

## **Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa Critical Edition in Six Volumes**

Transcribed, compiled, edited, and introduced by Christine Lucia  
Texts translated by Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa,  
Mantoa Motinyane-Smouse, and Mpho Ndebele

**Volume 1:** *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika I*  
(African Songs and Extemporaneous Harmonizations Book 1)

**Volume 2:** *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika II*  
(African Songs and Extemporaneous Harmonizations Book 2)

**Volume 3:** *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika III*  
(African Songs and Extemporaneous Harmonizations Book 3)  
and  
*Khalima-Nosi tsa 'Mino Oa Kajeno: Harnessing Salient Features of  
Modern African Music* (Shining Examples of Today's Music)

**Volume 4:** *Meluluetsa ea Ntšetso-pele le Bosechaba Lesotho*  
(Anthems for the Development of the Lesotho Nation)

**Volume 5:** Afrikaans-Sesotho Psalms

**Volume 6:** Miscellaneous (un)published works

## General preface

This is the first critical edition of the complete works of Lesotho composer Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa (1908-1982), who between the 1920s and 1970s created a modern African choral idiom in tonic solfa score, inspired by traditional Basotho music, jazz, western classical music and hymns. Mohapeloa's repertoire of almost 200 short unaccompanied choral songs has been newly transcribed from tonic solfa into staff notation, and his original Sesotho texts have been extracted from the solfa scores and translated into English where his own translations do not exist. His tempi, dynamics, and expressive markings are retained and where they do not exist editorial suggestions are made. All editorial interventions on the score are shown in square brackets. The historical and cultural background of the composer and various documents including his own writings, have informed the editorial work. The musical sources are given for each song. Accuracy and consistency have been aimed at as far as is practicable, respecting the composer's legacy and presenting it in a form that scholars, teachers and performers can access. Mohapeloa wrote within the literary tradition of tonic solfa but his music was often disseminated orally and copied by hand or electronically; thus individual songs have sometimes been modified through popular practice. This edition returns to the available printed and manuscript sources in order to prepare a new performing score of each song, with critical commentary explaining why a particular version or aspect of a score is considered authoritative.

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Nts'iuoa Joyce Mohapeloa	Thembele Vokwana

## Abbreviations

Edwards = *Staff Notation Versions of Choral Compositions of Mohapeloa* transcribed by Jonathan Edwards.  
 ILAM = International Library of African Music  
 JPM = Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa  
 MMA = Morija Museum & Archives  
 MSBD = Morija Sesuto Book Depot  
 NTTC = National Teachers Training College (of Lesotho)  
 OAU = Organisation of African Unity  
 OUP = Oxford University Press  
 Revd. = revised  
 SAMRO = Southern African Music Rights Organisation, Johannesburg.  
 SATB = Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass  
 Transcr. = transcribed  
 Trans. or transl. = translated  
 Vol. = Volume

## General introduction by Christine Lucia

### The Mohapeloa Critical Edition

This critical edition of almost 200 short unaccompanied choral works by African composer Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa (1908-1982) has been collected from a number of sources and is presented here for the first time, in six volumes.<sup>1</sup> With one exception, all works were originally composed in tonic solfa notation and are newly transcribed into staff notation with English translations of the Sesotho texts.<sup>2</sup>

Volumes 1-4 contain five collections published during the composer's lifetime in the order in which they originally appeared. Volume 5 comprises a manuscript of 39 settings of Psalms and other Biblical texts made for the African Dutch Reformed Church, published here for the first time. Volume 6 contains several previously published individual songs and a number of unpublished ones. The catalogue for Volumes 1 and 2 can be downloaded on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/catalogue](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/catalogue).

The six volumes will become available for sale online during 2014 at [www.african-composers-edition.co.za](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za), with a limited edition hard copy appearing once all volumes are complete. New songs traced through further research will be published online. The edition is conceived as an online publication is regularly updated; comments, queries and corrections are welcome via [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/contact](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/contact).

Accompanying the edition are thirty-one audio tracks on the African Composers Edition CD label, *African Choral Legacy: Historic Recordings of Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa*, available for download on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/sales/audio](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/sales/audio).

Each volume has an Introduction giving historical background and explaining the editorial work required to prepare it for this edition. Individual scores are prefaced with a historical introduction and a translation and followed by a critical commentary including variant readings of sources where more than one exists.

Unlike most critical or complete editions of music scores in the West, this one lacks any precedent in the context of southern Africa where the music originated or the composer's life. Before describing the edition itself, therefore, Mohapeloa's biography is briefly sketched, and an overview explaining the tradition of African choral music within which he worked is given.

### Mohapeloa's biography in brief<sup>3</sup>

Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa (1908-1982) was a member of the Bataung clan, born in Molumong in the eastern mountains of Lesotho on 28 March 1908. He was the third generation of an African family converted to Christianity in the nineteenth century by the Swiss-French Protestant missionaries from the *Société des Missions Evangéliques chez les peuples non-chrétiens à Paris (SMEP)*, known in English as the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (PEMS). Joshua Pulumo was the fourth of ten children born to Rev. Joel Mohapeloaane Mohapeloa and Candace Sehorane Matong. Aside from some years in Johannesburg (1938-1943) Mohapeloa spent most of his life in Morija, a flourishing mission village in the lowlands of Lesotho.

After elementary schooling in the village of Molumong in the highlands (Mokhotlong district) he attended the PEMS Morija Training College, where in addition to other subjects he studied music and music education, including tonic solfa, staff notation, and keyboard (harmonium). He completed a Junior Certificate in 1927 and in 1928 enrolled at the South African Native College (SANC) in the eastern Cape, South Africa in order to complete his Matriculation, which he did in 1929.<sup>4</sup> He hoped to study medicine but this time he had contracted tuberculosis and was forced to leave the SANC and go home to Mohalinyane, where his family were then living. While recuperating here he took correspondence courses and began composing, as a distraction. His daughter-in-law Nts'iuoa Mohapeloa remembers him saying:

<sup>1</sup> This critical edition has been peer-reviewed by international scholars.

<sup>2</sup> The exception is the unpublished O.A.U. anthem *Freedom in Unity*, written for choir and piano accompaniment in staff notation. A Pronunciation Guide to the Sesotho can be downloaded on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/mohapeloa-complete-edition/lyrics-and-translation](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/mohapeloa-complete-edition/lyrics-and-translation).

<sup>3</sup> Information for this biography was culled from many sources and rather than litter it with footnotes I give most of them here: Mohapeloa, J.M. and M.K. Phakisi, *The Eloquence of Song in Sesotho*, trans. Mantoa Motinyane-Smouse (Maseru: Lekhotla la Sesotho L/P 1139, 2009[1987]); Gill, Stephen, *A Short History of Lesotho* (Morija: Morija Museum and Archives, 1993); Daniel Moekoetse Mohapeloa letter to David Ambrose, 17 November 1981; Huskisson, Yvonne, *The Bantu Composers of Southern Africa* (Johannesburg: SABC, 1969); Mohapeloa, J.P., Preface to *Khalima-nosi tsa 'Mino oa Kajeno* (Morija: Morija Sesuto Book Depot, 1951; Mohapeloa, J.P., 'Bophelo ba ka ke le Sechaba sa Sejoale-joale: My Life as Modern African Composer, trans. Mantoa Motinyane-Smouse (SAMRO Archive: Huskisson Collection, [n.d. c.1965]); Mohapeloa, J.P., Preface ['Khorō'] to *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika I*, trans. Mantoa Motinyane-Smouse (Morija: Morija Sesuto Book Depot, 1988(1935)).

<sup>4</sup> Matriculation was the school-leaving qualification. SANC is now called Fort Hare University and boasts some famous alumni, including Nelson Mandela. It was at that time the only place in southern Africa where a black person could matriculate.

He was so sad about all that that he used to sit in the forest. Sit there, worry, being alone there. Then, he said to me, he would be listening to the birds chirping, you know. Then he started to, you know, love nature, started to appreciate what was around him. He started to appreciate the countryside. He thought, 'this is a wonderful country, I can write a lot about it'.<sup>5</sup>

Nor was he just an observer, for both at Molumong and at Mohalinyane Mohapeloa planted many trees, as a way of acknowledging the importance of the environment and the devastating effects of soil erosion due to over-grazing.

At home and at school Mohapeloa was exposed to various forms of vocal music: folk music, songs composed in tonic solfa by previous Sotho composers, European hymns, and the western choruses introduced by his teachers in Morija Training Institution. He also learnt local dances and games, and delighted in making up tongue-twisters. As his brother, historian Josias Makibinyane Mohapeloa recalls, "the Basotho ways, old and new, that he learned from home, at school, herding, and different kinds of jobs, are evident in many of his songs".<sup>6</sup>

Mohapeloa started a choir at Mohalinyane and tried out his songs, their popularity quickly spreading to other choirs. By 1934 he had written over 30 and in 1935 Morija Sesutu Book Depot published his first songbook. In late 1936 or early 1937 the Morija Training Institution Choir conducted by Mohapeloa's neighbour, Bennie Mashologu recorded eight songs from *Meloli I* at the South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) studios in Johannesburg, which are probably among the first African choral songs recorded for radio.<sup>7</sup>

Mohapeloa produced his second songbook in 1939 and in the same year began studying in the Music Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg as an 'Occasional Student' with the partial help of a scholarship given by the Lesotho Director of Education, Mr O.B. Bull. This was preceded by "a year's intensive revision work on the rudiments".<sup>8</sup> Mohapeloa took selected courses or lectures given by Wits Professor of Music Percival Kirby (who had studied composition at the Royal College with Stanford) and by theory lecturer W.P. Paff. His student record at Wits shows that he passed "History of Music A.1" in 1939, "History of Music II" and "Counterpoint & Harmony" in 1940, "Counterpoint & Harmony" in 1941, and "Composition only" in 1942. He was far from completing a diploma or degree, but the courses listed above expanded his musical grammar, as one can see from the details given in the *University Calendars* of the time and from changes he effected to his style in his third book of compositions (1947).

