An Ethnographic Study of Shebeens in Lesotho

Gwendoline Mphokho Malahleha

A thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Surrey for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Sociology
University of Surrey
Guildford
Surrey

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ERRATA

Page 11
Bottom line ...of life in Lesotho [and South Africa].

12 Line 2 ...(Dikobe 1981, Hellmann 1934 [and Mofokeng 1979]).

13 Government.....loophole [in 1973] by enacting...

13 9 .....boundaries are [often not] clearly.....

15 16 .....of [the] indigenous.....

18 11 .....seeking refuge from [the] wider.....


24 19 ...by Schmidt and Lotter (1974-1975) [and Lotter (1981)] studying...

28 Footnote 9 [see page 129]

34 Line 3 .....sources [of a scientific nature] on this kind of....

54 7 ...in 1962 [in South Africa], government...

55 4-5 Lotter and Schmidt (1975 studying shebeens in South Africa] came up...

101 9 During the month of December [1982], which was...

120 9 In an anthropological study [of the Basotho] by Ashton...

151 19 [As described below], I found four categories...

154 21 .....that one observes [patrons with] serious...
ABSTRACT

This study, carried out in one of the disadvantaged residential areas of Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, primarily presents the shebeen establishment as it is perceived by the actors in that setting. It is an ethnographic study of two unlicensed drinking houses; Shebeen United Nations and Peggy Bel Air Spot (pseudonyms).

The study shows that shebeens came about as a consequence of a complex historical, economic, social and legal process. Traditionally liquor was not a commercial commodity. However, with the advent of European colonialism during the nineteenth century, European liquor had a demonstration effect which affected the indigenous liquor production and consumption patterns. As a result, traditional liquor became a commodity to be bought and sold in the market to whoever had money to buy it. When prohibition of European liquor was lifted in 1961, it was generally assumed that this heralded the demise of shebeens but this did not happen. Instead thousands of shebeens sprang up.

Shebeens have become a meeting place for people of varying degrees of respectability. It is an intersection of the straight and the deviant world - contrary to the commonly held belief that the straight world and its actors are separated spatially and temporally from the deviant world and its actors. Furthermore, within the shebeen there is a flattening of the stratification pyramid so that men and women interact under conditions of equality.

These establishments are mainly found in slums, low income and high density population areas. They are also found along the main roads at intersections and in most villages. Like most public drinking houses, the moral order prevailing in these establishments is considered questionable by some members of the community.
As the establishment caters for a varied patronage, it therefore has varied activities. Some of the activities which the general population would consider deviant are legitimized in the shebeen. Thus normally law abiding citizens become situationally deviant in these settings.

The shebeen has a potential to generate a wide range of networks - economic, social, cultural and political, and has an impact far beyond its formal setting.

On a world basis, management of public drinking houses is the monopoly of men. However, the shebeen is a woman dominated institution, thus upsetting the traditional patterns of male domination in the spheres of commerce, politics and social affairs generally.

Speculating about the future of the establishment, it appears that it is going to be with us for a long time and there is no indication that its popularity is diminishing. For as long a there is no other establishment that can bridge the gap between the old and the new experiences and between the have and the have nots, then the shebeen will endure.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I am grateful to the European Economic Commission for financing me throughout my stay in the United Kingdom and to the Ford Foundation for making it possible to collect the data in Lesotho.

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NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

1. Introduction

1.1 The Shebeen Phenomenon  4
1.2 The Research Problem  9
1.3 Definition of Concepts  11
   1.3.1 The Shebeen  11
   1.3.2 Legal Order  13
   1.3.3 Moral Order  15
1.4 Location of the Study  17
1.5 Overview of Shebeens  20
1.6 Brief History of the Two Shebeens  21
   1.6.1 Shebeen United Nations  22
   1.6.2 Peggy Bel Air Spot  23

CHAPTER 2

A Critical Review of Literature  30

2.1 General Overview of Public Drinking Places  31
2.2 Studies on Public Drinking Houses  33
2.3 Typologies of Public Drinking Places  37

2.4 Characteristics of Patrons  43
2.5 Functions of Public Drinking Places  45
2.6 Literature on Drinking Places in Africa  48
2.7 Types of Shebeens  54
2.8 Clientele of Unlicensed Drinking Places  59
2.9 Comparisons of the Functions of the Functions of Unlicensed Drinking Places to those of other Public Drinking Places  60
2.10 Women in Liquor Brewing and Selling 60
2.11 Sociability and Play 63

2.11.1 Sociability Theory 63
2.11.2 Public Drinking Place Sociability 64
2.11.3 Contemporary Sociability 65
2.11.3(i) Historical and Class Pressures 66
2.11.3(ii) Psychological Determinants 67
2.11.3(iii) Structural Determinants 67
2.11.4 Classical Sociability 68
2.11.5 Play Theory 69

2.12 Informal Sector 73

2.12.1 Theories of the Informal Sector 74

2.13 Problems Associated with Research in Public Drinking Places 77

2.13.1 Ambivalence and Value Conflicts 77
2.13.2 Stereotyping 78

Summary 79

2.14 Implications for the Study of Shebeens 80

CHAPTER 3
Theory and Methods 83

3.1 Theory 83

3.1.1 Transactional Approach 90
3.1.2 Symbolic Interaction Approach 91
3.1.3 Microsocial Ecology 92
3.1.4 Decision-making Approach 94
3.1.5 Focus of the Study 94

3.2 Methodology 96

3.2.1 Archival Data 96
3.2.2 The 'Network In' 99
3.2.2(i) 'M' e Popie 101
3.2.2(ii) Meeting 'm' e Popie 104
3.2.2(iii) Starting Point 105

3.2.3 Participant Observation, Interviews and Use of Tape Recorder 106
3.2.3(i) Participant Observation 108
3.2.3(ii) Interviewing Schedule 110

3.2.4 Use of Photographs 111
3.2.5 Self-Definition and Social Experience in Oral Poetry  113

CHAPTER 4
Shebeens in Historical Perspective  115

4.1 General Reference to Alcohol Drinking  121
4.2 Trade with White Settlers  122
4.3 The Great Trek from 1795 Onwards  125
4.4 Missionaries in Lesotho  129
4.5 The Dual Legal System  130
4.6 Emergence of Canteens/Shebeens  133
4.7 Emergence of Oscillating Migrant Labour  138
4.8 Preservation of Traditional Agricultural Systems  143
4.9 Cultural Shifts and Different Economic Expectations  144

Summary  145

CHAPTER 5
Ecology, Rhetorical Space–Time Properties and Use of the Shebeen  151

5.1 Stratification in the Shebeen Universe  152
5.2 Ecology of Shebeens  156
   5.2.1 Number and Types of Liquor Sources  157
5.3 Entrance Rhetoric  158
   5.3.1 Shebeen United Nations  158
   5.3.2 Peggy Bel Air Spot  167
5.4 Space–Time Properties and Use  169
   5.4.1 Shebeen United Nations: Space–Time Properties  172
   5.4.2 Peggy Bel Air Spot  184

Summary  185

CHAPTER 6
Type of Shebeen Actors  189

6.1 Sung Oral Poetry  190
6.2 Typologies of Patron Actors in Shebeens  194
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1</td>
<td>Bokobonyana</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1(i)</td>
<td>Self-Perspectives</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1(ii)</td>
<td>What Bokobonyana do and with whom</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Bo Moshana</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1</td>
<td>Identities and Perspectives</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2</td>
<td>What Bo Moshana do and with whom</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Batho ba Baholo</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.1</td>
<td>Perspectives and Identities</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.2</td>
<td>What Batho ba Baholo do and with whom</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Other Patrons</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.1</td>
<td>Perspectives and Identities</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.2</td>
<td>What do they do with whom</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Peggy Bel Air Spot</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER 7**

What Happens in Shebeens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Conversation in the Three Subsettings of Shebeen United Nations</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Acquaintance and Status Levelling Effect</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Problems Inherent in Shebeen Encounters</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Patterns in Initiating Encounters</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.1</td>
<td>Symbolic Support of Encounter</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.1(i)</td>
<td>Nature of Talk</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.2</td>
<td>Cross-Sex Encounters</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Indicators of Social and Personal Initiation</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>Business Negotiations</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Activities in Peggy Bel Air Spot</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER 8**

Latitudes of Behaviour, Swearing and Ground Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Joking Relationships</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Swearing</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>Latitudes of Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3.1</td>
<td>Unsanctioned Improprieties</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3.2</td>
<td>Remedial Measures of Interactional Offences and Major Violations</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>Guidelines to Behaviour</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 9</td>
<td>Women in the Shebeen Business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Conceptual Tools</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>Linkage of Woman's Position to Husband's Earnings</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>Position of Basotho Women</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>Identities and Self-Perspectives</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Why Women Opt for Shebeen Running</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>Status of Bo Mamosali in Relation to their Occupation</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 10</td>
<td>The Relationship between the Shebeen and its Wider Environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>Network of Reciprocal Exchange in the Shebeen</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Diversity of Activities</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.1</td>
<td>The Fuel Pedlar</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.2</td>
<td>The Plumber</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.3</td>
<td>The Broom-maker</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.4</td>
<td>The Preacher</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>Other Externalities</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3.1</td>
<td>The Corner Shop</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3.2</td>
<td>The Off-Sales</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3.3</td>
<td>Livestock Owners</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>Diffusion and Distribution of Earnings</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4.1</td>
<td>Migrant Labour Remittance</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4.2</td>
<td>Prestations along Kinship Networks</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>Quality of Family Life of Bo Mamosali</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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NOTES

Glossary of Sesotho Words

For this study I have used the Sesotho orthography that is used in Lesotho rather than the one used in the Republic of South Africa. Collectively the inhabitants of Lesotho are Basotho, singular a Mosotho. They speak Sesotho and any aspect that pertains to their culture is referred to as Sesotho. There are certain peculiarities in the language: 'L' before an 'i' or a 'u' is pronounced 'd', thus Mosali - woman is pronounced Mosadi. Also in the absence of 'w', a combination of 'o' and 'a' becomes 'wa' and with an 'e' it becomes 'we', hence joala not jwala or Moshosho and not Moshweshe, as it would be with the South African orthography. Any deviation from this will only occur in direct quotation where a different orthography is used.

Lesotho - A country occupied by the Basotho. Formerly commonly referred to as the British Protectorate of Basutoland.
Basotho - People living in Lesotho (Singular : Mosotho)
Sesotho - Language spoken by the Basotho. The word is also used when referring to anything pertaining to their culture, e.g. Sesotho beer or Sesotho law.
Joala - Strictly speaking means beer but now is used as a generic term for liquor. Distinctions are made by qualifying the liquor being referred to, e.g.
   Joala ba Sesotho - Sesotho liquor
   Joala ba Sekhoa - European liquor
Khotla - Court.

Traditional characteristics of the Court were:
1. Place where state matters were discussed
2. Place where cases were heard
3. Club
4. Place for receiving male visitors.
Joala was often served after the completion of serious state business and community matters.

'M'e - Mother, but also used generally as a respectful way of addressing any older or mature woman in the community.

Mamosali - "My woman's mother" as opposed to "my wife's mother". A term used generally in addressing women proprietors in shebeens. Upper class shebeen proprietors are addressed as 'Aunt', 'mangoane' or 'Sis', hence Sis Peggy; Plural Bo Mamosali.

