained in the music. Currently, the school curriculum includes songs, modern Sesotho poetry and praise poetry which are closely related to accordion music. The inclusion of accordion music as another genre of traditional music may contribute a lot to reflecting the dynamic nature of oral literature. Students may gain a lot on expression and contextual use of language.

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## **INTERVIEWS**

N/B Audience and hawkers names have not been included as their interviews were haphazard. Categories included below are: artists, coordinators, radio and television presenters and some members of public whose names have been used in the study.

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N/B Interviews of some artists which was obtained from radio stations and televisions have been left out. The list covers some artists who were personally interviewed by the author and few whose information was drawn from radio and television interviews. The names in brackets are either their nicknames or names of their group.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS PER GROUP**

#### **ARTISTS**

How much do they know about the history of accordion music in Lesotho?

What makes accordion music a popular genre among the Basotho?

What is their basic role as artists engaged in accordion music?

What is their contribution to the society in terms of improving its standard socially, economically and politically?

Is there any success in their attempts to achieve some of their objectives?

How do they measure their achievement?

How do the young artists grow to become famous?

How do they manage to have their songs recorded?

What problems do they encounter prior to, during and after the recording?

How do they overcome such problems?

The merits and demerits of being an accordion music artist.

Their relationship as artists and their working conditions.

Do they operate as individuals or under a certain association?

Are there any regulations or laws that they have to abide by in their career as artists or they are just on their own?

What are their expectations of the fellow artists in terms of behaviour as artists and the type of songs that they sing.

What is their overall relationship with the society, the attitude of the society towards them as artists and their music.

What strategies do they employ in order to win the audience through their music?

Which qualities do the audience like most about the artists as individuals or as a group?

What is it that the audience like most about the songs sung by the artists and that they dislike about the songs?

How does the public show its appreciation and dislike of the songs?

How do they advertise themselves as artists?

How about the distribution of their music to different shopping areas.

What could be the reasons for the high production of accordion music nowadays?

How sustainable is their career as accordion music artists?

Their long-term and short-term development plans as artists.

### **RADIO PRESENTERS**

To trace the history of accordion music in Lesotho.

Why their radio stations run the programme of accordion music?

How do the presenters or their stations benefit from such programmes?

How the artists benefit from such programmes?

Who takes care of the costs of inviting the artists?

What is the reaction of artists towards the programme, and also their attitude when invited on air?

Which problems do they encounter when running the programmes and what are possible solutions to them?

How do the problems affect the production of the music and the artists in general?

What is the attitude of the public in general towards accordion music programmes.

What is it that the public like most about the programme, and what the public dislikes about the programme?

What measures are taken to address some of the concerns of the public for the smooth running of the programme.

### **HAWKERS**

How much do they know about the history of accordion music in Lesotho.

Why do they sell the accordion music cassettes?

How do they get the cassettes, from the artists or record companies?

Is there any criteria for choosing the cassettes to sell or is it random?

Whose cassettes are mostly sold and why?

Whose cassette take time to sell and why?

How is the business of selling cassettes-profitable or not?

Who are regular customers, how do they buy (one or many cassettes at a go)?

What is the attitude of the artists towards such shops or street vendors?

What problems do they encounter in the business of selling the cassettes, and how do they overcome them?

Overall reaction of the public towards accordion music.

## **AUDIENCE**

To relate the history of accordion music in Lesotho.

What makes accordion music a popular genre among the Basotho?

To what extent is accordion music acceptable as oral literature.

What is it that they like most about the accordion music and its artists?

What is it that they dislike about the accordion music and its artists?

Their views with regard to the role played by the artists and their music.

What impact does accordion music have on them as its lovers and the society in general?

Their views when comparing accordion music from its origins up to the late 1970's and from 1980's to 2005.

Their views with regard to the current status of the accordion music, high production of the music and proliferation of artists.

Their opinion concerning improvements on the music to individuals and artists in general.

What support does the audience give to the artists – individuals or groups?

What are their basic expectations of the artists in terms of behaviour and the songs they produce?

What if they fail to meet their expectations as audience, what measures do they take to correct the situation and the aftermath of such measures?