Mohapeloa was only allowed to study 'composition' after three years, in 1942, however and no details are given in the Wits *Calendar* about what this comprised. A 34-year-old African composer steeped in Sotho folk music and missionary styles of choral writing (in tonic solfa) must have made an odd impression at Wits in the late 30s-early 40s. Kirby's autobiography *Wits End* makes no mention of Mohapeloa although Kirby mentions many other former students and surely this one would have stood out. Composer Stanley Glasser, who was an economics student at Wits at the time, warmly remembered 'Josh' as he called him, recalling that Kirby and Paff "were highly impressed with Mohapeloa as a musical phenomenon, remarking on his musicianship, originality and imagination of his pieces and somewhat puzzled as what best to do for him".<sup>9</sup> Kirby took a dim view of African choral music in general,<sup>10</sup> but maybe he regarded Mohapeloa as an exception, and clearly Mohapeloa felt indebted to Kirby because he gave his first-born son, Maloisane the English name, Percival.

While on the Reef Mohapeloa ran a choir called the Johannesburg Traditional Choristers to earn more money, and after he returned to Morija one of the choirs he formed was called Baithaopi (Volunteers). He began working at the Morija Printing Works as a proof reader the year he married Mary Stimmiri, 1945, and stayed in this job until his retirement in 1973, raising four children. Aside from attending the Kitwe All African Church Music Conference in Zambia in 1963, Mohapeloa never left South Africa. In his retirement he taught music at the National Teacher Training College in Maseru after it was founded in 1975, and he was still teaching there on 13 January 1982 when he died. He is buried in the graveyard outside Morija, and in 2008 a tombstone was erected, sponsored by the Southern African Music Rights Organisation, of which Mohapeloa was a member.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ntsiuoa Mohapeloa, Author's Interview, 28 Sep. 2006.

<sup>6</sup> See fn. 1.

<sup>7</sup> They can be heard on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/sales/audio](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/sales/audio).

<sup>8</sup> This extract from Mohapeloa's proposal for a study trip abroad made to the Lesotho High Commission in 1968 (turned down, on the recommendation of Hugh Tracey) was found in the Hugh Tracey Correspondence Collection at the International Library of African Music, Grahamstown (document HTC-H051-01, folder 'High Commissioner-006').

<sup>9</sup> Stanley Glasser to Christine Lucia, 8 June 2009.

<sup>10</sup> "[Its] form is of the most rudimentary nature, consisting chiefly of orthodox musical sentences without a trace of the devices used by European composers to mitigate the 'squareness' of the design or to inject vitality into the melody or character into the harmony. In other words, with very few exceptions, our African composers have made little advance in their art during the last half-century". Kirby, Percival, 'Introduction' [to 'Bantu Composers of South Africa, The', in *South African Music Encyclopedia Vol. 1*, ed. J.P. Malan, 1979, 85).

<sup>11</sup> There are a number of photographs illustrating this biography on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za).

Mohapeloa was also a founder ('African') member of Hugh Tracey's African Music Society.<sup>12</sup> He was awarded an OBE by the British Government in 1961, a Knighthood of the Order of Ramats'eatsana (KCOR) by the Lesotho Government in 1976, and an Honorary D.Litt. from the University of Lesotho in 1978. His obituary also mentions that he was an honourable member of the Organization of Sesotho Writers, and that the King and Queen of Lesotho attended his funeral.<sup>13</sup>

### Overview of the tradition of African choral music in southern Africa

John Knox Bokwe stands "at the head of the tradition of black choralism" in southern Africa; as Grant Olwage has observed.<sup>14</sup> Bokwe's first notated composition, *Msindisi Wa Boni* was published in 1875 and he followed it with more than 30 pieces over as many years. With this piece and in his own practice Bokwe established certain norms in the genre of African choral music that have persisted to the present day: he was a "self-taught composer [who] composes almost exclusively for voice [and who] is typically also a choral conductor [for] whom choral practice is a part-time activity" (Olwage); s/he also typically writes in tonic solfa notation, the mission script.

Bokwe's choral music was published between 1875 and 1922 by Lovedale Press and includes several works in the early South African collection of mission songs and hymns, *Amaculo ase Lovedale* (1885). All Bokwe's manuscripts (in Rhodes University's Cory Library for Historical Research) are in staff notation, for it was not unusual for musically talented pupils in black mission schools in southern Africa to receive additional instruction in staff notation and piano or harmonium (as we have seen with Mohapeloa). Bokwe's music was strongly influenced by British Victorian or American revivalist hymnody, resulting in an SATB choral style that Olwage calls "resolutely metropolitan". This magnetic attraction to Christian styles at 'the centre' of western culture by composers at the periphery in rural locations scattered throughout southern Africa, was to remain a characteristic feature of African choral music throughout its history.

Bokwe also left us with another first, which complements his metropolitan leanings: his transcriptions of fragments of African traditional music that date back to an early nineteenth century indigenous chant by the first Xhosa Christian convert, Chief Ntsikana Gaba (c.1780-1821). One of these fragments is called *Ulo Tixo Mkulu* (in isiXhosa; 'Thou Great God' in English), which became known as 'Ntsikana's Great Hymn'.<sup>15</sup> Bokwe thus set in motion a parallel characteristic of much African choral music, including Mohapeloa's: a proclivity for reimagining in western four-part harmony traditional music from regional African cultures. This became particularly important as a musical form of expression during the anti-apartheid struggle and has been observed by a number of writers.<sup>16</sup>

Bokwe's peers and immediate successors include Tiyo Soga and Enoch Sontonga, the latter most famous for his hymn *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* which was adopted by the South African Native Congress as a closing song at meetings in 1919 and subsequently by the SANC's heir, the African National Congress (ANC), now the governing party of South Africa. Hence it is still sung as part of the new South African national anthem. The third generation of composers - alongside Mohapeloa - includes fellow Basotho and almost exact contemporary Michael Mosoeu Moerane (1904-1980), Reuben Caluza, Daniel Marivate, Benjamin Tyamzashe and Hamilton Masiza. Aside from competitions their work was advanced through the establishment of mission printing presses such as Lovedale Press in the Eastern Cape (a British Methodist mission), Moriija Sesuto Book Depot (MSBD) in Lesotho (Paris Evangelical Lutheran), and Mazenod Institute in Lesotho (Roman Catholic), which were among the first publishers of choral music. Mohapeloa's first four song books were published in the 1930s thru 50s by MSBD and a few other songs were then published by MSBD and Mazenod in the 50s and 60s.

In the twentieth century more publishers became involved, including Shooter and Shuter in Pietermaritzburg who published the next generation's music including songs by Alfred Assegai Khumalo, and Oxford University Press who published Mohapeloa's fifth collection (1976). It was mostly educational

<sup>12</sup> African Music Society, List of Members at 30th April 1948, Cape Town: University of Cape Town Museums and Archives, P.R. Kirby Collection, file BC750/A, [n.d. 1948]; African Music Society, Form of Application for Membership, Cape Town: University of Cape Town Museums and Archives, P.R. Kirby Collection, file BC750/A, [n.d. 1948].

<sup>13</sup> *Leselinyana le Lesotho*, 'The Composer Has Rested: Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa KCOR, OBE, D.LITT', trans. Mantoa Motinyane-Smoude, 29 January 1982, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Olwage, Grant, 'John Knox Bokwe: Father of Black South African Choral Composition', *NewMusicSA Bulletin* Issues 9/10, 2010/2011, 18-19.

<sup>15</sup> Bokwe, J.K. *Ntsikana, the Story of an African Hymn* (Lovedale, Eastern Cape: Lovedale Press, [n.d. c.1904].

<sup>16</sup> See for example, Mngoma, K., 'The Correlation of Folk and Art Music Among African Composers', *Papers Presented at the Second Symposium on Ethnomusicology*, ed. A. Tracey (Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, 1981), 61-69; Mthethwa, B., 'The Songs of Alfred A. Kumalo[sic]: A Study in Nguni and Western Musical Syncretism', *Papers Presented at the Sixth Symposium on Ethnomusicology, 1987*, ed. A. Tracey (Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, 1988), 28-32; Pewa, E., 'Zulu Music Competitions: the Continuity of Zulu Traditional Aesthetics' (MA diss., University of Natal, 1995); and Mugovhani, G., 'The Manifestation of the "African Style" in the Works of Mzilikazi Khumalo' (MMus diss., University of the Witwatersrand, 1998).

publishers that took on choral music, supplying solfa books to the newly burgeoning State school systems of countries such as South Africa, Swaziland, Botswana, and Lesotho. They had a guaranteed large market. Composers of the past fifty years, who include Mike Ngxokolo, Makhaya Mjana, L.B.M. Chonco, Thanduxolo Ngqobe, Shalati Khoza, and Phelelani Mnomiya could to some extent rely on this market and increasingly on the prescription of their works for competitions to ensure performances; but not income.

Considering the size of the repertoire, few African choral works have been transcribed into staff notation during the history of choral practice, and those few mainly for competitions. In 1998 the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) began publishing a series of African choral scores in ‘dual notation’ called *South Africa Sings* which are useful study scores, and SAMRO has also published some individual scores.<sup>17</sup>

The history of African choral music publications relates intimately to its history as a practice, and this history is closely bound up with the histories of black southern African groups, the emerging black middle class in the early twentieth century, and the different religious or education systems Africans were exposed to. The tradition of ‘amakwaya’ or ‘iikwayala’ as it is often called (from the Zulu/Xhosa words for choir) is much older than the first inter-institutional choral competitions, that seem to date back to 1931 when the newly formed South African Bantu Board of Music first held competitions in the Johannesburg area.<sup>18</sup> These competitions - which initially had instrumental categories as well as choral - prescribed different songs each year and helped enrich a repertoire already developing for classroom use. In practice, conductor-teachers often taught music by rote because scores were precious resources, and rehearsals were held almost daily. (This is still common practice.)