'M'a ('m'e oa) - (prefix) mother of.

Madice - a game of dice (gambling)

Pinapole ) different brews available from shebeen United Nations. Skop donnor ) Pinapole is derived from pineapple which is added to Hopose ) this particular brew. Skop donnor - a fast brew Morara ) meaning lightning basher. Hopose is made from hops and Morara is made by adding raisins to the liquor.

Zolo - Self-rolled cigarette from leaf tobacco or cannabis.

Liepamekoti - Derogatory term used to describe men who are at the back and call for Bo-Mamosali. Literal translation means 'hole digger' - working in the mines, the position of underground digger is considered to be at the bottom of the scale.

Loti and Lisente - Lesotho currency.

Sheleng - Shilling - old currency - but term used extensively in shebeens.

Zoka - Six pence in old currency.

Sekala - Derived from scale. A measuring 'cup' or container used in shebeens usually about 500 ml.
CODING OF DATA

The following system has been followed in coding the data. The first number of digits indicates the respondent, the second set indicates the tape number, then the page and the date. Examples drawn from 1983 data have day and month only.

Patron respondents = Any set with '00' as first digit(s) e.g. 0020
bo Mamosali = " " " '0' " " " 01
Poems = " " " '10' " " " 103
Songs = " " " '11' " " " 116
Non-shebeen patrons = " " " '0' unit '0' -ditto- 010
Essays = " " " Single unit numbers 1
Conversation between patron actors only = " " " Double numbers 77

There is no coding for field data, as the activities recorded were observed on numerous occasions throughout the research, nor for mixed conversations.

ABBREVIATIONS

BPP = British Parliamentary Paper
LEC = Lesotho Evangelical Church
LLA = Liquor Licensing Act
LLR = Liquor Licensing Regulations
PEMS = Paris Evangelical Mission Society
R/C = Roman Catholic
RC = Resident Commissioner
HC = High Commissioner
DC/AS = District Commissioner/Assistant Commissioner
NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

1. Introduction

This is a study of unlicensed public drinking places, usually referred to as shebeens. Two shebeens in Lesotho were studied utilizing an ethnographic orientation. These are shebeen United Nations and Peggy Bel Air Spot (pseudonyms). They are unlicensed, unserious\(^1\) behaviour settings, located in Lekoeishining, one of Maseru's high density, inner city residential slum areas\(^2\). They cater for a pot-pourri of patron type and are often managed and owned by women. The activities associated with shebeens are often taken for granted by those researchers who orient towards the study of routine practical activities in the social world. These activities will be treated as problematic and the sociological concern will be with the description of that which takes place, and is expected to take place, in such establishments and how these establishments came to be.

The 1976 Liquor Licensing Act states that any person who sells, deals or disposes of liquor\(^3\) without a licence is guilty of an offense and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment. According to this Act shebeens are therefore illegal. The proprietors have no licence to brew and sell alcohol beverages\(^4\), to prepare and dispense food or to provide entertainment. However, shebeen actors do not appear to be unduly inconvenienced by this statutory definition of the shebeens. The legal position of the shebeen is further complicated by the operations of a dual legal system in the country. Thus while general statutes apply to European liquor, traditional liquor as a commercial commodity is dealt with in both the Laws of Lerotholi revised edition 1959 and in Statutory Orders pertaining to trade\(^{1973}\). In such cases contradictions are
likely to occur. (Further discussion on problems inherent in dual legal systems and in externally originated legal systems is in pages 11-14). These contradictions do not appear to be affecting the operations and proliferation of shebeens.

Although shebeens are not incorporated private clubs and though no formal requisite governing membership is required for entrance, in some shebeens, a set of behaviour is associated with admission and entrance to certain subsettings. In those establishments where screening is part of the procedures, the management provides for a degree of exclusivity for its patrons. In this way patrons are afforded alcohol drinks, entertainment, food and comfortable surroundings in which to play and socialise away from prying eyes and at times that are suitable for them.

My observation as a participant observer in Shebeen United Nations and Peggie Bel Air Spot suggests that the shebeen affords people of varying degrees of respectability an opportunity to relax and play in semi-secret. It is not unusual to hear a patron saying that he would not like his wife or girl friend to see him in shebeens or to know that he visits such places. The settings appear to be an intersection of the deviant and the 'straights', a setting which belies a common belief that the 'straight' world and its actors are spatially and temporally separated from the deviant world and its actors (Roebuck and Frese 1976). Most studies of deviants in "the open" focus on the individual deviants and deviancy in a closed subculture. In this study, because of the intermingling of the 'straight' and the 'deviant', the focus is on the intersection and confluence of these two groups and their behaviour in a playtime situation. This setting appears to facilitate intermingling and intimate social encounters among the straight and underground personalities. It also facilitates unconventional behaviours which would
often be perceived as illegal by the general community. Actors in this behaviour setting create their own social world: how they regulate their lives according to this assumption of 'special social world' became one of those areas that I felt warranted analysis.

Thus the shebeen is viewed as a behaviour setting that supports deviant behaviour for those assumed to be nondeviant and nondeviant behaviour for those perceived as deviant. An encounter observed at Peggie Bel Air Spot best illustrates this intermingling. A doctor and a senior civil servant walked into the shebeen accompanied by a guest who, from the manner of the introductions, appeared to be holding a high position in his country. They had barely settled down in the comfortable chairs when in walked another well dressed gentleman. After preliminary niceties his next statement was "let's call them". He then turned to the proprietress whom he addressed as "Sis Peggie" and ordered an impressive shopping list of beers and spirits. The drinks and glasses made a notable spread on the coffee table. As is the custom in shebeens, drinks are ordered by bottles, never in 'tots'. Everybody around was invited to have a drink. This having been accomplished, he turned to the guest and asked without any preamble "Would you like a 20" National T.V. Sir?" As the guest was working out how to respond to this proposition, Bra Sai (this is how the gentleman was addressed), proceeded to assure the guest that the "television set is brand new, with guarantee and all. You will have no problems in getting a license." (0050:81:90:2/4) He persuaded the visitor to come and examine the commodity which was in his car.

Such encounters are not a novelty in shebeens. Encounters with those one is not acquainted with are ordinarily accompanied by remarks that actually serve as ritual forms or moves requesting conversation. Also actors appear to be more concerned with encounters that would ensure
engaging others in those interactions without suffering moral loss - what Lyman and Scott describe as guarding against being designated as an unworthy or disreputable actor in the setting (1970). The openness and unseriousness of the shebeen situation facilitates fluid conversations; encounters and interactions can be closed without too much formality - a remark like 'we shall see' suffices. In the above encounter, as soon as it became evident that the guest was not interested in the television set, other topics of conversation were introduced as if nothing untoward had happened.

1.1 The Shebeen Phenomenon

Personal observations, verbal reports and popular literary works suggest that these establishments are common throughout the sub-Sahara from Kenya to Cape Town. Further verbal reports from shebeen owners, patrons and conventional bar owners and some members of the general public suggest that these 'play pens' provide havens for an assortment of people. It is a place where an assortment of deviant and nondeviant types congregate to socialise, negotiate, cavort and entertain one another at convenient times. On the other hand, some people, especially the middle and upper class and the police, claim that these places are 'bad' and that they are frequented by deviants, criminals, prostitutes, layabouts, gamblers, cannabis and contraband goods pedlars. They believe that these places appeal to the thrill-seeking marginals of the upper and middle class who go slumming. These places are unconventional, deviant and cater for disreputable persons by disreputable persons, according to some people.

Shebeens have come to be known by a variety of names; spot, tamene, konkotia, phephezela and many others. The term shebeen is an Irish word which means a shop or house where liquor is sold without a licence. One theory explaining the origin of the word claims that both in Ireland and
Scotland during the late 1700's, it was not uncommon that after closing time in the evening, the regular patrons at certain pubs would nip to the back of the building where they could not be seen to continue drinking. This practice was known as shebeening and the owner of such a pub as a shebeener.

In Lesotho the term shebeen is not commonly used but everybody knows what it is. Therefore the term shebeen has been chosen deliberately because, for most Southern Africans, the meaning is clear; it conjures up a certain behaviour setting – secrecy, sociability, stage-managed by a woman. Other terms tend to be understood only in certain localities or have certain ecological characteristics like the typology worked out by Macrory on types of taverns – skid row taverns, downtown bar, drink and dine tavern, night club, a neighbourhood tavern (Macrory 1950:367). The pseudonyms chosen for our shebeens are very informative in themselves, showing that certain establishments are referred to as shebeens while others are referred to as 'spot', differentiating their character and class.

On the basis of a survey I did in Lekoeishining and other residential areas of Maseru and on the basis of data received from informants and general personal observation, certain impressions were formed about the shebeen. In the urban areas these establishments are mainly found in slum and low income, high population density areas and in residential areas where there is a large proportion of rented houses – the exception being government rented quarters. Appendix 1 shows Maseru population distribution and we observe that Lekoeishining has more than half the population of the combined eight other inner city suburbs. Shebeens are also found along the main roads at intersections and in most villages. Apparently most shebeens require a substantial population base for patrons.
Whatever name the institution is known by there is no doubt that it has become entrenched in the tradition, custom and affection of a large proportion of the society and has become an integral and important part of the lives of many Basotho. Shebeens observe no fixed hours. As already pointed, out European liquor is sold in bottle never in tots and some well known customers enjoy credit facilities. Thus the liquor trade has not remained limited to the traditionally home-brewed sorghum beer. No shebeens observe fixed opening hours: business commences on the arrival of the first client and the shebeen closes after the last person has gone home. If somebody is overcome by a craving for liquor in the middle of the night, the chances are good that he will be able to purchase liquor "to take away" from his favourite shebeen. Shebeen proprietors are generally matronly, jovial and warm, and their vitality is important to the success of their businesses.

Definite forms of social stratification exist in the shebeen universe which coincide with the aspirations of specific socio-economic groups. Professional and business men and successful underground characters tend to patronise upper and middle category shebeens exclusively. The labouring and lower classes enjoy shebeens which fit their social station. Once a patron has found friends with common views and life styles, he patronises this shebeen, indulging in favourite pastime discussions which range from profound philosophy to ridiculous nonsense. These social differentiations have been noted by other researchers on public drinking places, for example Macrory (1950) in his work on the function of taverns in society, Cavan (1966) who observed unserious behaviour in a public drinking place, and Lotter and Schmidt (1975) in their study of shebeens in Soweto. All shebeens are subsettings of family homes; some families may be lucky and have a room specially set
aside for business, especially prosperous shebeen owners, but for most families the position is very critical. They might have only one room which to a large extent is used for business purposes and the family has to adjust their need of that room to that of the business. At night the children pretend to be fast asleep by covering their heads with blankets and snoring while their elders make merry around them.

Whatever name the institution is known by, it is generally characterised by a configuration of time, space and object and it is associated with a standing pattern of behaviour and services that are both routinely expected within the setting and are treated as proper and fitting for the time and space (Cavan 1966).