But although the number of songs written in tonic solfa notation has proliferated and styles have gradually become more diverse, inflected with regional differences during the course of southern Africa’s volatile twentieth-century history, choral practice itself has remained largely unchanged. It is still a community-based, amateur practice, with the majority of choristers unable to read music (even tonic solfa), rote learning predominating, and competition the centrifugal force holding the practice together.

Annual competitions are organised for school, church, and adult choirs by separate bodies: and Lesotho, where Mohapeloa lived and worked, has its own competitions although some Sotho choirs also participate in South Africa’s (much larger) competition field. The competitions have a lot in common with sport: choirs are like teams, with managers jealously guarding their success and conductors who have additional coaches to do ‘drill’ work. Over the course of a year prescribed pieces are rehearsed in two categories - ‘Western’ (e.g. Handel), and ‘African’ (e.g. Mohapeloa), with traditional song/dance also performed at the competitions in the choir’s regional folk costume. Choirs pay to enter in the regional and provincial rounds of these competitions, which culminate in national finals held in one of the major cities - Johannesburg, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, or Durban - or in the case of Lesotho, its capital, Maseru. Competitions have evolved almost beyond recognition from their humble beginnings into a big business run, in South Africa’s case, by the National Choir Festival (NCF), which has in the past worked in conjunction with corporates such as the Ford Motor Company, the Standard Bank, Telkom, and now, the Old Mutual insurance and banking group.<sup>19</sup> The affect of “massive monetary incentives” on the culture of choralism has been noted by Thembela Vokwana.<sup>20</sup> The finals have been recorded for radio since the 1960s and more recently for television. The NCF makes its own in-house videos that are sold at the following year’s competitions but these films do not circulate more widely, and the focus is on singing rather than on compositions or composers, whose names are often not even recorded on the videos.

African choral music as a daily performance practice is firmly in the hands of practitioners. It is as much a social as a musical practice, a reason for coming together, and supporting each other not only by participating in competitions but by performing locally outside of a competition for weddings and funerals, etc.: acts performed by the community for the community. Choralism is a habit, a way of life, sometimes even an obsession, which the NCF Facebook page gives daily confirmation of; a major after-hours commitment for people who are working or studying, and a social forum for the unemployed.

Since the early history of African choral practice in the last quarter of the nineteenth century external influence has brought about many changes to musical style and vocal techniques, although the African choir retains a sound unlike that of any other choral group in the world. ‘White’ adjudicators have in the past (for better or worse) directly affected matters of tone production, phrasing, and intonation deemed important to western styles of choral singing. So have recordings: as soon as prescribed works are announced at the beginning of each year practitioners now rush off to find recordings of the western works, on which - probably

<sup>17</sup> Khumalo, Mzilikazi, gen. ed., *South Africa Sings* (Johannesburg: Southern African Music Rights Organisation, *Vol. I* 1998; *Vol. II* 2008; *Vol. III* 2013).

<sup>18</sup> Vokwana, Thembela, ‘Expressions in Black: A History of South African Black Choral Music: “Amakhwaya/iikwayala”’ (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 2004), 7.

<sup>19</sup> See <http://dogreatthings.co.za/music/national-choir-festival/regional-championships/2013-prescribed-music>.

<sup>20</sup> Vokwana, ‘Expressions in Black’, 3.

because there are recordings to emulate - they seem to spend more rehearsal time than on the indigenous works (according to conversations on Facebook).<sup>21</sup>

Listening to the recordings housed in the SABC sound archive since the early 1960s, one becomes aware how singing styles have changed: vibrato, for example, gradually entered the choral sound during the early 1980s, when CDs first came out, perhaps under the influence of opera stars such as Pavarotti, perhaps under the influence of Gospel singing. Conductors may have more musical training and exposure than their predecessors seventy or even twenty years ago but memorisation of a small repertoire for competitions is still the major focus of practice, rather than learning a wide range of repertoire for presentation outside competitions, never mind making commercial recordings, which barely exist. It is thus unusual for any practitioner to know more than a handful of Mohapeloa's songs. People know what they have sung in competitions but little else is available to them, and this gap in knowledge is something an online critical edition might help to fill.

In an unpublished essay on choral music written in 2004, 'Expressions in Black' Thembela Vokwana distinguished four main styles or 'expressions' in choral music that had emerged by the end of the twentieth century (the asterisks are his):

\*expressions based on European models, especially Methodist hymnody and Baroque - Classical choral models. (Christian themes, nature appreciation and [themes of] love obviously borrowed from the literature of the English canonic masters read in schools as well as the Bible).

\*expressions based on European models but evoking unity among Africans, social commentary on abuse of substances in urban areas, the dilemma and problems associated with urbanization and civilization.

\*expressions with sections clearly adding indigenous aspects of music, sources being the local wedding songs and other types of traditional musics found in rural communities.

\*expressions specifically emulating indigenous musical components and themes throughout as well as those that incorporated aspects of *toyi-toyi* as a means of voicing anger at political upheavals, reclaiming an African identity and aesthetic.<sup>22</sup>

These expressions clearly outline a history of practice in which many musical and so-called extra-musical elements have always been important. There is a huge repertoire of African choral music in tonic solfa notation through which these expressions have gradually been developed. In her 1969 book *The Bantu Composers of Southern Africa* Yvonne Huskisson wrote entries on 318 composers.<sup>23</sup> Her 1992 supplement contained many new entries on younger composers, and yet she still regarded her research as representing only the 'tip of the iceberg'.<sup>24</sup> Assuming, at a conservative estimate, that there have been around 500 composers since Bokwe, each composing an average of 100 songs, the total repertoire historically runs into tens of thousands of works. Many of them are lost, however and few were published, those surviving in manuscript being extremely rare. This is a *Gebrauchtmusik* second to none. Survival has been ensured mainly through the past practice of (illegal) copying. African choral songs are rarely regarded by practitioners, as 'works' in a historical or generic sense so much as vehicles for immediate use and most particularly for winning prizes. It is not surprising, given this background, that no complete body of work by one composer has previously been considered as a body of work.

Choral music and choral competition in South Africa has been written about by a number of people, especially masters and doctoral students, and there are a few publications aside from Huskisson's that are well worth exploring, such as Nhlapo and Khumalo's *The Voice of African Song*.<sup>25</sup>

## The concept of 'work', 'song', and 'catalogue' in this edition

### Work

If there is one place where the 'work-concept' still has currency, it is a complete critical edition, the purpose of which is to make a new version of all works authored by one person. In this case, Mohapeloa is author of the texts and composer of the music. His works are registered with the Southern African Music Rights Organisation

<sup>21</sup> This began long ago. See Ndlovu, C.J.M., 'Red-carpet Treatment of Western Classical Music in Black South African Music Competitions', *Papers Presented at the Fourteenth Symposium on Ethnomusicology*, ed. A. Tracey (Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, 1997), 100-103.

<sup>22</sup> Vokwana, 'Expressions in Black', 5.

<sup>23</sup> Huskisson, Yvonne, *Die Bantoe-Komponiste van Suider-Afrika/The Bantu Composers of Southern Africa* (Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1969).

<sup>24</sup> Huskisson, Yvonne, *Black Composers of Southern Africa: An Expanded Supplement to The Bantu Composers of Southern Africa*, edited by Sarita Hauptfleisch (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), back cover.

<sup>25</sup> Nhlapo, P.J. and S. Khumalo, *The Voice of African Song* (Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1993).

(SAMRO) and the copyright that subsists in them is held by his legal heirs, Mrs Nts'iuoa Joyce Mohapelo (the composer's daughter-in-law) and Joshua Pulumo Mohapelo, her son and the composer's grandson. They have granted permission for African Composers Edition to collect, edit and publish Mohapelo's works in this edition. This concept of 'work', the legal one, reminds us that all songs written by Mohapelo remain under copyright until 70 years after his death, which was in 1982.

The concept of work generally referred to in this Introduction, however, is a generic one, and the word identifying it in southern Africa is not normally 'work' but 'song'. It is common practice in the African choral tradition to refer to indigenous works as songs rather than choral pieces, choir music, choruses, or part songs – some of the English terms used in the West. 'Song' in the West implies 'art song' - solo song with piano accompaniment - and a few African composers have written 'art songs' in this sense, too, but not Mohapelo.<sup>26</sup> 'Song' in the African choral tradition means unaccompanied short work for SATB sometimes with additional voices, an extra Alto or Tenor being Mohapelo's preference.

### *Song*

The word for 'song' in local languages is synonymous with 'music' or 'dance': '*umculo*' or '*ingoma*' in isiZulu, for example; and one Sesotho word for song, '*lifela*' reflects the introduction of hymn tunes by missionaries. The most common Sesotho word for school (choral) song is '*lipina*', derived from '*mino*', "an abbreviation of *mobino*, derived from the verb *ho bina*, to sing".<sup>27</sup> Mohapelo preferred new words, like '*meloli*' (which means whistles), '*lithallere*' (songs sung with a trained voice), '*meluluetsa*' (ululations), and the title of his 1951 songbook was *Khalima-nosi tsa 'Mino oa Kajeno*, which includes the word '*mino*' but '*Khalima-nosi*' literally means 'shining stars' or perhaps 'gems' - 'of today's music'. Whatever the preferred word for 'song', these different experiments reflect Mohapelo's explorations along a new path of African choralism in the 1930s.

The notion of 'song' in African music in southern Africa goes far wider than choirs, of course, and embraces almost every cultural expression in the region. Singing is such an ingrained, embodied activity that it was possible for historian Helen Kivnick to say in 1990 on the brink of South Africa's new democracy:

It is through their singing that Black South Africans most publicly assert their cooperative identity. And we may be sure that when South Africa's people draft a constitution that allows them all to live together in true justice and equality, when they install their first truly democratic elected government, these political milestones will have the sound - quite literally - of more than 28 million voices singing.<sup>28</sup>

### *Catalogue*

The need for a catalogue for this edition is related to its rationale, which is (1) to make available a large repertoire by one composer writing in an African choral tradition 140 years old; and (2) to present that composer's repertoire critically in a way that highlights African music's relation to western modernity while revealing its Africanness.