The most peculiar aspect of shebeens is that they are often owned and managed by women with the men doing the "menial" jobs of collecting fuel or running errands. Comparatively speaking it is unusual for a public drinking place to be owned and run by a woman; internationally in such settings women often work under a male management as barmaids or waitresses. When women opt out of their usually defined role and redefine their relationships in an economic world that is dominated by men and closely linked to a dominant capitalist economy, then a number of questions are raised. We may begin to ask whether we can construct a model 'shebeen queen' career strategy of these relatively unskilled women. Are there discernible patterns of decision making at certain predictable points in their lives? In opting for shebeen business, we observe the upgrading of women to a dominant role that is publicly instituted and approved but which is in contrast to the norms of the patriarchal Basotho. Further, one is inclined to re-ask some of the questions posed by Nelson (1977) in trying to understand the implications of the entry of women in the public economic domain – specifically, whether some of the women who have entered the economic public domain
achieve greater control over their lives socially, economically and politically? Can their penetration into the economic world allow us to make predictions about successful entrepreneurship of women in the non-formal sector? At issue is whether shebeen-running explains the woman's relationship to society's resources and whether ideological redefinition accompanies new strategies of survival.

The shebeen phenomenon further excites our interests in, and our attempts to understand, urban poverty and strategies employed to cope with urban life. Added to this is the growing interest in interrelationships between what is controversially described as the 'informal sector' and the 'formal sector' in developing-world cities.

All these questions are asked in an attempt to understand how an establishment like a shebeen is possible and what are the implications of such an establishment.

Although this is a case study of only two shebeens, I believe that much of the description and analysis would equally apply to other shebeens in Maseru and other lowland towns. Nevertheless one is not unmindful of repeated proclamations by customers that "each shebeen has its own character and brand of customers". They also point out that "it is not so much what you drink but with whom you drink and what you chat about that makes drinking in a shebeen such a lovable institution" (0026:53:80:15/1).

Variations have been noted and earlier I indicated that there was definite stratification in the shebeen universe (detailed discussion on shebeen stratification is in Chapter 5), but it was observed that most customers who routinely drank at Shebeen United Nations make rounds of other shebeens. On any given day a customer may have been drinking at any of the many shebeens in the area. Also it was observed that workers
at Shebeen United Nations might have worked at other shebeens before coming here: they might have come to this shebeen because of close ties with the owner, either by being a relative or coming from the same area. Thus a social network of shebeen managers, employees and customers who are part of the social world at many of the shebeens in Lekoeishining is formed.

1.2 The Research Problem

Upon first consideration, shebeens appear to be free-wheeling, going concerns, profitably owned and managed by women who are often addressed as bo-Mamosali in Lesotho or commonly known as Shebeen queens in Southern Africa. These women appear to be making sufficient money to support themselves and their families. They seem to have no difficulties in attracting a large number of patrons and retaining their patrons. The actions of bo-Mamosali and that of their patrons appear to be a product of beliefs and desires; it is of sociological interest what these beliefs and desires are. Equipped with these preliminary observations, I decided to address myself to the following questions within a transactional-symbolic interactionist approach to the behaviour-setting framing the phenomenon. The approach taken by Roebuck and Frese (1976) has been adopted in exploring this terra incognita:

1. What is a shebeen? This will be considered in view of the general impression that it is a 'hideous' place where all kinds of concoctions are sold, a terrifying breeding place of crime, violence and promiscuity.

2. What does it look like? Here I will be looking at the rhetorical space-time configuration and how these properly facilitate actors' behaviour in the setting.

3. How is such a place possible? Up to 1961, the selling of liquor to the Basotho was prohibited except in special cases. A massive illegal liquor trade blossomed. Hard measures to suppress the trade were not
successful. In 1961, with the abolition of prohibition, it was expected that shebeens would be dealt a deathblow and that they would be a thing of the past. This expectation, based on a rather simplistic economic argument, was not to be realised. Instead, shebeens have flourished.

4. What goes on in these establishments?
5. Who goes there? To do what? With whom? Where in the setting?
6. What are the consequences of these actions?
7. Who runs shebeens? What kind of woman opts to take such a risk?
8. What is the relationship between the shebeen and the wider socio-economic world?

The shebeen is viewed as a behaviour setting chosen by some actors for their daily rounds. The behaviour setting will enable me to ascertain the permanent structural features, namely its physical, space-time properties in relation to accepted patterns of behaviour which benefit the setting (Roebuck and Frese 1976). In other words I am interested in finding out what the setting looks like and what consistently takes place when and where in relation to the physical milieu. But equally of importance is the kind of person who manages a shebeen; what are the characteristics that make him/her congruent to the behaviour setting?

The proprietors appear to be using their traditionally ascribed and acquired abilities to improve their social status. The patron-proprietor relationships are viewed in a transactional sense examined in terms of exchange of goods and services. The interaction perspective has been used to enable me to determine the meanings and motivations underlying actors' behaviour and conduct and how the actors, through their behaviour, communicate these shared meanings to one another. In motivation there is decision-taking; I am therefore interested in the decision process that motivates the actors to use the shebeen and in
decision-making among patrons and among proprietors. The aim is to reconstruct the shebeen scene from the interpretations, reactions and viewpoints of the actors.

The study embraces the following major parts:

1. The historical development of shebeens in Lesotho and special features that might have nurtured the shebeen.

2. What a shebeen looks like, how it is possible, the major courses of behaviour routinely occurring in the setting and the relationship between the behaviour and the physical configuration.

3. Typology of shebeen actors - all actors. This includes both clients and staff.

4. A comparison of behaviour patterns in the selected shebeens with those found in kindred unserious settings, especially sociability and play behaviour.

5. Profile of bo-Mamosali. Although 3 above deals with actors' typologies bo-Mamosali warrant special attention. Patron typologies might not be too different from patron typologies of other kindred settings but bo-Mamosali are in a category of their own when it comes to public drinking place proprietors.

1.3 Definition of Concepts

1.3.1 The Shebeen

Although shebeens are prevalent in the Southern African region, their nature is affected by the various legal systems and therefore it has not been easy to find an all-encompassing definition. It became necessary to develop a definition that as closely as possible fits the settings in Lesotho and portrays actors' perceptions. One often finds allusions to shebeen settings in popular literary works and studies of various aspects of life in Lesotho. In most of these works shebeens are referred to as
places of assignation, pleasure and debauchery (Dikobe 1981 and Hellman 1934).

After visits to a number of licensed public drinking places and unlicensed establishments, I found that the distinctions between the two were not always as clear cut as anticipated. The kind of behaviour that most people associate with shebeens was also observed in licensed public drinking places.

The legal dual system that operates in the country creates problems of definition, especially in those areas where the traditional system operates at variance with the imported foreign legal system, in this case the Roman Dutch Law. Under the law it is illegal to sell liquor without a license but then the legal definition of liquor does not include traditional sorghum beer. Government attempted to close this loophole by enacting a new regulation which introduced a new establishment - the 'Basotho Beer Shop'\(^8\). Proprietors operating in these places are expected to have a licence. Most of the women in shebeen trade whom I spoke to claimed not to have a licence and confessed they saw no advantage in paying for such a licence. I was inclined to believe that they were telling me the truth because whenever there was a rumour of police raids there was always a panic reaction. In fact, during such a rumour, M'e Popie and I were accused of being police spies. Constant efforts were required to back up and retain the confidence of the community being researched. Furthermore, arrest and convictions for beer-brewing carry no social stigma. Thus the community does not perceive shebeens as illegal. Court judgments appear to be taking cognisance of social definition: women arrested for beer-selling often get away with a note of caution and sometimes their liquor is returned to them "to be enjoyed with friends".

12
The shebeen is here defined as "an unlicensed, unconventional drinking establishment where alcoholic beverages are sometimes brewed, and always sold and dispensed at any time that is convenient to the patrons and proprietors". Such places are operated without a licence to brew liquor for commercial purposes, to sell liquor or to provide other forms of entertainment and services usually associated with public drinking places such as food or music. Their physical milieu is often found enclosed within the milieu of other settings such as a family home (see Chapter 5). Its physical boundaries are not often clearly demarcated from those of the larger settings. Thus the drinking place is still in part conterminous with the physical area of the encompassing setting. Fixed in time and place, shebeens are viewed as separate from the conventional public drinking place. On the whole they are run by women in contrast to the conventional establishments.

1.3.2 Legal Order

A good deal about laws governing shebeens has been discussed in the above section. Implicit in the laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages are the following: they define who may or may not drink in a public drinking place; they specify who may or may not be employed in such establishments and what times one can get services from these establishments. Somehow these restrictions do not apply to the shebeen. Since I decided to reconstruct the shebeen from actors' definition, perceptions and viewpoints, it would be at variance to this stand to define shebeens as illegal. Suffice it to say that they are unlicensed and appear to thrive on this legal ambiguity.

An explanation for resistance to externally imposed laws can be found in Carson's (1974) and Burman's (1976) discussions on the effects of the imposition of one legal system by one group on another group with
different values. According to Carson, conflict arises when a legislative measure is advocated by one group and opposed by the group on which the measure is being imposed. The group on whom the measure is imposed may oppose it, not because of its perceived impact on people's behaviour (which he calls its instrumental effect), but because for historical or other reasons the measure becomes associated with apparently unconnected issues. This way the measure attains or acquires a symbolic dimension (Carson 1974). These dimensions symbolise conflicts in the society which are apparently unconnected with the exact subject matter to which they refer (Burman 1976). When a people have no say in the legislative process, there can be no opposition at the legislative stage. But as the new law is put into effect, its symbolic dimensions become apparent to both the administrators and to the people on whom it is being enforced. This affects the extent to which it will be observed and administered. This is well demonstrated in the shebeen case. In concurring with Gusfield (1963), Burman points out that it would be: "useful to think of symbolic acts as forms of rhetoric functioning to organise the perception, attitude and feelings of observers". (Burman, 1976:p.204)

The history of prohibition in Lesotho, indicates that the Protestant churches was very strict about the use of alcohol by its members. This was further reinforced by the Colonial Administration which prohibited the sale of liquor to the Basotho. Complete abstinence meant that practising Christians could not participate in societal activities, as convivial drinking has always played a central part in serious state discussions as well as in cementing of ties and creating new ones. Thus to impose restrictions on liquor usage curtailed one's involvement in the affairs of the nation. For the Basotho, beer drinking had significance beyond that of personal indulgence. It is true that prohibition was only on
'monetarised' liquor but then, when the traditional 'Khotla' from which a mosotho man could have a free drink disappeared and new administrative structures were adopted, the shebeen came in to fill the vacuum created by the disappearance of the Khotla. That most Basotho men have come to view the shebeen as "fulfilling the purpose of a Khotla" was confirmed by their response when asked how they used the shebeen.

In a situation where the symbolic dimension is important, Burman (1976) observed that the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of the law is affected by the symbolic connotations which are either intrinsic to the situation or develop as a result of attempts to alter the behaviour of the indigenous population. The symbolic connotation may influence both the officials responsible for enforcing the law and the people upon whom the law is being enforced. In his studies of the South African situation during early European occupation, Burman found that magistrates were often compelled to 'manipulate' the law in passing judgment, thus magistrates made judgments according to the definition of indigenous population. This instrumentally inspired "bending" of the law generated pressure to recognise African law and, in some cases, often enhanced the magistrate's position. It is interesting to note that what used to happen in South African magisterial courts during the last century is happening in Lesotho as regards shebeens; there is an almost tacit acceptance of these establishments. Only when there is vociferous objection from certain quarters, e.g. Reserve Chief, do law enforcement agents opt out of "non-recognised policy" and sometimes bring shebeen owners before the Court. It is under these conditions that the shebeen in Lesotho operates. It could well be that this is how shebeens survive and operate throughout the Southern African region.

1.3.3 Moral Order

The moral order of shebeens is derived from the following:
a) prohibition;
b) missionary endeavours to save the indigenous population from complete annihilation\(^{(9)}\);
c) temperance movement in Lesotho. The Blue Cross is fashioned after a similar movement in Switzerland\(^{(10)}\).

Historically, the patterns of behaviour taken for granted in the shebeen have often been viewed not only as an antithesis of the general standards of propriety of polite society but also as destructive to the moral fibre of the actors in shebeens and were relegated to a position of low esteem. The moral order prevailing in all public drinking places is questionable to some middle class Basotho and what is thought to go on in these establishments is lewd, lascivious, bawdy and drunken behaviour.

The ambivalence between an attitude of acceptance and use by a seemingly large number of persons, and an attitude of rejection and disregard by others, raises a number of interesting issues and almost forces us to study the setting to resolve some of these conflicts. Are shebeens detrimental to society or are they harmless? Are they dens of iniquity or are they valuable neighbourhood meeting places?\(^{(11)}\) Do shebeen activities have wider social, political and economical implications? (The issues on stereotyping and ambivalence are discussed in Chapter 2 under sections 2.13(ii) and (iii)).

The degree to which church pressure can be important is seen in the history of Shebeen United Nations. This establishment started as a legal "Basotho Beer Shop" owned by a church elder. It was not long before the church put pressure on the owner arguing that the proprietor was acting against religious obligation and expectations. The manager was forced to give up the business but others, who had no such restrictions and pressures, took over the business and ignored licence requirements.
1.4 Location of the Study

This research was conducted in one of the oldest residential areas in Maseru. It is actually Lesotho's first African urban residential area modelled on European patterns - houses built in lines or in such a way that allowance is made for vehicle movement. It was established towards the end of the last century when Maseru became the Administrative Headquarters of the British Protectorate of Basutoland. With characteristic aplomb the colonial administration summarily removed the original Maseru residents from what now constitutes the centre of town into this area. Here old families jostle with the new arrivals from other parts of the country attracted into Maseru by the prospects of earning a better living. The place is generally referred to as Lekoeishining (Location) a derogatory transmigratory term from the Republic of South Africa which specifically refers to urban African residential areas in that country. It implies something lower than a suburb. I am not aware that there is any other residential area in Lesotho that is so described.

Lekoeishining fits well Joseph Conrad's description of Africa in the *Heart of Darkness* when he writes that there are two Africas: one is a land of mud huts, squalor, rowdiness, drinking and endless ceremonies; the other is a land of modern cities with twentieth century chic and problems. Both Africas co-exist; the old Africa lives inside the new. It is not unusual to find a senior government officer residing in the prestigious Maseru West preferring to have his drink in a shebeen in Lekoeishining.

Officially, Lekoeishining comprises of three residential areas, each with definite, distinguishing characteristics. Closest to the town
centre is Lekoeishining 1. It curves north-eastwards from the edge of town. It is an area of contrasts. Spread across this area decaying structures exert a pervasive stranglehold over a few new habitable quarters. It is generally deteriorating into a slum because of years of local administrative neglect. There is inadequate sanitary provision, overcrowding and very little private or public open space. Most homes use communal taps, thus every so many yards one crosses rivulets resulting from dripping taps.

The population is quite a mixed group. Honest, stable, hard-working people, students, labourers, unemployed migrant labourers and some deviant types seeking refuge from wider society either live in or frequent this place.

Walking through the streets is like walking through a maze. The untarred streets, if one can describe them as such, are short, narrow, potholed and winding. Eddies of dirty dish water, alcohol debris (moroko) and urine given the place a nauseating stench. The crowd is a motley hordes of decently dressed men and women side by side with human derelicts. With characteristic irony, the Basotho refer to this residential area as the "United Nations". For most people this place is regarded as a low-status area to be moved out of as quickly as possible to clean 'safe' places.

Apart from being the 'twilight' area of Maseru, it is also noted for being a low-key 'red light' district. It foams with life and bustles with activity from Monday to Monday from very early in the morning to very late at night. Music of all types; hymns, jazz, soul, mbaganga and traditional songs blare through doors, windows and other unconventional openings.

The area is mainly occupied by tenants who are housed in rather small,
long, continuous rows of rooms (malaeneng - rows or lines). Any structure with four walls and an aperture for an entrance qualifies for rental accommodation. Most properties in this area are owned by people who live in better parts of Lekoeishining or other residential areas of Maseru. Most people, especially 'single' women with families, move into Maseru and there experience difficulties in finding accommodation in town that is within their financial means - Lekoeishining 1 offers them accommodation and prospects of making a living.

**Lekoeishining 1** is a residential neighbourhood suffering from deteriorating blight conditions. The broken down physical state of the district is an expression of the transient, broken-down physical and mental state of most of its inhabitants.

In **Lekoeishining 2** one finds a community which is a step or so up the social ladder from that of **Lekoeishining 1**. Its residents are a petit-bourgeois motley of offsprings of erstwhile rich citizens. Businessmen, professionals and clerks live in this area. In sharp contrast to **Lekoeishining 1**, most of the residents here own houses they live in. The landlord and his or her family live in a respectable house hiding away rented malaene (rooms) at the backyards.

Still a shade higher is **Lekoeishining 3**, east of **Lekoeishining 2**. Half of the area consists of privately owned houses, the other half is mainly made up of government-owned houses, originally designed with monotonous similarity for Basotho civil servants. There are few shebeens in this latter half of Lekoeishining - government prohibits brewing liquor for sale on its property. Most of this section has been left out of the map showing distribution of shebeens.

Lekoeishining 1 has a higher concentration of shebeens than in the other
two neighbouring residential areas. In some of the spontaneously recited oral poems (see Chapter 10), the customers lament the misfortunes that befell them here on their way home from the mines. "Here I was dispossessed of all my hard-earned goods". There is another euphemistic name for this residential area which can be translated to mean 'stop' or 'blockade'. Some miners never complete the homeward journey. With most of their earnings dissipated in shebeens and other activities in Lekoeishing, they are left with no alternative except to rejoin the queues at the mine recruiting offices with a hope that the second time around they can jump the 'blockade' and make it home.

1.5 Overview of Shebeens

Allusions to shebeen or beer-brewing and selling have been noted in many studies of Southern Africa and in the mass media in connection with police raids or in connection with alcohol abuse. Other illegal activities are frequently mentioned in conjunction with shebeens. My foreknowledge of shebeens was based primarily on personal observation and information from patients. I worked with while employed in the Mental Health Section. I also had information from other studies often emphasising liquor sales and drinking.

It is not enough to equate the shebeen with its more obvious or visible manifestations - sale of liquor, rowdiness and drunkenness. The establishment is much more complex than that and, like other complex systems, it has many facets which need to be untangled in order for us to be able to understand it. Furthermore, the position of the shebeen has never been static, its roots reach deep into the past. Over time the shebeen has developed novel features as a result of the change in laws pertaining to the availability of European liquor to the indigenous population and the changing socio-economic and political features of the
country. These establishments around which the beer trade is centred do not operate in a vacuum but are accompanied by a constellation of cultural activities, all of which combine to create a convivial atmosphere in the shebeen which contrasts with the working or non-working conditions of the majority of patrons. It also contrasts with the 'alien' atmosphere of hotel bars which are the only alternative public drinking places in the country. The assertion that the hotel bar atmosphere is 'alien' was expressed by a number of patrons including those who had been exposed to Western culture and values either through education or living abroad.

Crucial to the tenacity and cohesion of shebeen culture is the role of traditional activities such as music, oral poetry and the commandeering of different personally-owned musical instruments. This not only provides vivacity to the setting but also provides an avenue of employment for numerous persons unwilling or unable to submit to the rule of capitalist employment.

It is apparent that in spite of the ambivalence and inconsistencies of attitudes towards the shebeens, the culture of these establishments has not failed to exercise an attraction for most Basotho.

1.6 Brief History of the Two Shebeens

Most shebeens do not have long histories because of the nature of the business which is used as a means toward achieving less risky and more 'acceptable' occupations. It is unusual to find a long line of family shebeen keepers. Since most shebeens are within family houses, outsiders cannot buy the business.

From preliminary discussions with some people in the country and from personal observation, it was apparent that not all households engaged in selling liquor undertook this on a daily basis; some sold liquor only at
weekends or intermittently, others were involved in 'liquor parties' or what are locally known as *setokofole* (from stock fare). Yet other households brewed and/or sold liquor every day. The choice of shebeens depended on regularity of business and possibility of gaining entry without affecting the natural atmosphere. Two shebeens were selected for this study after an extensive door-to-door survey aimed, first at establishing the number of households engaged in shebeen running, and secondly at identifying those who did business on a regular basis and lastly to identify a suitable shebeen for study. That is a shebeen which appeared to be more representative in its patrons and activities. It became apparent quite early in the study that there are differences in the types of shebeens; some are exclusive, catering for a special patronage - either the skid row or the very low in society and/or the very top in the social structure, while a great majority of shebeens fall within the middle ranges.

1.6.1 Shebeen United Nations

Shebeen United Nations caters for a pot-pourri of patrons from different walks of life with differing tastes. It is one of the few establishments that has a long history of shebeening. It was established soon after the second World War as a Basotho Beer Shop. Within a year the proprietor was under pressure from his church to relinquish such business. The shebeen is uncomfortably close to a church and the revelry from the shebeen competed with the sombre activities of the church. The proprietor sold his business to Mr. Teko who decided not to continue with the business as a beer shop but rented it out to women who were interested in running a shebeen.

From the time it changed 'legal status' and management, Shebeen United Nations became famous as the nerve centre of social activity in
Lekoeishinging. It is not quite clear whether it is the change in management, that is being taken over by women, or the change of 'legal' status that brought it notoriety and fame. A wide variety of liquors as well as a wide variety of activities became available.

Mr. Teko added more rooms to the building instead of the original two rooms; the building now has eight rooms and two detached shacks. The increase in the number of rooms meant that more people could rent the place both for residential and business purposes. All the rooms are rented by women engaged in shebeen business. Only one of the eight shebeens was selected for in-depth study.

Mr. Teko's explanation for buying the business is that:

"I saw that a number of women without husbands were flocking into Maseru, desperate for accommodation and anxious to get money for family requirements. Liquor brewing and selling was popular in the 1950's and 1960's. The mine boys brought back 'space grams' (ear shattering music centres) and accordions. The music made everybody crazy with enjoyment. It brought people to the shebeens either to drink, dance or watch. The place was always full of people, young and old. The young ones enjoyed themselves too.

So you see, I provided these 'poor' women with accommodation and an opportunity to provide for their families. Above all, the migrants could come and relax here before proceeding home or while waiting for the processing of their recruitment papers." (07:6:81:8/12/82)

Kotikoti has rented two rooms from Mr. Teko. She has been in shebeen business for twenty years. Her shebeen attracts many people (see pages 175 on patron attendance). She appears to be doing well compared to her neighbours; she has more patrons than the other women. Unlike her neighbours, she provides a variety of liquor, both home brewed and European. She opted for liquor selling:

"Because I had no husband and had a family to look after. Wage employment did not give me sufficient money and I had problems with accommodating my children and caring for them as my time was determined by my employer". (03:20:30:51)
Peggy Bel Air Spot has a much more recent history, about fifteen years. It started as a shebeen, catering for a clientele with more discriminatory tastes. The proprietor comes from a long established family in Lekoeishing. She owns the house and is fortunate to have sufficient space to spare a room for business.