No catalogue of Mohapelo's songs existed when work on this edition began, so the edition and the catalogue developed together. The catalogue is still work in progress as long as more songs are discovered. It lists all Mohapelo's songs as works, each assigned a 'JPM' number (like BWV numbers for Bach but based on Mohapelo's initials) and all Mohapelo's works as published scores, each assigned an 'ACE' number, ACE being the acronym of African Composers Edition. There are two ACE numbers per JPM work because there are two versions of every score, one in staff notation only and one in staff notation with tonic solfa added. The first song in Vol. 1, *U Ea Kae?* (Where Are You Headed?), for example is listed in the catalogue as JPM001/ACE001 and JPM001/ACE002. Each ACE work is assigned a sequential ISMN (International Standard Music Number).<sup>29</sup>

Titles of songs are normally given in italics unless songs and collections are referred to in close proximity, in which case the *New Grove* practice of using italics for collections and single quotation marks for individual songs is followed. The five song collections in Volumes 1-4 are only collections, not cycles; they are not meant to be performed as an entity and were grouped for publication purposes, although there is a certain integrity of style to each volume and patterns of subject matter emerge within collections. Mohapelo's songs are known in the African choral community by individual titles and performed individually, and some have been (re)published individually because they proved popular or began life as 'occasion' pieces.

<sup>26</sup> See Joshua Uzoigwe, *Akin Euba: An Introduction to the Life and Music of a Nigerian Composer* (Bayreuth: Eckhard Breiting, 1992); Akin Euba, *Modern African Music* (Bayreuth: Iwalewa Haus, 1993); and Chris van Rhy, 'Mapping Western Art Song Composition in Africa Since 1990' (PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> Wells, Robin E., *An Introduction to the Music of the Basotho* (Morija: Morija Museum and Archives, 1994), 5.

<sup>28</sup> Kivnick, H.Q. *Where Is the Way: Song and Struggle in South Africa* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 336.

<sup>29</sup> In southern Africa ISMNs are supplied by the National Library in Pretoria. Volumes 1 & 2 of the Mohapelo catalogue are downloadable free on [www.African-composers-edition.co.za/catalogue](http://www.African-composers-edition.co.za/catalogue).



The total number of Mohapeloa songs previously published in tonic solfa notation collections is 132. (The exact figure depends if you count reprints of songs in other contexts - see below.) More than 50 extant unpublished psalms and miscellaneous songs are also published here for the first time, making the total number of works in this edition more than 180. There are a number of titles for which scores have not yet been found, however.<sup>30</sup>

### Previous publication of Mohapeloa's work

Many of Mohapeloa's songs were originally published during his lifetime in five tonic solfa songbooks (without translation) devoted to his music. These are important sources for this new edition and are listed below, with details of each reprint. The fact that they were reprinted several times testifies to their (once) widespread use in Lesotho's schools.

*Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika* [African Songs and Extemporary Harmonizations Book 1].<sup>31</sup> Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesuto Book Depot. 1st ed. 1935; 2nd ed. 1953; 1st reprint 1977; 2nd reprint 1983; 3rd reprint 1988. [32 songs]

*Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika II: Buka ea Bobeli* [African Songs and Extemporary Harmonizations Book 2]. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesuto Book Depot. 1st ed. 1939; 2nd ed. 1945; 3rd ed. 1955; 4th ed. 1980; 5th ed. 1996. [32 songs]

*Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika III: Buka ea Boraro* (African Songs and Extemporary Harmonizations Book 3). Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesuto Book Depot. 1st ed. 1947; 2nd printing 1966; 3rd reprint 1977; 4th reprint 1983; 5th reprint 1988. [28 songs] (This contains three songs later republished in *Meluluetsa*: 'TY', 'Maseru' and 'Mafeteng' - see below.)

*Khalima-Nosi tsa 'Mino oa Kajeno* [Shining Examples of Today's Music]: *Harnessing Salient Features of Modern African Music*. Morija: Morija Sesuto Book Depot. 1st ed. 1951; 1st reprint 2002. [5 songs]

*Meluluetsa ea Nišetso-pele le Bosechaba Lesotho*. [Anthems for the Development of the Lesotho Nation]. Foreword by Dibarata Ghosh. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. 1st ed. 1976; out of print. [25 songs] (This contains several songs previously published elsewhere.)

Mohapeloa numbered his 92 songs in the first three songbooks consecutively: *MLA I* begins with no. 1, *MLA II* begins with no. 33 and *MLA III* begins with no. 65, a numbering that this edition retains. He intended *Meluluetsa* to be published by MSBD as *MLA IV* but was persuaded to give them to OUP instead.<sup>32</sup> The five songs in *Khalima-nosi* show new trends in modern African music as the title suggests and are a significant transition between Mohapeloa's early 'school' songs of the 1930s and 40s and his more mature 'patriotic' works from the post-war 1950s and post-Independence 1960s-70s in Lesotho.<sup>33</sup>

Eight Mohapeloa songs appeared in a multi-composer collection of worship music called *Hosanna: Lipina tsa Kereke* [Hosannah: Church Songs]. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesuto Book Depot. 1st ed. 1955. These are 'Balisa', 'Hosanna', 'Christmas', 'O Phokolang', 'Molimo ke Moea', 'Silevera le Gauda', 'Ahe Moren'a Khanya!' and 'Na le 'Na?'. ('Molimo ke Moea' had originally been published in 1939 the hymnal *Lifela tsa Ziona* - see below.)

Two other Mohapeloa songs appeared in another collection of worship music called *Binang ka Thabo* (Songs of Joy): 'Leheshe-heshe' and 'Lehlomela la Thesele le Letle-letle'. Mazenod: Mazenod Institute. 1st ed. 1963. (This book contained four other Mohapeloa songs later republished in *Meluluetsa*: 'Leribe', 'Butha-Buthe', 'Maloti a Lesotho', and 'Quthing').

To recap, the following list explains how songs appeared in more than one collection or were published separately as well as in a collection:

<sup>30</sup> The obituary mentioned above (*Leselinyana* 1982, 1) includes the phrase, "During his life we can estimate that Mr J.P. composed 200 songs".

<sup>31</sup> This first volume was not called 'Book 1' until the last reprint of 1988; and the technical difference between new editions (where there are changes even if pagination is the same) and reprints (where there are no changes) is not consistently followed.

<sup>32</sup> Mohapeloa to Huskisson, 3 August 1962 and 18 November 1963, Korrespondensie [Correspondence] (Huskisson Collection, SAMRO, file 'Mohapeloa, J.P. '); and David Ambrose, pers. comm. July 2012 re OUP.

<sup>33</sup> The country attained independence from Britain in 1966.

‘Molimo ke Moea’ - first published by MSBD as hymn no. 445 in the 1939 edition of the Lutheran Evangelical Church (LEC) hymnal, *Lifela tsa Ziona*.<sup>34</sup>

‘Moriya’ (*MLA II/38*), ‘The Gay Night Birds’ (*MLA III/77*), and ‘Thoko ea Tlhōlo’ (*MLA III/92*) - also published by MSBD as separate leaflets.

‘Coronation March’ (*MLA II/64*) - originally published in the *Basutoland Teacher’s Magazine* in 1937 in honour of the coronation of Britain’s King George V;<sup>35</sup> in 1939 and 1945 this version was reprinted but in the 1955 3rd edition of *Meloli II* the lyrics were adapted to take account of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

‘TY’ (*MLA II/35*), ‘Mafeteng’ (*MLA II/55*), and ‘Maseru’ (*MLA II/64*) - republished in *Meluluetsa* as songs no. 20, 22, and 21 respectively.

*Lesotho Tsiketsi sa Tlotla ea Afrika* and *Moshoeshoe, Tsoha* - originally published in the Souvenir Programme of the 1966 Lesotho Independence Celebrations.<sup>36</sup>

‘Maloti a Lesotho’ (*MNBL/15*), ‘Butha-Buthe’ (*MNBL/18*), ‘Leribe’ (*MNBL/19*), and ‘Quthing’ (*MNBL/24*) - originally published in *Binang ka Thabo*.

‘Likhomo Mokoena!’ - published in *Moriya* in the (Church) Newspaper *Leselinyana le Lesotho* on 9 March 1960, in honour of Constantinus Bereng Seeiso, who was proclaimed King Moshoeshoe II of Basutoland on 12 March.

### Sources for this edition

Three types of sources have been consulted for this new edition: Mohapeloa’s published scores in as many versions listed above as are available, his manuscript scores where they exist, and other documentation.

#### Published scores

The first source is more important than might be the case with other critical editions because of the dearth of manuscripts. The books published by MSBD are still in print - the latest editions are on sale at the bookshop in *Moriya* - and most of the previous editions are housed in the *Moriya* Museum and Archives (MMA, opposite the bookshop). *Binang ka Thabo* is still on sale in the Catholic Centre at Maseru. *Meluluetsa* did not go beyond a 1st edition and is out of print but there are copies in several libraries including the Library of the University of South Africa, Pretoria which was used for this critical edition. The newspaper *Leselinyana* is housed in MMA. Many other newspapers, magazines and documents and even one or two individual songs are owned by Professor David Ambrose in Ladybrand, South Africa, who has an invaluable private archive of material on Lesotho. Other sources for scores are institutional or private collections. SAMRO has songs from larger collections that were published individually (usually in *Moriya*), and other songs or fragments, including ‘Lesotho, Tsiketsi sa Tlotla ea Afrika’ (SAMRO Catalogue AO2950), ‘Eben-Ezer’ (AO2951), ‘Tloholohelo ea Ntlo ea Molimo’, ‘Moriya’ (*Moriya* Solfa Leaflets No. 1), and ‘Thoko ea Tlhōlo’ (Praise of Man’s Victory Over Ignorance), described as an ‘Adapted Extract’ from *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika III*. These sources are not always dated. SAMRO has itself re-published two songs from *MLA in South Africa Sings*: ‘U Ea Kae?’ (*MLA I/1*) and ‘Nonyana Se-nya-mafi’ (*MLA III/66*).<sup>37</sup> These published songbooks constitute the majority of sources used.