Initially, she sold liquor during weekends only because she was employed full-time as a shop assistant. When she realized that her full-time employment was not bringing in sufficient money, she resigned and undertook full-time shebeen running. She had made her contacts during the time she was employed as a shop assistant, therefore she had no problems in getting patrons.

Peggy Bel Air Spot was chosen for in-depth study because it contrasted sharply from Shebeen United Nations in terms of its actors, liquor available and cleanliness and comforts. The former looks more like a private club. Contrary to societal beliefs, shebeens get a fair representation of all members of the community. Often people are given the impression that shebeens cater for the lower classes, but this has been proved to be incorrect. The same finding was observed by Schmidt and Lotter (1974-1975) studying shebeens in five major cities in the Republic of South Africa.

Liquor brewing and selling without a licence is a common phenomenon in Lesotho. The enterprise shares many characteristics with licensed public drinking places and 'informal sector' activities: yet at the same time it has many characteristics which are only peculiar to it.

The presence of a large number of shebeens in Lesotho and the extensive patronage of these establishments bears testimony to their role in society. However, visible presence and patronage cannot adequately convey the role of the shebeen and its function of helping to fulfil many
social, recreational and economic needs.

The development of shebeens resulted in specialization in the liquor trade. This specialization has created a network of relationships, activities, wealth and social position which revolve round the business of alcohol, thus bringing into existence a set of factors which had hitherto been absent; factors unrelated to the physiological and psychological properties of alcohol. It is the examination of these networks that is important to this study.

One outstanding peculiarity of shebeens is that in most cases they are managed by women. This raises a number of questions. Why is it that shebeens are run by women? How did this come about? And what effect has this on the general economic, social and political structures of the country? Female behaviour is often measured against abstract norms, often based on studies of men. This study aims to search for the meanings by which shebeen owners live and not to regard them as deviants to be explained. It is an examination of the content and context of the lives of bo Mamosali and their clients.

The use of alcoholic beverages has always been common in Lesotho but the consumption was often subject to certain conventions which defined the limits of degree of permissive intoxication and the liberty of behaviour which was socially tolerated. The limits were determined in the light of the fundamentals of societal organization so that, while advanced states of drunkenness may have been tolerated, offences which might endanger social equilibrium were not generally excused on the grounds that misconduct arose from the effects of alcohol. This was possibly because liquor supply was centred around the domestic setting. The establishment of commercial drinking places changed the character from the convivial meeting of relatives and friends to a heterogeneous gathering whose
admission relied among other things on the ability to pay for liquor. This change has increased or widened the scope for interaction between men and women.

In the light of the above, shebeens appear to offer an opportunity to study certain values and norms which appear to have undergone changes with the changing life styles. The atmosphere is usually relaxed and congenial and is a place where individuals can express themselves without constraints of the work-a-day world. In so doing they express those deeply and often unstated values on which social order is based (Cavan, 1966). It appears almost as if the shebeen milieu is a more natural world than the world outside in which we are strait-jacketed into certain stereotypes.

With the paucity of research on the shebeen, it was necessary to review literature on related public places in search of common trans situational features obtaining in these places - kindred to shebeens. It was hoped that as a first step such a review might provide tentative guidelines from which I could proceed.
1. Synonyms provided by Rogets Thesaurus for unserious include witty, scintillate, joke, jest, amuse, tell a good story, lack of seriousness and many others. Cavan (1966) Liquor Licence was among the first scholars to use the concept in relation to public drinking places. Roesbuck and Frese (1976): Rendevouz defined behaviour that is unserious as - "having no consequence beyond the here and now". (Page 42). Huizinga, Homo Ludens (1950) show that even in unserious activities there can be seriousness. Thus play loses its unserious nature when it is no longer suspended from reality. There is an element of both seriousness and unseriousness in shebeens.

2. Lekoeishing population of 5012 is more than half the population of the other eight Maseru residential areas. Appendix (i)

3. Liquor is officially defined as any spirits (including methylated spirits), wine, ale, beer, port, cider, perry, hop beer, qadi or other fermented distilled spiritous or malt beer of an intoxicating nature and any drink with which any such liquor shall have been mixed, but shall not include traditional Sesotho beer. Lesotho Liquor Act 1976:163 (hereafter referred to as LLA).

4. It is commonly accepted that people do not normally drink pure alcohol. Thus throughout this study alcohol, alcoholic drink or alcoholic beverage or liquor refers to drinks in customary usage with whatever concentration of ethnol. It is also common to use the term 'drinking' as a substitute for the rather cumbersome expression'drinking of alcoholic beverages', therefore 'drinking' will be used in this sense in this study.

5. According to Barker and Wright (1958) standing patterns of behaviour
are behaviour patterns which are stable, persistent and independent of the particular individual involved and are regarded by members of the group as being congruent with the setting with which they are associated.

6. Shebeen-queen is a term used to refer to women who own shebeens, however most of these women do not like this term as there is an underlying derogatory meaning. In Lesotho this term is hardly in common usage; Mamosali is the more commonly used term. Mamosali will be used throughout the text.

7. Roebuck and Frese were interested in finding out whether the actors' perception of an after-hour club matched those held by the general population, in terms of what it is and its activities. Furthermore they wanted to find out how such a place was possible. Roebuck and Frese (1976) The Rendezvous: A Study of an After-hour Club.

8. Trade Order No. 20 of 1973 requires shebeen owners who sell 'joala' or 'leting' to have a valid licence, the fee for such a licence is R20. Shebeens are officially known as Basotho Beer Shops if they have a licence. Most shebeen owners I spoke to did not hold this licence. Appendix (ii)

9. Most Protestant Missionaries writing about shebeens (cautiously) stressed the morally destructive characters of these establishments.

10. The 'Blue Cross' was established in Lesotho in 1937 by the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (now Lesotho Evangelical Church: LEC). It was based on the same premise as the Croix-Bleue established by Rev. Louis-Lucien Rochat in Switzerland in 1877.

In Vol. 18 of Africa Letter from the Aborigines Protection Society to Colonial Office, August 21, 1885, it is stated:

'I desire to call your attention to the fact that owing to the
impunity with which spirits are allowed to be imported into Basutoland...the condition of that country is going from bad to worse and the people are gradually sinking into a state of demoralisation, which if not arrested must inevitably result in their total ruin' (p.204)

11. Some of these questions have been raised by scholars studying licensed Western pubs, taverns and saloons. Although there is a general consensus of lax behaviour, scholars believe there is a high degree of exaggeration. See Denitz 1951, Macrory 1950, Cavan 1966, Mass Observation 1943.

Academic interest in drinking and public drinking places started about the turn of the century. As befits the importance of such a subject, there exist a plethora of literature and theories, albeit lopsided as most of the literature is concerned with alcohol beverage drinking and far less with establishments where the drinking is done. There is an over-representation of some disciplines while others have made only a limited and recent contribution. There is a high representation of medical, psychiatric and psychological studies. Consequently, these disciplines have influenced directions, theories and methods of collecting data in this field. They have tended to concentrate on individual drinking and individual pathology. Little attention has been paid to the socio-cultural milieu of drinking; where a person drank, with whom, why he or she drank in a particular place and not in another and what cultural factors governed public drinking places. Earlier sociological and anthropological studies mirror the influences of the early arrivals in alcohol studies (Morton 1943, Heath 1962 and 1976 and Mandelbaum 1965). Many studies were also influenced by the moral paradigm of early social sciences and deep involvement of religion in alcohol consumption and prohibition.

Heath shows the importance of alcohol in society when he refers to it as a central variable to which other pertinent social and cultural data are related (Heath 1974). Because of this unique characteristic a great number of disciplines have made their bid for authority in this field. The medical profession and the psychologists have worked longest in this area. Their focus tends to be in biochemical and psychological aspects.
related to the individual. The former explains alcohol intake in terms of physiological and biochemical mechanisms while the latter explains intake by looking at personality and emotional disorder. The emphasis is on the individual with a problem - disease, pathology and problems related to the alcohol intake. The individual is the central figure. The politicians and the lawyers, with the help of social scientists, tend to focus on criminality and social control. The interest is on the relationship between man and alcohol where the behavioural concomitants of drinking depend on beliefs and ideas of what alcohol does to a person. These theories are interesting, important and suggestive but they are tangential to my primary concern, that of the shebeen in society (Robinson 1976 and Pittman & Snyder 1962).

Not all early social scientists were so indoctrinated or short sighted. Moore pioneered academic interest in places where liquor and other beverages are consumed in his study of "The social value of the saloon" in 1897. Three years later another paper "The Saloon in Chicago" was published. However, interest seems to have flagged in the following decades. There is only a scattering of works on public drinking places, and the only study I could find following that of Moore was that done by Mass Observation on an English Pub in Worktown (1943). Jansen in 1963 referred to the tavern as a "neglected topic of sociological importance" (cited in Lotter 1981). Elsewhere he expressed surprise at the scant attention given to the cafe in sociological and socio-psychological studies (Jansen 1976). Since the 1960's interest in this "neglected" field seems to have been rekindled, though according to Popham there remains important gaps in our knowledge of the "historical and epidemiological as well as sociological" aspects of public drinking places (1978).

2.1 General Overview of Public Drinking Places
Public drinking houses appear to be among the oldest institutions in society. The Hammurabic Code of 108-111 shows that on-premises liquor outlets were fairly common in Babylonia and Assyria (Johns 1911). No fewer than four articles in the code deal with the outlets' operation and patronage. Although these places were owned by merchants, their management was delegated to women. The women were prohibited from drinking and from accepting payments of drinks in currency. The customers drank on credit and then, after the harvest, paid their accounts in grain. Already we note certain similarities between the ancient Babylonian taverns and the contemporary Lesotho shebeen. The first of these is the management of public drinking places by women. The tradition seems to have been maintained throughout east, central and south Africa, especially in situations where traditional beer is brewed for retail purposes. The second of the similarities is drinking on credit. Because most shebeen patrons are regular clientele, they are allowed the privilege of drinking on credit. Most of the patrons in my study referred to this phenomenon as "drinking by the book" (001:2:10:6/12/1982). Generally this also shows that Babylonian tavern patrons were not of a transient type.

Some writers believe that the stipulations in the Code of Hammurabi were evidence that Babylonian taverns were generally places of ill repute (Popham 1978). It was suspected that some taverns were houses of prostitution; Article 108 stipulates that offenders should be "thrown into the water". Also that taverns attracted undesirable elements; Article 109 stipulates: "If outlaws collect in the house of a wine-seller and she do (SIC) not arrest these outlaws and bring them to the palace, that wine-seller shall be put to death" (ibid.p.233) With such a history it appears that shebeens could not have hoped to attain a more respectable position in society. This unfavourable legacy tainted the
reputation of shebeens, sometimes without concrete evidence.

Of the ancient Egyptian and Syrian public drinking places, Maspero's excerpt gives useful information and lucid description of the decor, physical arrangement, function and norms of the establishments of that period. Above all, this extract shows that public houses are not just mere shops whose assistants are indifferent to their customers. In describing one of them, he says that:

"...it is furnished with mats, stools and armchairs upon which the habitual customers sit side by side fraternally drinking beer, wine, palm brandy, shodu...If you enter you are scarcely seated before a slave or a maid servant hastens forward and accosts you: 'Drink into rapture let it be a good day, listen to the conversation of companions and enjoy thyself'. Every moment the invitation is renewed, 'Drink, do not turn away for I will not leave thee until thou has drunk'. The formula changes but the refrain is always the same...(drink, drink and drink again). The regular customers do not hesitate to reply to these invitations by jokes, usually of the most innocent kind, 'Come now bring me eighteen cups of wine with thine own hand. I will drink till I am happy and the mat under me is a good straw bed upon which I can sleep myself sober'. (Maspero 1917, p.29-30). (RIDD 001:1:60:20/12/83)

This kind of banter was observed in the shebeen. It is not uncommon for a customer to say to the shebeen keeper "Mamosali give me some beer with your own hand, pour it until it overflows".

2.2 Studies on Public Drinking Houses

Most of the literature is unanimous about one aspect of public drinking places, that these retail premises are not mere commercial establishments but also serve as social centres. Popham reaffirms this by pointing out that, although the tavern should be seen as a product of the development of urban society, "of growth in the size and concentration of population, economic specialization and associated trade and travel....the origin of its social role presumably is to be found at....the level of social development; in associations - probably characteristic of all societies which foster a sense of group solidarity and personal identification"
Because the focus of this study is on shebeens and because literature sources on this kind of a drinking place are very few, I reviewed literature on other related drinking places in search of common trans-situational features obtaining in these places kindred to shebeens. It was reasoned that such an examination might provide tentative guidelines for the study of my specific setting.

A survey of literature on shebeens reveals an abundance of short journalistic 'travelogue' and literary works. These accounts present a diversity of descriptive vignettes of the establishment's popularity, social visibility, type, quality and price of drink and food and entertainment, without any central theme of analysis. As reference for a scientific study they have limited potential, they can be used only to a limited extent because they are particularly perceptive and discerning of activities in public drinking places especially when the places are not "officially" recognised. Since the style used by literary writers is not couched in specific discipline jargon, the works read more life-like. The major problem, however, is the validity of the data in these works. The literature also shows that, in addition to the American saloon, tavern and English pub and ale houses, other kindred places have been objects of various studies from east to west and north to south. These include (Lewis (1970), Korean tearoom; Jansen (1976), Dutch bar; Roebuck and Spray (1966), cocktail lounge; Achilles (1967), homosexual bar; Archard (1975), skid row bar; Gottlieb (1957), neighbourhood tavern; Machado de Silva (1969), Argentinian botequim; Sachs (1962), South Africa beerhalls; Wolcott (1974), Zimbabwe beer gardens and Schmidt and Lotter (1975) South African shebeens. The list is not complete; but this only serves to illustrate recent academic interest in these public establishments. Topping the list is the literature on historical
accounts of public drinking houses (Harrison 1971 and 1973, Clark 1983, Lugard 1897, Lynn 1975 and Connell 1968). The historical accounts focus on the progression of public drinking places through the centuries, especially as they related to historical events such as elections, travel and communication systems, recruiting to the armed forces, illicit brewing and related legislation, the temperance movement and control of liquor trafficking.

On the African front, the tenor of most of the writings originated from religious ideologies borne by Missionaries anxious to show the evils of alcohol beverages and "pagan" drinking places. The portrayal of negative characteristics of these establishments was not confined to Africa but was internationally observed.

Public drinking places are known by a variety of terms such as pubs, bars, taverns, saloons, bistros, beer halls, beer gardens, wine houses, spots and so on. A generic term has been chosen for our purposes because it encompasses all these institutions; thus a public drinking house or place will be used throughout. However in situations where a specific name has been used and is a direct quotation then that name will be adhered to. A simple definition of a public drinking place has been adopted here. It is being defined as "an establishment whose main business is to sell and serve alcohol beverage on the premises". I am aware of the inadequacies of this definition. A comprehensive definition would include a number of characteristics like (a) a functionary – someone who serves and attends to the patrons, (b) group drinking and group activities such as playing games or dancing, (c) the commercial and public aspects of the establishment – it is commercial in that it trades in alcohol and is public in that every person who so wishes expects to be served should he enter such premises and (d) the physical structure, ecological setting and the set of norms that prevail therein. It would
not be easy to fit these characteristics into such an all-embracing definition because the degree to which each of the above characteristics is important depends on the social, cultural, political, legal and geographic factors. Therefore the adopted definition suffices.

In studying public drinking places most researchers try to find answers to a number of questions that have plagued society for a long time. They include questions such as what is the social value of the public drinking place? What demands do such establishments fulfil? What exactly is a public drinking house? Answers to these questions are often determined by the attitudes of those who respond to them. They tend to fall in an ordinal scale composed of those who are positively oriented towards such establishments and their commodity and those opposed to these places with varying degrees of positiveness or negativeness (Moore 1897). The contradiction is evident in most issues related to alcohol and alcohol drinking places. Cahalan et al argue that a crucial way of understanding public drinking houses is by looking at everyday drinking, as man in society uses alcohol beverages and public drinking houses (Cahalan, Cisin and Crossley 1969).

In urging increased interest in public drinking houses, Moore based his premise on the thesis that an "institution which society has generally created for itself must meet a definite social demand and that the demand was not synonymous with a desire on the part of society to commit suicide by means of alcohol poison" (Moore 1897,p.3). He felt that this institution must stand for use rather than abuse and that it fulfilled legitimate needs which it alone could supply. The problem of these establishments is that the more uncommon negative characteristics have been declared universal. Although one has to guard against overglorifying the public drinking houses, there is no gain either in
adopting an extreme negative stance. Research studies reviewed here are those from English speaking countries; the intention is not to portray an over indulgence among these communities nor is it to reveal neglect of this area by other communities. The explanation is simple; availability of material and familiarity with the language in the studies governed this decision.

Although there is some overlapping in the themes of analysis, the research studies on drinking establishments focus primarily on the following topics:

1. public drinking establishment typologies
2. public drinking establishment patron characteristics
3. purposes of public drinking establishments, and
4. 'gender emancipation'

Studies under topic (4) are particularly concerned with women workers in public drinking places. For heuristic and classificatory purposes representative studies will be discussed within the above framework. Studies by Schmidt and Lotter (1974) "The Shebeen in an Urban Bantu Community", Nelson (1977) on "Dependent and Independent Female Household Heads in Mathare Valley" and Roebuck and Frese (1976) "The Rendezvous", a case study of an after-hours club, will be discussed further, as they are particular and unique. These are much closer to the subject of this study and the last two greatly influenced the direction of my research.

2.3 **Typologies of Public Drinking Places**

Several dimensions have been adopted in establishing typologies of drinking places. Macrory (1950) and Clinard (1962) based their typologies of public drinking places mainly on the function, ecological location, type of patronage and physical structure. Macrory, in his study of the role and functions of the tavern in the community in 1950,
supports the necessity for such a base to dispel the stereotypes that are associated with taverns and which often portray them in uncomplimentary terms. Both Macrory and Clinard have similar typologies. Macrory hypothesises that taverns can be divided into types with distinguishing characteristics as to location, physical structure, type of patronage and function. In the light of these characteristics he proceeds to analyse five types of establishments; these are the skid row taverns, downtown bars and cocktail lounges, drink-and-dine taverns, night clubs and roadhouses and neighbourhood taverns. The skid row taverns are generally located in the "tenderloin" areas near a city's central business sections. Although the main activity in these establishments is to provide cheap liquor, they are also sites for gambling and soliciting for prostitution. The main distinguishing characteristic of skid row is its locality. However, since gambling and prostitution are not difficult to find in other types of public drinking places, the skid row gambling and prostitution is differentiated from that of other kindred establishments by type, negotiation and amount of money involved. Where heterosexual interaction takes place in an environment that encourages sociability and unseriousness, 'affairs' are bound to occur. Only a certain type of person would patronise the skid row tavern. The downtown bars and cocktail lounges are situated in business and shopping areas. These cater mostly for the transient white-collar patrons who come in to have a drink and to discuss business matters. There are few regular patrons and the characteristics that often accompany 'regular patronage' are absent, for example setting norms and territorial imperatives and the forming of close relationships. Drink-and-dine establishments are found in either the central business area or near the city limits along major highways. Most of the patrons are businessmen who come to transact business deals. However, the primary drawing card here is not the drinks per se but the good food and music. Night clubs and roadhouses are generally situated
in the amusement centre of the city, or on the main highway just beyond
the city limits. These establishments cater for couples out to have a
good time at weekends. The main activities here are enjoying fine food,
dancing, listening to the orchestra and watching floor shows. (Macrory
1950 and 1952). Lastly, Macrory discusses the **neighbourhood tavern**.
According to him these are more numerous than the other types and can be
delineated into four subtypes, distinguished by their location; rural,
village, suburban and city taverns. (Macrory 1950, Ibid. p. 382) The
distinguishing characteristic of these establishments is their location
and type of patronage which makes it easy to have four neat subtypes.
Neighbourhood tavern is one of the most important, if not the most
important, of all tavern types. All these neighbourhood taverns function
as places for people to relax and converse and to get away from the
drudgery of work. Most of the patrons are local regulars who are well
acquainted with one another, the owner, the bartender and other
employees.

Gottlieb utilised similar criteria as Macrory and Clinard to
differentiate the neighbourhood tavern from the cocktail lounge. The
lounge, which is located in the commercial area, caters for a transient
clientele who do not form such a cohesive group as the former. The
cocktail lounge provides a bar, booths, television and, in some cases,
professional performers (Gottlieb 1957). The primary emphasis in this
establishment is on serving drinks to a heterogeneous group of patrons
during the early afternoon and evening. On the other hand, the tavern, a
product of the neighbourhood, caters for individuals with similar
backgrounds who do things together in an organised fashion, in and
outside the tavern setting. Gottlieb's findings are corroborated by the
writer in her observation of some of the shebeens which catered for
people from the same departments or organisation, for example University
lecturers living in Maseru had their own special drinking place; and even men working in the market tended to frequent certain shebeens and not others. The same pattern was observed among non-workers or men waiting to be recruited by the mining agencies. The neighbourhood taverns became centres of voluntary association enforcing group norms and organising group action. Taverns are located in residential areas of the city; the principal drinks are draught beer and whiskey. For the entertainment of patrons there is usually television and perhaps a game or two, for example pin ball. The English pub has some of these characteristics with the patronage of the pub being governed by the locality and its population. Thus some pubs close to the University may cater for a student population. Sometimes these may be further subdivided into law student pubs and so on. Gottlieb further points out that there is variation within each type and that there are marginal establishments of both cocktail lounge and neighbourhood tavern.

Cavan criticised Gottlieb and Clinard's typologies in her book *Liquor Licence*. Her criticism is that much of the behaviour which they described cuts across all the types they distinguished. She continues her criticism by claiming that ecological location and the characteristics of the patrons may not be the most important variables for differentiating the uses of public drinking places (Cavan 1966). She developed a typology based on the primary uses to which the establishment is put by those who patronise it. Consequently, she came out with the following types: the convenience bar, the nightspot, the market-place bar and the home territory bar.