#### Manuscript scores

Most of Mohapeloa’s original manuscript sources are lost but a few have survived, held in the private collections of Mrs Nts’iuoa Joyce Mohapeloa (Hlotse), Dr Karabo Eric Lekhanya (Maseru), and Dr Richard Cock (Johannesburg). Mrs Mohapeloa has part of the ms. of *Meluluetsa* and manuscripts of the miscellaneous songs *Freedom in Unity: O.A.U. Anthem*, *Tholoana Lerato*, *Lesotho Lefa la Rōna*, and *Shoeshoe tsa Moshoeshoe*. Some of these are in large print format: 4 plain A4 sheets glued together and music written with a thick felt-tipped pen. Mrs Mohapeloa’s view (pers. comm. 29.9.06) is that this was due to the composer’s failing

<sup>34</sup> David Ambrose letter to Christine Lucia 24 June 2014. *Lifela tsa Ziona* is the most widely used hymnbook in southern Africa, and is reprinted almost every year by MSBD.

<sup>35</sup> Mohapeloa, Joshua Pulumo, ‘A Song for the Coronation of King George VI’, *Basutoland Teachers’ Magazine* 1, November 1937, 6-8.

<sup>36</sup> *Moriya* Sesuto Book Depot, ‘Souvenir Programme: Lesotho Independence’ (*Moriya* Sesuto Book Depot: 4 October 1966), 13-14.

<sup>37</sup> See Khumalo, *South Africa Sings I*, 29-32; and Khumalo, *South Africa Sings II*, 61-75.

eyesight in later life.<sup>38</sup> Dr Lekhanya's private collection in Maseru includes a sheaf of Psalm settings by Mohapeloa in manuscript - harmonizations of Afrikaans melodies made for the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa - a missionary branch of the main Dutch Reformed Church - in the late 1970s - and a few individual (late) songs. Dr Cock's private collection in Johannesburg has the original manuscript of *Meloli I* revised by Mohapeloa in 1965 and discussed in more detail below. A manuscript score in the SAMRO Archive attributed to Mohapeloa, *Thapelo* [Prayer] (file A04669), handwritten in staff notation, is neither by Mohapeloa nor in his hand: it is an extract from a work by Haydn transcribed anonymously from the tonic solfa songbook *Lipina tsa Likolo tse Phahameng*, which contains a number of western choruses.<sup>39</sup>

Fifty-seven songs from *Meloli* were transcribed into staff notation by a teacher at Waterford School in Mbabane, Swaziland called Jonathan Edwards. His handwritten *Staff Notation Version of Choral Compositions of Mohapeloa* contains the 32 songs of *Meloli I* and first 25 songs of *Meloli II*, without translations.<sup>40</sup> Copies of this private publication are housed in the International Library of African Music (ILAM), Grahamstown and Morija Museum and Archives. Despite errors in Edwards' transcriptions and interpretations of time signatures, grouping of notes, or voice registers that differ from the present critical edition's, Edwards' volume provided a useful sounding board.

Other transcriptions of individual songs were made for concerts or eisteddfods: for example Mohapeloa's *U Ea Kae?* (*MLA I/1*) by Rosalie Conrad in 1987 and sung by the University of Durban-Westville Choir's concerts during the early 1990s, and *Mokhotlong* by Ludumo Magangane and Carl van Wyk in 1997 for the Roodepoort International Eisteddfod.

Over decades of practice where choral songs were performed by so many different kinds of choirs for competitions and other events, many hand-written, roneoed, gestetnered or photocopied versions of individual songs have been brought into circulation. A common practice before the 1970s was copying songs by hand: composers whose work was not published did this as a way of getting works known; conductors borrowed scores and copied them. Through years of copying, sometimes from a borrowed score that itself was copied from a previously borrowed score, many different versions began to exist - as happens with editions of published music, too. It was only in the 1990s that scores were standardised for national choral competitions and there is (still) usually no indication of the printed source of songs reproduced by the NCF, whose prescribed music, once sent out to choirs as photocopies pasted into foolscap books is now available online. Titles of pieces or composers' names are still sometimes missing, however and in the case of Mohapeloa circulating copies were/are rarely reproductions of original Morija, OUP or Mazenod scores. This reinforces the notion that works are anonymous vehicles for singing and winning prizes that are handed down lovingly over generations of competition entrants via oral tradition, rather than historically grounded documents produced by composers who own - or their descendants own - the intellectual copyright.

For the purposes of this edition, circulating copies have hardly been used. They shed wonderful light on the reception history of Mohapeloa's music but not on its genesis.

#### *Other sources*

Literary sources used to prepare this edition include Mohapeloa's prefaces to *MLA I*, *Khalima-Nosi*, and *Meluluetsa*, which indicate his intention and sometimes his sources of inspiration. Prefaces and forewords written by other people are also interesting: for example Akim Sello's foreword ('Mohlatsoa-Sebaea') to *MLA I* (1935), Diparata Gosh's introduction to *Meluluetsa*, and Chief Lebua Jonathan's foreword to *Meluluetsa*.

The Huskisson Collection in the SAMRO Archive contains material acquired by Yvonne Huskisson during the 1960s while she was compiling choral programmes for the Radio Bantu service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). In her capacity as Music Organiser for Radio Bantu she corresponded with most of the 318 composers listed in her 1969 book (mentioned above), including Mohapeloa. The documents in file 'Mohapeloa, J.P.' in the SAMRO Archive Huskisson Collection include their correspondence, two original photographs, Mohapeloa's various lists of his works, two short autobiographies (one in Sesotho, one in English), transcripts of regional (Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa etc.) programmes on African music, and Mohapeloa's translations of some of his songs. Also in this file at some point was a manuscript, almost certainly the original manuscript, of

<sup>38</sup> Another suggestion is that music in this format could be pinned on a wall and read by choirs during rehearsals (J.S.M. Khumalo, pers. comm. 2 September 2008). Mohapeloa's script, both in his music notation and his song texts, is distinguished by its neatness and legibility regardless of paper quality or size.

<sup>39</sup> *Lipina tsa Likolo tse Phahameng* [Songs for High School] (Morija: Morija Sesuto Book Depot 1985(1907) was a major bearer of the traditions of western choral practice to Lesotho and would have been known to Mohapeloa from his schooling in Morija. It follows the format common in nineteenth-century British publications in tonic solfa of reproducing popular choruses from oratorios and operas for wider dissemination. What is interesting about *Lipina tsa Likolo* is that it also contains a number of European folksongs, too, presumably because it was compiled by Swiss-French missionaries.

<sup>40</sup> Edwards, Jonathan, *Staff Notation Version of Choral Compositions of Mohapeloa* (Mbabane, Swaziland: Waterford-Kamhlaba School, October 1979).

*Meloli* Book 1, which Mohapeloa sent Huskisson in 1965. The importance of this 1965 Huskisson ms. as a source is discussed below.<sup>41</sup>

Anthropologist David B. Coplan interviewed Mohapeloa when he was beginning his ethnographic research on Basotho music and poetry in the 1970s. Coplan recorded two interviews, one in 1976 on tape which he later transcribed onto cards, and one in 1978 directly in note form. These field cards, which Coplan located in his office at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2009, are a rich source for Mohapeloa's thoughts about his music and how he composed it, especially his struggle to combine African and western elements. Another useful source for connections between his songs and his life is a biographical essay by historian J.M. Mohapeloa (the composer's brother) and the composer L.M. Phakisi, produced in 1987. This substantial privately published monograph of 47 pages in Sesotho called *Likheleke tsa Pina Sesothong* (The eloquence of song in Sesotho) has rich historical data not given elsewhere and includes some musical analysis with tonic solfa examples.

Newspapers such as *Leselinyana le Lesotho* (The little light of Lesotho) have a number of references to Mohapeloa between the 1920s and 1980s. A typescript by P.M. Mot'soane in Morija Museum and Archives (2004) reproduces material in Mohapeloa and Phakisi, and one on the Internet by Moroosi Sibandze for the St Louis African Chorus draws heavily on the Mot'soane.<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, it also refers to a project aimed at "transcribing all, or selections of Dr J.P. Mohapeloa's compositions into staff notation" in which student volunteers were invited to team up with Ms Sibandze's 'Arts and Cultural Centre in Lesotho'.<sup>43</sup> There are many other literary sources, sometimes pertaining to Lesotho's history,<sup>44</sup> sometimes music-analytical,<sup>45</sup> ethnographic,<sup>46</sup> or musicological.<sup>47</sup>

The lists Mohapeloa made for the SABC were consulted as well as one drawn up in 1998 by a Mr Nchoncho, evidently part of a proposal to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Mohapeloa's birth.<sup>48</sup> Some of the titles Nchoncho lists are difficult to trace: they may not be Mohapeloa's titles but slightly altered first lines, or popular names by which songs became known among choirs, for as the Catalogue shows, there are many titles on Nchoncho's list (and also at the SABC) that do not appear in any other source.<sup>49</sup> This suggests there may be a number of other songs to trace.

### Reliability of the sources and the authority of this edition

The approach used in this edition comes from the German tradition of historical-critical editions whose "method focuses on the creation of a comprehensive apparatus, linked to an accurately presented, historical text".<sup>50</sup> This is a performing edition: the edited vocal texts here are as historically authoritative as possible and performable by contemporary choirs anywhere. The process of editing involved selecting the best tonic solfa copy-text from among competing versions (printed and manuscript) and preparing a new version of the score in staff notation, with minimal interference to the text, explaining in the apparatus (editorial marks, translations, notes, commentaries) why such a version is considered authoritative. Editorial suggestions on the score itself are kept to a minimum, there to clarify an aspect of performance that is not self-evident.