It is obvious from the term chosen that the convenience bar is a place where the patrons kill time, or rest between courses of activities. This type of establishment provides an activity that is only an adjunct to the
daily round of activity a patron might undertake. The patron is provided with a minor course of action that may be brief or prolonged in duration, unplanned or routine. Describing the typical patron behaviour there, Cavan writes: "Either singly or in the company of others, they enter order and, once the drink is consumed, typically leave". (ibid.p.145) She describes them as convenience bars because they happen to be conveniently placed inadvertently near the initial site of entertainment, for example, Coliseum restaurant, theatre or somebody's house. Patrons may drop by the convenience bar en route home after work to unwind from their daily routine, or to extend the activities of a night out beyond the time which was originally planned. This particular contention has been found not to be valid in a study of an after-hours club undertaken by Roebuck and Frese (1976), where they found that the club can, at any given time, be used by one or more patrons either as a convenience bar, nightspot setting, market-place bar, or home territory bar.

Cavan's nightspot provides programmed entertainment. Patrons attend the nightspot setting, usually on a couple basis, to watch the show. The physical arrangement of furniture does not allow much opportunity for milling around. This structured setting and controlled behaviour means that interaction among those unacquainted and those not attending the performance together is minimal (Cavan 1966,p.156-157).

The marketplace bar is primarily used as a setting for exchange or trading in various goods and services such as sex, drugs, gambling or stolen merchandise. The dealers are not usually connected with the running of the establishment. The bar is merely a physical setting where varied kinds of transactions may transpire, some legal and some illegal. Furthermore, this bar provides a locale where strangers with many different interests may interact and dally with one another without a commitment beyond the here-and-now. But the home territory bars are
conceived of, and used, as if they were private retreats for special
groups. Patrons who are referred to as habitués, attend on a frequent
basis and share one or more characteristics of a common identity, such as
ethnic group, social class, occupational group, sex, or criminality, etc.
The more homogeneous the collectivity of patrons, the less open the bar
is to outsiders. Outsiders are limited in terms of privileges accorded
to habitués (e.g. cashing a cheque, using the phone and even acceptance
for sociability). The patrons act as if the bar 'belongs to them'.
These characteristics were also observed by Roebuck and Frese (1976), who
noted that procedures of entry in an after-hour club were elaborate and
ritualistic and most guest members came in the company of regulars. The
management and the regulars make outsiders feel very uncomfortable. The
outsiders may be discriminated against in terms of services, insulted or
excluded from conversation. In contrast, home territory bars are
camouflaged and hard to find - some are even unmarked. Likewise, after-
hours clubs are camouflaged and unmarked because they are illegal.

A number of writers argue that all public drinking places are of
'questionable moral order' (Cavan 1966, Macrory 1952, Maspero 1917,
Harrison 1971). The historical characterisation of what goes on in them
defines these places as 'marginal if not disrespectful' (Cavan
1966,p.23). Added to this are the legal statutes that govern these
establishments as regards, for example, age restrictions, opening times
and beverage and food limitations. Public drinking places are often
perceived as risky places where all sorts of untoward, rowdy, illegal and
lascivious behaviour is likely to occur among intoxicated people.

Although bar typologies demonstrate differences among public drinking
places, they also reveal common trans situational features. All are
'unserious' configurations, provide liquor, and are of a questionable
moral order in the eyes of at least some members of the community. These features are demonstrated throughout the world of public drinking places. In her discussion of this point, Cavan documents the fact that historical characterization of public drinking places and legal statutes governing them is derived from the belief that control is imperative (Cavan 1966).

2.4 Characteristics of Patrons

There are a number of studies on drinking places that cater for patrons with certain common special characteristics like homeless men (Archard 1975), street corner patrons (Hannerz 1969) and alcoholics (Dinitz 1951). There are studies that have also examined characteristics of patrons of ordinary or normal public drinking establishments. In an attempt to assess the correlation between occupational groups and tavern patronage, Macrory (1952) used attitudes towards taverns as a tool. The aim of establishing patron characteristics was to find out whether people who patronised public drinking places were 'the dregs of society' only. If so, then the negative attitudes towards public drinking places could be explained.

Mass Observation (1943) revealed that pubs were patronised by law abiding citizens as well as those who are not well thought of. Harrison (1973) also found that the locality of the pub greatly determined the kind of patronage. Pubs were concentrated around commercial centres in London; in the one mile of Whitechapel Road from Commercial Street to Stepney Green, there were, in 1899, no less than forty-eight drinking places. This geographic distribution meant working men were more likely to patronise public drinking places.

While analysing the characteristics of both tavern patrons and non-patrons in Dane County, Macrory found that 62% of the people patronised taverns. Of these, 75% were men (Macrory 1952). He also found that 80%
of his respondents agreed with the statement that the tavern was diametrically opposed to some of the most important values of contemporary American life, for example, children and the home. He assigned ideal type characteristics of the patron with the most favourable and the least favourable attitudes towards taverns. The professional proprietor group, Catholics, infrequent or non-churchgoers, those with college education, the youngest and the unmarried were more tolerant towards taverns than were farmers, Lutherans, less educated, regular churchgoers and married fathers with children twenty years of age or over (Macrory, 1952).

Twelve years later, Clark, using the same methodology as Macrory (1950) found only small differences in tolerance towards taverns (Clark, 1966). He divided his respondents into white-collar and blue-collar occupations, finding little difference between the groups with respect to tavern patronage, and he concluded that such places drew patrons from all strata of society. Roebuck and Spray (1967) found that the occupations of the male patrons were primarily in the professional, managerial, official or proprietary category. The women were primarily employed as secretaries, clerks, college students, professionals and cocktail hostesses. In a later study, Roebuck and Frese found that patrons were drawn from all occupational and non-occupational groups (1976). Likewise, Clark (1983) found that patrons of British pubs were drawn from all walks of life.

All studies cited above showed that men patronise public drinking places more frequently than women, even though women are more tolerant of these establishments than men. Furthermore, public drinking places draw their patronage from all occupational groups.

The patrons of public drinking places vary in social and personal
characteristics and they frequent different types of drinking places. Many are conventional people, without criminal, delinquent or deviant backgrounds.

2.5 Functions of Public Drinking Places

The Mass Observation group (1943) remarked that of "the social institutions that mould men's lives between home and work in an industrial town...the pub has more buildings, holds more people, takes more of their time and money than church, cinema, dance hall and political organisations put together" (op cit, p.19). They drew up a list of things people do in pubs; and activities associated with the pub, both pleasurable, ceremonial and businesslike activities.

The literature discloses that public drinking places provide a variety of voluntary, time-out, 'unserious' behaviour settings that vary in milieu as well as in regard to behaviour taking place there. Although the setting is 'unserious' some of the activities therein are very serious, for example, business transactions, which have been noted by many researchers.

Although patrons approach public drinking places with a variety of behavioural expectations, three behavioural expectations were found to be transsituational for all these establishments:

1) sociability
2) playing
3) drinking (Roebuck and Frese, 1976)

Contrary to commonly held beliefs, it appears that drinking per se is not the primary interest for most patrons of public drinking places. The relationship between the pub and the working man's place of employment or residence led to the view of this establishment as a working man's club, or what the French termed "masculine republic" (Harrison 1973, p.172). It
is believed that a working man needs a place for relaxation, leisure and a place that would provide for collective experience and protection from the loneliness and strangeness of town life. Macrory asked tavern patrons "Why do people go to taverns?" He received the following responses: "for social reasons", "relaxation", "entertainment", "mixing with your 'neighbours'", "social reasons mainly: seeing the gang, playing a little cards, or shuffleboard, to joke, tell stories, or meet people" (Macrory 1952,p.630-636). Although these are quoted from Macrory's study, they are similar to responses found in other studies. Proprietors of public drinking places gave similar answers. Moore states that 'a saloon is a social centre' (Moore 1897). He further explains that a saloon "transforms the individual into a socius, where there is no other transforming power. It unites the many ones into a common whole which we call society and it stands for this union amid conditions which would render it impossible".(Ibid,p.3)

Other than drinking, it appears that there are four chief functions for the public drinking place:-

(a) as a meeting place where social relationships with other people can be established

(b) as a place for recreation, such as games

(c) as a place to talk over personal problems with the bar keeper or other and

(d) a place of relaxation and stepping out of reality (Roebuck and Frese 1976, Clark 1966, Harrison 1971). Cavan concluded that public drinking places, as one of the voluntary 'unserious' behaviour settings, serve as places removed from the daily round of everyday life where conventional behaviour may be temporarily suspended (Cavan 19:1966,p.49).

It would appear that among the working class and the lower income groups, public drinking places play a major role in recreation and
leisure activities. It has been pointed out that working class people rarely meet each other in their homes for social activities the way that middle class people do. Therefore working class people meet their friends in public drinking places, where they can talk as 'man to man' (Smith 1983). A drink is only a price of admission into the society and so, for most patrons, drink becomes inseparably connected with social activities, relaxation and pleasure. As Clinard puts it, "to have a drink in a tavern actually means 'let's talk and play a game or two' in much the same way that 'let's play bridge' often means 'let us get together and visit'" (Clinard 1962, p. 279). The literature appears to have concentrated on masculine needs; the explanation for this could be simply that there are more male patrons than women patrons. Or it might be a reflection of different norms governing sociability among women's social networks which often stem from contacts made with neighbours or through their children.

Smith's caution to the researcher is that the proposition that the public drinking house was predominantly the domain of the working class should not necessarily imply too much about contemporary usage of such an ubiquitous establishment, especially when there is evidence to suggest that there is little proportionate difference in 'visiting the pub' amongst various socio-economic groups (Smith 1983). This is evident in most of the studies even those dealing with unlicensed establishments.

Harrison argues that these establishments provide a machinery by which a newcomer to the urban industrial centre, who is without a stable kin group and well defined function, can establish social networks and learn some of the new social values (Harrison 1971). In the absence of a corporate kin group to provide stability, permanence, formal structure and well defined functions, public drinking houses fill these gaps (Field, 1962).
Public drinking houses appear to provide one regular setting for time-out periods that is less restricted than is the case with many other unserious settings. They are sometimes set up to give the impression of an ever-continuing, sociable, playtime atmosphere, for example, lighting in the premises. However, unserious settings form a part of the wider social order, since they are officially controlled temporally and spatially within the context of the wider social order. For example, the activities of unserious settings are scheduled to begin and end within the daily round of more serious behaviour. Expressive sexual behaviour at an after-hour office cocktail party is not permitted at the office during normal working hours. Further differentials in social class, ethnicity, age, life style, sex, religion, occupation are among other variables which predispose different types of people to seek out different types of unserious setting (Roebuck and Frese 1976). We find that the behaviour of people is, therefore, somewhat constrained to mesh with the ongoing activities and to conform to ground rules obtaining therein.

2.6 Literature on Drinking Places in Africa

In an earlier chapter it was pointed out that the phenomenon of unlicensed drinking places is not peculiar to Lesotho. Indeed, it is a common phenomenon throughout the African continent. I had access to literature on east and southern African establishments. Added to these, there are studies of the government controlled beer halls or beer gardens of Southern Africa. In some way the latter influences the tenacity of the unlicensed drinking places. The beer halls are associated with racial discrimination and African oppression while unlicensed drinking places are found mostly in African residential areas and express solidarity and comradeship. In 1976 the Soweto children imposed a ban on
the sale of alcohol and burnt and destroyed a great number of the municipal beer halls and bottle stores, but were less ruthless with shebeens (Mzamane; The Children of Soweto 1982 and Brooks and Brickhill Whirlwind after the Storm 1980).