The Huskisson manuscript (1965) mentioned above is the authoritative copy-text for Volume I: *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika I*, because it is almost without doubt (in the absence of any other evidence) the original 1935 manuscript used to typeset the 1st edition, with a few minor tweaks made by the composer before he sent it to Huskisson in 1965. (Details of what Mohapeloa added or changed in 1965 are given in the critical commentaries on individual scores.) This ms. is thus the last known version of *Meloli I* that Mohapeloa approved. He made extensive changes to the MSBD 2nd published edition (1953) of *Meloli I* subsequently reproduced in all MSBD's later editions, but when came to showing Yvonne Huskisson in 1965 his best work -

<sup>41</sup> It is now in the private collection of Dr. Richard Cock in Johannesburg, who allows copies to be made. A copy made by Mokale Koapeng c.2009 was the one used in this edition.

<sup>42</sup> Mot'soane, P.M., 'A Brief History and Background to J.P. Mohapeloa's Music Composition: An Interview with Prof J.M. Mohapeloa, a Brother of the above Music Composer. Conducted by P.M. Mot'soane: 10th November 2004.' (Unpublished typescript, Morija Museums and Archives, 2004).

<sup>43</sup> Sibandze, M., 'Dr. J.P. Mohapeloa: The Man and His Music' (*The Voice of African Music: A Newsletter of the St. Louis African Chorus* 10.1, Winter/Spring 2003), [www.africanchorus.org/Voam/Voam1014.htm](http://www.africanchorus.org/Voam/Voam1014.htm), accessed 19.11.05; the outcome of this project has been difficult to trace.

<sup>44</sup> Gill, *Short History*, 1993.

<sup>45</sup> Mngoma, 'Correlation of Folk and Art Music', 1981.

<sup>46</sup> Coplan, David B., *In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Wells, *Introduction*, 1994.

<sup>47</sup> Olwage, Grant, 'Music and (Post)Colonialism: The Dialectics of Choral Culture on a South African Frontier', (PhD Dissertation, Rhodes University, 2003); and 'Apartheid's Musical Signs', in *Composing Apartheid: Music For and Against Apartheid*, edited by Grant Olwage (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008), 35-54.

<sup>48</sup> Nts'iuoa Mohapeloa, pers. comm. 29 September 2006.

<sup>49</sup> See [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/catalogue](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/catalogue).

<sup>50</sup> Hulle, Dirk, 'Aims and Methods of German and French traditions of textual scholarship and critique génétique', Paper presented at the Symposium *Securing the Past, Rescuing the Present* (North-West University, Potchefstroom, 24-26 February 2011).

as any composer wants to do, when asked for samples of their compositions by a major player in the music industry - Mohapeloa returned to his first thoughts, as set down in the ms.

How Huskisson obtained this ms. is explained in their correspondence in the Huskisson Collection in SAMRO's Archive. She must have first written to him (we do not have her letter) in mid 1965, for his reply on 16 July 1965 was, "Just a line to thank you for your kind invitation to contribute something in your intended publication. I am only too glad to co-operate in a work of this type. As proof of this I am returning the form duly signed and promise to fulfil the remaining obligations shortly". Five days later he sent her the manuscript score of *Meloli I*, the Mazenod publication *Binang ka Thabo*, and a covering page attached to the score that read:

I have pleasure in sending you some of my compositions as requested.

1. The songs in manuscript form have already been published (1935) and the copyright for these is in the hands of the publishers, Morija Sesuto Book Depot.

2. The printed copy consists of songs of which the publishers concerned do not claim any copyright reservations. The copyright still belongs to the individual composers.<sup>51</sup>

He 'suggests' three songs from each book, perhaps for Huskisson to use as examples and it's interesting that he refers to songs 'already published in 1935' as if *Meloli I* had not already been reprinted by MSBD in 1953 with his (new) preface explaining the 1953 revisions. These revisions are extensive: not one song is without changes, and in some songs there are dozens of changes, to pitch, to rhythm, and as a result occasionally text. He did not cut out or add sections to songs but tinkered, extensively, with the musical grammar. What these changes may indicate is the influence of his part-time study at Wits - between the 1st and 2nd editions - where Mohapeloa learnt to have misgivings about his lack of knowledge of western harmony and counterpoint.<sup>52</sup>

Regarding the reliability of published sources: most of them were printed in Morija, where Mohapeloa settled in 1945 and lived until his death in 1982. His day job from 1945 to 1978 was proof reader at Morija Printing Works where MSBD books were printed, so he would have been close to the publication process and knew how composing worked. In comparison with the MSBD publications, therefore there are many more typos in *Meluluetsa*, printed in Cape Town by OUP. Although Mohapeloa proofed this (the Nts'iuoa ms. mentioned above shows some of his corrections) many errors remained. He described one of the problems with this product as 'spacing', saying in his 1978 interview with Coplan that (for example) song no. 7, 'E, Molimo Ok'o Boloke Motlotlehi le Sechaba' (MNBL/7)] was "spatially poor. Tonic solfa line has 20 rather than 18 typographical units. Proper duration of notes not well rep[resented]. The *Meloli* Books are better".<sup>53</sup> Part of the problem, he felt, was the inadequacy of tonic solfa rhythm to represent African rhythm patterns which came into his mind "more by accident than intention". This song was "1st written in very complic[ated]. manner", he told Coplan, "later simplified - it had quarter notes as 1/6 of a bar. The song is better taught without the score, which does not represent the rhythm adequately". In both the surviving manuscript version of this song and the printed score the meter is two divisions in a bar subdivided into twos, and fours, which is indeed far from "quarter notes as 1/6 of a bar".

The MSBD reprints occasionally have variants that might be improvements or corrections, and these variants are explained in the critical commentary on individual songs. Some reprints had additional prefaces while others did not. Some reprints are identical. The only difference between the 1st edition (1951) and 1st reprint (2002) of *Khalima-nosi*, for example is that the 1st edition has a photograph in the Frontispiece while the 2nd does not.

### Presentation of the edited scores

Editing Mohapeloa for this edition began with the process of transcribing songs manually from tonic solfa to staff notation, a process that to most people is a mystery.<sup>54</sup> Staff notation scores were set up in Sibelius reading from a tonic solfa score where the voices are not always designated (e.g. SATB) and where the number of voices sometimes varies during the course of a song, only the context helping to decide what the extra voice part is. Repeats are frequent but formatting them varied according to context. Tonic solfa does not use key signatures:

<sup>51</sup> Mohapeloa, J.P., manuscript of *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika [I]*, [1965, cover page] (Johannesburg: Richard Cock private collection).

<sup>52</sup> See Lucia, Christine, 'Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa and the Heritage of African Song' (*African Music* 9.1, 2011), 56-86; and Lucia, Christine, 'Composing Towards and Against Whiteness: The African Music of Mohapeloa', *Unsettling Whiteness* ed. Lucy Michael and Samantha Schultz (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2014), 219-230.

<sup>53</sup> J.P. Mohapeloa interviewed by David B. Coplan (Morija, May 1978), card 2.

<sup>54</sup> There may be a computer program that does this, but it might not be able to cope with music based on a Sesotho text that can change voicing mid-song and has an idiomatic repeat system, and where variants exist.

the key of a song is stated at the top of the score, for example ‘doh=F’. Major keys are the norm, and even where a song is in a minor key or modal it is still usually given a major key (doh).

Determining meter (time signature) is more difficult, since this is not stated by composers of tonic solfa scores. It has to be deduced from the way units or bars are divided and subdivided by short barlines, colons, dashes, full-stops, commas, or spaces (rests). The most common metrical divisions in Mohapeloa’s songs are four main divisions, for which 4/4 meter works best, and duple or triple divisions are also found (2/4 and 3/4). Mohapeloa sometimes divides the bar into six units (6/8) and occasionally divisions suggest 9/8 or 12/8.

A major difficulty in transcribing songs is discerning the difference between Sesotho text, pitch letters d, r, m, etc., and commas and colons that denote rhythm - all occurring in a fairly crowded space.

The devil is in the detail. Tonic solfa is a notation system that uses the seven letters d r m f s l t (doh, ray, me, fah, soh, lah, te) to denote pitch. A choir has a total range of about four octaves, and different octave registers are shown by means of superscript or subscript strokes or numbers against the solfa letters. (In African choral practice numbers are more common than strokes, but strokes are normal elsewhere and are the Sibelius norm so are used in this edition.) This is what a range of four and a half octaves in tonic solfa pitch theoretically looks like, using numbers for octave displacements. The ‘normal voice’ octave is shown in blue:

d<sub>2</sub> r<sub>2</sub> m<sub>2</sub> f<sub>2</sub> s<sub>2</sub> l<sub>2</sub> t<sub>2</sub> d<sub>1</sub> r<sub>1</sub> m<sub>1</sub> f<sub>1</sub> s<sub>1</sub> l<sub>1</sub> t<sub>1</sub> **d r m f s l t** d<sup>1</sup> r<sup>1</sup> m<sup>1</sup> f<sup>1</sup> s<sup>1</sup> l<sup>1</sup> t<sup>1</sup> d<sup>2</sup> r<sup>2</sup> m<sup>2</sup> f<sup>2</sup> s<sup>2</sup>

Using strokes it would look like this:

d,, r,, m,, f,, s,, l,, t,, d, r, m, f, s, l, t, **d r m f s l t** d’ r’ m’ f’ s’ l’ t’ d’’ r’’ m’’ f’’ s’’

How is a ‘normal’ doh determined? In Mohapeloa’s scores, middle C up to B-flat (d-t) are normal pitches for Sop/Alto and an octave below this is normal for Ten/Bass, because in solfa notation the idea is to avoid too many sub- or super-scripts, just as in staff notation one changes clefs to avoid using too many ledger lines.

Returning to the editing process: after clefs, key signature, time signature, and notes voice by voice had been inputted, the text was added, reproducing hyphens (or lack thereof) and spellings exactly as Mohapeloa has them, and noting discrepancies in the critical commentary at the end of the song.<sup>55</sup> Mohapeloa’s solfa scores show slurs as underlinings. In the staff notation transcription melismas are shown as slurs between notes. Syllables are not prolonged in the text unless the slur goes over a page or over several notes not beamed together.

The scores in this critical edition are open vocal scores, one voice per stave - as in the original tonic solfa score, the difference here being that the Sesotho words are placed rather more carefully under every voice. Text is often written only between Alto and Tenor in the solfa scores, posing problems when voices have different rhythms. In handwritten manuscripts texts are fairly logically spaced but in published scores the spacing is not always ideal and occasionally it is difficult to determine which syllable goes with which note.

All scores in this new edition have a piano reduction to aid rehearsal. This is not an accompaniment, although in the history of choral practice it has to be said that songs may have been conceived ‘a cappella’ by default, for lack of keyboards in African schools or community halls and for lack of African pianists to play them. There are one or two historic recordings of Mohapeloa songs in the SABC Sound Archive where choirs are accompanied, by piano or banjo.<sup>56</sup> But the tradition of a cappella choral music in the West that was brought to places such as Lesotho in the nineteenth century undoubtedly had enormous influence.

The apparatus on or around the score includes title, composer, scoring, page numbers, copyright information, historical introduction to the song and translation before the score, and sources, variants, and critical comments after it.

The edition makes two staff notation versions of every song, one with and one without tonic solfa. The argument for presenting ‘dual notation’ versions is that it helps the practitioners most familiar with this music learn staff notation,<sup>57</sup> which may in turn help choirs widen their repertoire. Adding tonic solfa above each voice part in Sibelius 7 is not without problems: it makes the scores visually cluttered; some tonic solfa buffs might not agree with the way Sibelius 7 handles octave displacement or compound meter; the possibility for more typographical errors creeps in, and so on. On the other hand, some choirs outside southern Africa who have never used tonic solfa might be interested in these dual notated versions and may even learn how to read solfa notation with sufficient skill to be able to sing other southern African works not yet been transcribed, and hence broaden their repertoire of African music.

<sup>55</sup> Hyphens were particularly problematic, because many words that in Mohapeloa’s early years many have been hyphenated (Sesotho was first written by French speaking missionaries in the mid nineteenth century when hyphens were common) but under the impact of changes to orthography hyphens often fell out of use.

<sup>56</sup> *U Ea Kae?* has been arranged for solo voice and jazz ensemble and *Molelekeng* for choir and orchestra. Copies of these arrangements are in the SAMRO Archive, Johannesburg.

<sup>57</sup> In other countries in Africa choirs read staff notation, yet in South Africa the habit persists of composing and singing music in tonic solfa.

Although an editing template was (after much trial and error) worked out for formatting scores, in practice this was often adapted to allow for notes that lie high or low on a staff, sudden divisi, or extra verses of text. Where possible there are two systems per page, which is easier for choirs to read even if it necessitates a slight reduction in note or staff size. Where there are six or more voices or multiple verses of text, one system per page is generally used.

Regarding repeats: Mohapeloa often wrote songs in two sections the second of which is repeated, although sometimes he repeated the first section at the end of the song or had more than one repeat in a song. He used Dal Segno (D.S.) for most repeats, as is the practice in solfa notation; occasionally he used D.C. In preparing the scores for this edition repeat bars or D.C. were used except where complex repeats made D.S. necessary. Sometimes 1st and 2nd time bars were generated where they do not exist in the original solfa scores, where (it seems) there is sometimes an unstated understanding of how a turnaround differs from the ending of a section or song. If a song begins on an upbeat Mohapeloa usually notates the first bar in full even if it begins on the 4th beat. In staff notation, the convention is to begin notating on the upbeat unless it is a particularly complex rhythm, in which case it may be preceded by a rest or rests. The transcribed song may thus begin and end slightly differently from the tonic solfa score, which means that bar numbers may sometimes be one bar out from the original score.

Repeats, like accompaniments, can be approached with an open mind. What Mohapeloa wrote is presented in this edition, but what was sung was often different in practice: as historic recordings show us, choirs sometimes repeated sections where no repeat was indicated, or even whole songs. This might have happened to satisfy the needs of the studio recording or the mood of a live concert situation.

### **Presentation of the song texts**

The texts are presented in two forms: in the original Sesotho on the score and as separate poems with translations after it, the poems having in most cases been rather laboriously extracted from the solfa scores. In Mohapeloa's scores the Sesotho matches the music word-by-word or syllable-by-syllable, but when words or phrases are repeated (or left out, or incomplete) because of the polyphonic nature of his writing, or where different voice parts sing different texts simultaneously, it took some juggling to represent the text as a coherent poem. Repetitions were deemed essentially musical rather than poetic, unless the context - the meaning and thrust of a song - dictated otherwise. When the Sesotho texts were extracted from the tonic solfa scores, then, decisions were made all the time about the order in which lines should appear in and how often (or if) repeated words or lines should be shown.

Writing out the texts as poems was essential, however, so that they could be translated, and because there are almost no extant texts written as separate poems by Mohapeloa himself. In so doing, this critical edition makes available for the first time to literary scholars a wealth of poetry in Sesotho-English that shows Mohapeloa to have been a commanding literary as well as musical figure.

In terms of the way he composed words and music: in his early songs, he told Coplan, he found it "easiest to write music, with a theme or subject in mind, then it becomes easier to fit words to it. Idea to melody to words".<sup>58</sup> Coplan continues:

Mohapeloa finds the words a handicap if they are there first. Once the music is there the words just come. The tune sugg. [suggests] the words. Like in his first song ... the music sugg. a folktale about a rabbit & so the words just came. The words then necessitate changes in the melody, to avoid semantic distortion. So the words can damage the melody. To get a word that just fits the tune is a strug. [struggle] & may have to be an 'expensive' one. This diff. [difficulty] actually helps to improve the qual. [quality] of the lyrics - the words tend to be commonplace if they come too easily.<sup>59</sup>

Where Mohapeloa did make copies of some Sesotho texts in 1965 for Yvonne Huskisson, these have been used for comparison only, because they are summaries that do not 'fit' the music. Texts in the scores are what choirs sing, so texts extracted from the scores are what are presented and translated, by and large. Extracting words from the scores was made easier by Mohapeloa's regular use of capital letters denoting new lines.

Mohapeloa's (few) translations in the Huskisson Collection are used. Mantoa Motinyane-Smouse did all the remaining initial translations, phoneme-by-phoneme, including lines Mohapeloa left out of his own translations, several years ago. She then made a fairly literal interpretation of the meaning of each song to create the poem, and this was later edited by South African poet Stephen Gray, and more recently by Mpho Ndebele, who was able to transform the poem into a lyric, using her own knowledge of the songs (which she grew up with) and

<sup>58</sup> Mohapeloa interviewed by Coplan, 1978, card 6. NB the abbreviations are in Coplan's field notes.

<sup>59</sup> Mohapeloa interviewed by Coplan 1978, card 7.

taking into account the deeper meanings of many Sesotho words. Mohapeloa is known for his rich use of language, especially metaphor, and Sesotho is a highly metaphorical language and also a tonal one - meaning sometimes depends on tone - and in the early songs he uses many elisions and contractions of words to make them fit his music. In *Meluluetsa* the Sotho poems were published separately from the songs in the 1976 edition, and where there are occasional contradictions between in-score texts and separate texts, in-score texts are presented as the poems, and translated because, once again, these are what choirs sing.

Translations are not there to be 'sung to' the notes, however but to help non-Sotho speakers understand what they are singing about. Pronunciation of the Sesotho language is not difficult but it is not always obvious, hence the Pronunciation Guide, that uses international phonetic symbols and English equivalent sounds.<sup>60</sup>

### Editing rationale

There is no standard way of notating scores composed in tonic solfa notation, which has been used as a compositional medium in southern Africa since 1875. As with editing any other music there are sometimes problems reconciling notation and practice, or what Richard Taruskin has called 'text and act'.<sup>61</sup> In the practice of African choral music, 'act' looms large: scores are not prescriptions so much as records of what composers such as Mohapeloa have tried out with their choirs already. Once committed to paper, choirs learn a composer's music by rote and a song is quickly memorised. The entire tradition of choral singing out of which compositions emerge is seen by conductors, choralists, competition organisers, broadcasters, adjudicators and anyone else involved as a singing, rather than a composing, tradition. Between the two acts of vocalisation - imaging the music before committing it to paper and then singing it - the score as 'text' plays a fleeting role. Even after so many years of national choral competitions there is no centralised library of scores; composers lend their scores and they disappear (as famously happened to Sontonga's *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*); scores are copied wantonly as if there was no copyright: all this indicates the low value of African choral music as 'text'. Notwithstanding, Mohapeloa saw his scores as reliable and authoritative documents, as explained below.

There is no one, standard rationale for producing any critical edition; a great deal depends on the repertoire. The rationale for developing this edition took into account aspects of critical editions elsewhere, which offered at least partial models although no direct precedents, and a clear rationale for this one only emerged as it progressed, from the repertoire and also from limitations imposed on the production of the edition. Funding did not allow for an interactive edition with which scholars and choralists could engage and to which they could contribute, for example, which would have been ideal in a situation where public opinion has not been heard before and where there are so many enthusiastic and knowledgeable practitioners. Even though it is static, however, an online edition still allows some leeway for regular updating, and for incorporating comments made through the ACE website's contact form.

This edition uses the Chicago Manual of Style for text, adapted to suit the material, and Sibelius 7 for scores, with standard sizes for margins, staves, and notes unless a score looked crowded: stems on middle lines down; no syllable prolongation in texts unless syllables go over a page or are not beamed together; no brackets for triplets; lyrics below the staff at default distance; tonic solfa above the staff at 1.91cm; tempi placed above the time signature; dynamics placed above the relevant notes. Adjustments were made to the text on the score as typesetting proceeded. Scores went through many transformations before the present format became settled.

Editorial additions on the score are in square brackets [ ]. All original dynamics and expression found in printed or ms. versions of Mohapeloa's songs are reproduced. Mohapeloa placed one dynamic mark on top of a system, whereas here they are given for all voices and positioned logically. Occasionally an editorial dynamic is added after a *cresc.* or *dim.*, or an 'a tempo' after a 'rit.' where Mohapeloa did not add this, for clarity. Where there are no dynamics an 'overall' *f* or *p* is put at the beginning as a guideline. Mohapeloa rarely used metronome marks but often gave tempo indications and a metronome mark is added where he did not. Recorded and live performance practices have often informed these interpretative interventions - tempo and dynamics - although it has to be said that historic performances themselves also differ widely. Expression marks such as 'rit.' and 'cresc.' are often found in Mohapeloa's scores, his 'hairpins' as well as his 'cresc.' and 'dim.' are always retained, including where he spreads 'cres ... cen ... do' over more than one bar. Words or phrases that seem odd to us, such as 'con fuoco' are 'corrected' and this intervention is explained in the commentary.

This last comment requires a slight digression: Mohapeloa worked in a small village in Africa, had no real peers except Moerane who lived in Lesotho only intermittently; there was no music library nearby, and he may often have relied on his memory. This maybe explains 'con fuoco' but there is something more below the surface here, about his scores and African modernity, that needs teasing out. Mohapeloa worked within a hybrid Afro-western cultural environment in which all influences, all source material, all exposure to new material, was

<sup>60</sup> This can be downloaded free on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za/mohapeloa-complete-edition/lyrics-and-translation](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za/mohapeloa-complete-edition/lyrics-and-translation)

<sup>61</sup> Taruskin, Richard, *Text & Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).



devoid of an overarching western historical context. This allowed him enormous freedom to interpret influences as he saw fit (although he may or may not have seen it that way). Any scores or books - and they were few and far between - that came his way were grist to Mohapeloa's *contemporary* mill, as it were, not to any imagined historical mill imported from another country. In 2006 the surviving library in Mohapeloa's former house in Morija contained *The World of Music* by Sandved (1957), David Ewen's *The Complete Book of 20th-century Music* (1959), and Novello vocal scores of *Lucrezia Borgia* and *Robert le Diable*. This should not surprise us. However these books and scores entered his house, what they entered into was a world of modernist simultaneity, one that Mohapeloa shared with many other Africans of his generation. Black artistic expression could be found equally well in the modernization of the 'traditional' folksong, the negro spiritual, the hymn, barbershop harmony, ragtime, and all available samples of western Classical music, especially vocal; any or all of these kinds of musics were performed by African practitioners, and any or all of them were absorbed by African composers into their style. Any or all of them contributed to Afro-modernity in choral music.

The avoidance of what in the West is seen as musical modernity, "art music of the early twentieth century (Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók) [and] serial or post-serial techniques",<sup>62</sup> was inadvertent: composers in southern Africa in the mid twentieth century, black and often white, too, were generally speaking not exposed to this aspect of modernity. Modernity was represented, for people in the African choral world by the popular song, choreographed traditional music, jazz, the romantic opera chorus, or earlier oratorio choruses: being 'modern' for Mohapeloa included knowing extracts from *Messiah*, *The Creation*, *The Mount of Olives*, a Mozart mass, or a Donizetti opera.

Retuning to dynamics and expression: where Mohapeloa used them in one version of a score but not another they are deemed authoritative, and included, their absence from a particular edition regarded as an error. They are too important to ignore, for Mohapeloa did not make free with dynamics as some composers do and in the absence of phrasing (which his tonic solfa scores do not have) they become important guides to musical shape.

The basic principle underling the editing rationale is that of transcribing in as unaltered a way as possible any words or text on the score and retaining "given forms of punctuation, contraction, abbreviation, compound words, hyphenation and capitalization, however widely these may vary from modern practice".<sup>63</sup> Given forms of Sesotho orthography are retained because the rationale is not to modernise music or lyrics but to make them more accessible. To quote Richard Fotheringham's 'Editing rationale' for a collection of English plays written for the Australian colonial stage in the nineteenth century:

Original spellings with historical warrant and eccentric spellings that are not misleading are allowed to stand, as well as other inconsistent presentations. There is always the possibility in playscripts [or in this case, music scores] that such forms are meant to encode aspects of spoken [sung] language; that is, they are intended, however imperfectly, as guides to the phrasing, emphasis or rhythm of [songs].<sup>64</sup>

Mohapeloa's inconsistencies are not corrected, in short, because they may have 'momentary' significance.

He was inconsistent about stating what voices a song was written for, sometimes. In tonic solfa scores this information normally appears at the beginning of a song along with the key. *Chabana sa Khomo* for example says at the top "Key Ab S.T.B.S.T.B." *U ea kae?* has nothing. Perhaps the rule of thumb was SATB unless otherwise stated; but he did not use that rule consistently.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The exploratory freedom of movement associated with whiteness is expressed in the licence to control the means of knowledge production, to assume the ability to know, assess the validity of knowledge and control representations of both self and other, subject and object, while strictly upholding the self-imposed limits and binaries on which its licence depends. If whiteness asserts a right to knowledge of blackness, its freedom to know also asserts a right to its own privacy, a freedom not to be known, a denial of equal knowledge of whiteness.*<sup>65</sup>

It seems important to step away from the third-person, hands-off narrative that this General Introduction has been so far, and introduce a personal note.

<sup>62</sup> Lucia, Christine, 'Back to the Future: Idioms of Displaced Time in South African Composition', *Composing Apartheid: Essays For and Against Apartheid* ed. Grant Olwage (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008), 11-34, 11.

<sup>63</sup> Fotheringham, Richard, 'General Introduction' to *Australian Plays for the Colonial Stage 1934-1899* ed. Richard Fotheringham (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2006, xxi-lxxxvi), lxxxi.

<sup>64</sup> Fotheringham, *Australian Plays*, lxxxii- lxxxii.

<sup>65</sup> Coetzee, Paulette, 'Performing Whiteness; Representing Otherness: Hugh Tracey and African Music' (PhD diss., Rhodes University, 2014), 51-52.

I had to balance many things in preparing an edition of music that is so well known to African choirs and yet still so marginal in the academy, where it is seen by some as not western enough and by others as not African enough.<sup>66</sup> I wanted above all to present it as an overwhelming body of evidence in and for itself, for what it was, and not for what it was not. It is music that has enjoyed huge popularity among black southern Africans for more than seventy years, but, on the other hand, most practitioners themselves do not value it as a comprehensive, historically informed *body* of work. I had to keep remembering this, and also that I am a white, western trained, former professor of music living a privileged middle-class life, able to see this as a body of work, making free with the music of a black, less well trained and less privileged, humble man from rural Lesotho, who lived in a previous generation to mine and who is not around to tell me whether or not I'm on the right track.

This is a hybrid repertoire inspired by traditional Basotho music of which I have only secondhand knowledge, jazz, western classical music and hymns, many of the Sesotho, which I also don't know. I have managed to source some of the influences, but I don't speak Sesotho and have never sung in an African choir although I have heard choirs often, occasionally accompanied and adjudicated them, and since the 1990s have used African choral music as examples in teaching music theory.<sup>67</sup> This was the first kind of African music that I encountered when I first arrived in South Africa in 1974 and it simply bowled me over. I remain firmly convinced that it is the most 'national' music in this region in the sense that it is more important in people's lives and communities than any other kind of music.

I had no precedents to model a critical edition on. I tested the patience of many people, especially colleagues and students at Stellenbosch University and friends I made in Lesotho and Ladybrand as I stumbled through layers of material and meaning that took many years to understand and represent in a way that I could call 'scholarly'.

Mohapeloa was an African composer writing on the African continent, where he was born and which he never left. He was a much performed, much published, and much loved African composer during his lifetime, and remains popular to this day through a handful of songs. He wrote accurately, and the way he worked, to me suggests that he was well aware of the needs of singers but also carefully challenged their comfort zones. Yet I have realised that what he wrote down was in some ways only an approximation - bearing in mind the limitations of tonic solfa - of what he imagined. In practice, with his own choir, Mohapeloa would have been able to create something that went way beyond the score.

I hope this Critical Edition nevertheless provides choirs with informed performing scores and scholars with a new repertoire of African music to study *as* repertoire. It provides something, at the very least, for people to critique.<sup>68</sup> To Mohapeloa, publication seemed to be as essential a means of ensuring the continuity of African music as performance, perhaps because in his lifetime he had seen so many examples of oral traditions dying out. As he wrote in the 'Khoró' (preface) to *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika* in 1935), scores are like cases ('*nyeoe*') presented to a traditional court ('*lekhotla*'), their purpose being to set precedents: to ensure that African Music of this kind - is "in the right place, where it is kept for the coming generations, as an example that they can follow, or a place to start when investigating about what proper African music should be" (*mehlala eo ba ka e salang morao kapa ba h hlakothisa phutsong ea seo 'mino oa Afrika e ka bang o nepahetse ha o ka ba sona*).<sup>69</sup>

That purpose, which for Mohapeloa was to keep a continuity between his past and present, is the same for this critical edition, with an additional aim afforded by the luxury of hindsight: to present a historically informed coherent body of documents for use by singers and scholars, which gives a picture of what Mohapeloa achieved for African music, and which can be built on by other Africanist scholars who can do something similar for other composers.

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<sup>66</sup> I have written about this elsewhere; see (most recently) Lucia, *Composing Towards and Against Whiteness*, 2014.

<sup>67</sup> See Lucia, Christine, *Music Notation: A South African Guide* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2011).

<sup>68</sup> This can help improve this critical edition, and can be made via the contact page on [www.african-composers-edition.co.za](http://www.african-composers-edition.co.za).

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#### **Author's interviews**

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