There are very few studies from the region and therefore a number of issues relating to public drinking places are not covered. However, I found at least four studies on legal and six on unlicensed establishments. These provided comparison and insight into how these establishments co-exist or why there should be such a state of affairs. I could not locate any studies of Western type establishments in the region; for example, on bars or clubs. This in itself is significant, either scholars are so biased as to conclude or concur with government that the trouble spots are of indigenous origin, or they believe there are no major differences between bars in Africa and bars in other parts of the world.

In east and southern Africa, liquor and drinking establishments are sensitive political and economic issues. Because of this the review of the literature was not easy as one had to keep in check one's own bias to avoid being swept along with the tide. Where a study is undertaken by a government sponsored agency, one is painfully aware of the ethical dilemmas prevailing in such circumstances. For whose benefit was the study being done? What questions were being asked? Could the study reinforce government policies of segregation and contempt for the indigenous population? Was it to expose the 'assumed weakness' of the indigenous peoples? How much objective freedom did the researcher have? How did the people being studied perceive the study? Some of these disquieting issues and reservations were raised by Wolcott (1975) in his study of Zimbabwe beer gardens. In a much earlier work by Hellman (1934) about the difficulties experienced by a European researcher in Southern
Africa, she had this to say: "unpleasantness of some kind is anticipated from European contacts" (p.53). Suspicion and hostility are common and since inhabitants find it hard to believe that a European investigator could be dissociated from the main stream of European policies (ibid), the respondents are likely to phrase their responses in the light of these relationships. (Hellmann 1934). It is unfortunate that the only study of shebeens in the region was done through a government sponsored organisation (The South African Human Science Research Centre: HSRC) (1974). Hellman (1934) and Longmore (1968) examined, on a more independent basis, the importance of illicit beer brewing among urban African communities, which in effect relates to studies of shebeens.

The political and economic sensitivity and importance of alcoholic beverages and drinking places, licensed or otherwise, is well described by van Onselen (1976) in his critical appraisal of "The Randlords and Rotgut 1886 - 1903". In this study he shows how, through the years, alcohol was a distinct aid in proletarianising African peasants and reducing militancy and resistance towards African domination by the Europeans. The randlords (mine owners) exploited the 'partial weakness' of the African for alcohol to procure a labouring population from the African communities. Although the mine-owners were aware that alcohol was not an unqualified blessing and the self-appointed vigilantes raised vehement objections to supplying liquor to Africans, there developed an economic marriage of convenience between the liquor suppliers and the mining capitalists. This led van Onselen to conclude that 'in all systems of capitalism, but especially colonial regimes, alcohol has more to do with profits than priests and is concerned with money rather than morality' (op.cit.p.85).

To this one could add the work of Schatzberg (1980). In this study Schatzberg sets out to demonstrate the importance of beer in the
political and economic configuration of Lisala (Zaire). He goes even further and examines the politics of price control as it pertains to the bars and *buées* in Lisala, emphasizing the interaction between commercial and political spheres. From the systems perspective which he uses for his analysis, he came to the conclusion that beer is of political and economic importance in Lisala.

While these studies share similar conclusions to works from other parts of the world there are two distinct features that set them apart. Where the study examines 'illegal' brewing and selling (1), women become the centre of attention with regard to their role and status and the economic pay-offs from such undertakings. On the other hand, where the research concern is the municipal beer hall or beer garden, more attention is paid to the implications of alcohol usages for the African and the rationale for local authorities to establish such drinking places. The latter studies, as has already been indicated, highlight the importance of liquor in the political and economic spheres in some African countries. Spradley and Mann's (1975) study of the Cocktail Waitress bears some resemblance to the first type of African studies. They examine female/male relationships, as well as patterns of male dominance in social interaction, and show how these are linked to more general issues in societal studies. Among areas explored are: division of labour in a bar, social structure, joking relationships, territorial imperatives and use of fair and foul language. The main point that comes out of these studies is the role of women in today's society, and the manner in which female/male roles are interlocked.

Wolcott examined Zimbabwean beer gardens from an integrative and functional perspective (Wolcott 1974). He alludes to segregation only in passing. Yet for this region the integrative as well as the segregative characteristics of public drinking places are important. Europeans and
Asians do not patronise beer gardens, thus the inhabitants are denied the opportunities that public drinking places are said to facilitate; that of fostering sociability across different groups. From these perspectives Wolcott discusses the beer garden using frequently cited anthropological hypotheses about drinking.

1. Horton's hypothesis is that the primary function of alcoholic beverages in all societies is the reduction of anxiety (1943).

2. Lemert's hypothesis is that drinking serves as a vehicle for social integration and a symbol of social solidarity (1954).

3. Lemert's alternative hypothesis is that drinking is an institutionalized behaviour pattern operating relatively autonomously and is only tenuously related to other aspects of culture (1956). That is, drinking and drunkenness may be expressions not only of culture patterns but of collective behaviour, symbolic protest, individual demoralization, situational controls and social interaction (1965).

4. Field's hypothesis is that excessive drinking is determined by the absence of corporate kin groups characterised by stability, permanence, formal structure and well defined functions which provide a control over heavy drinking that is not available to societies with informal or less well defined kinship systems (1962).

5. Child, Bacon and Barry's hypothesis is that drinking or drunkenness or both are frequent in preliterate societies which produce a high degree of conflict about dependence and independence (1965).

6. Grave's hypothesis, dealing specifically with North American Indian migrants to the city, is that migrants who have a personal goal structure least in line with urban opportunities will experience the greatest psychological conflict about remaining in the city, and will therefore drink the heaviest (1970).

The study does not make any distinctions between liquor drinking and
public drinking places. Thus, in discussing functions, those of the setting and those of the commodity are interspersed. The main thrust of his thesis is that beer gardens function in a variety of ways to integrate urban life in the face of powerful disruptive forces, uncertainty regarding political developments, moving in and out of cities and great variation in economic status. Thus the beer garden serves as a meeting place for those that have and those that have not who may share culture or circumstances or both. 'Some talk about them, some ignore them and some attempt to drown them'. (op.cit.p.220).

A number of people writing about alcohol drinking and drinking places often point out the dysfunctional aspects of public drinking places. They often argue that most Africans complain about their poverty, yet they spend a great deal of money on drink, and worse still they drink in 'shebeens' where prices are sometimes higher. Orwell in 1937 tried to answer the question about the hopelessly poor of England and how they used their inadequate income on gambling and football pools. They sometimes spend it on beer, sometimes on sugar, tea and white bread instead of on wholesome food. He pointed out that in times of extreme poverty people try to make things tolerable. He wrote "But they do not necessarily lower their standards by cutting out luxuries and concentrating on necessities; more often it is the other way about - the more natural way, if you come to think of it...and above all there is gambling, the cheapest of all luxuries. Even people on the verge of starvation can buy a few days of hope (something to live for as they claim) by having a penny on a sweepstake" (Orwell 1937, p.83). He further wrote that "the ordinary being would sooner starve than live on brown bread and raw carrots, and the peculiar evil is this, that, the less money you have, the less inclined you feel to spend it on wholesome food. When you are unemployed, which is to say you are underfed,
harrassed, bored, miserable, you don't want to eat dull wholesome food; you want something a little bit 'tasty'" (p.80). If traditionally the African relaxed in celebration, now he found less occasion to celebrate. The receipt of his weekly or monthly pay marked only a momentary respite in his unending round of immediate problems, all of which served to emphasize the futility of his endeavours (Wolcott (1974,p.75).

2.7 Types of Shebeens

When prohibition was abolished in 1962, government expected that shebeens would disappear, but this did not happen. In spite of the danger of prosecution to which owners and clients are exposed and the high prices of liquor in the shebeen, 'thousands of shebeens with ten thousands of clients' are found in the urban areas of South Africa. The belief that abolition would spell the demise of the shebeen was commonly held in the region and all governments have been proved wrong in this assumption. The shebeen proprietors and clients were in continual conflict with the authorities. Since contacts between Africans and Europeans in South Africa are confined mainly to economic and legal spheres, this continued feud over shebeens does not improve relations. Hellmann was to write that she feared that a criminal population was being nurtured with the prohibition of shebeens. Also, this did nothing to improve African/European relations. Africans realize that they are economically exploited by Europeans, and when they take initiative to improve their lot, the Europeans continue to repress them. For the African, arrest and conviction for shebeening carries no social stigma; without this, legal prohibition is not likely to succeed (Hellmann 1934).

It is not, as is often believed, the dregs of society who patronise shebeens. Lotter, having found that a definite social stratification existed in the Soweto shebeen universe, also found that such
stratification coincided with the aspiration of specific socio-economic groups within the community (Lotter, 1981). This conforms with Smith's thesis that 'different categories of drinking houses...are historically related to different kinds of users and usages' (1983, p.30). Lotter and Schmidt came up with five categories which they could have termed typologies. They found that, once a patron has found friends with common views and life style, he then patronises a shebeen of his choice indulging in his favourite pastimes - conversation, playing cards or just listening to music.

The first category in this classification is what Lotter and Schmidt termed a high-class shebeen. These are run on sophisticated lines by men or women. Some shebeens employ smart, attractive female waitresses. The clientele is comprised mainly of members of the high income group. One finds professional patrons - doctors, lawyers - and sometimes affluent members of the underworld. Like all shebeens, they are a subsetting of the family house, but often a special room is set aside. There is, sometimes, a high wall or fence with a locked gate, from the outside looking no different to the house next door. Privacy is provided. Inside, the room or rooms are well furnished with deep-pile wall to wall carpeting and a built-in counter. Typical characteristics of this type of shebeen are dim lights and soft classical jazz emitted from an expensive hi-fi. The refrigerator is an essential. Usually only European liquor is available and clients often demand, and get, the more expensive brands. Profitability is difficult to determine but, if the proprietor's material possessions are any indication, then it is pretty high.

The second category is what they call the "middle class" shebeen. It is similar to the high class shebeen but might lack some of the more luxurious trappings. It caters mainly for the middle socio-economic
The rooms are nevertheless well furnished: a radiogram instead of a hi-fi set; there might be less carpeting and less stocks of the exotic brands of liquor but it has more gin, vodka, brandy and beer. Sales may be between four or six dozen bottles of spirit and 200 bottles of beer per week. Lotter and Schmidt also claim there is a third category of shebeen which specializes in weekend trade, selling one brand of spirits, one brand of beer and limited quantities of municipal brewed sorghum beer. They further claim that a majority of shebeens fall into this category. In such a shebeen the price of liquor plays an important role in determining the clientele and the shebeener needs every cent she can get to make ends meet. They do not elaborate on the manner in which prices determine the clientele and there is no indication of the patron type. One can only deduce that it must be mainly patronised by a working class and labouring class clientele, as most middle class and upper class clientele prefer European liquor.

The fourth category deals exclusively in African beer bought from the municipality or brewed at home. These shebeens are patronised by the labouring class who invariably move on to them after the closing time of the beer halls. Here we observe similarities to the American after-hour club, to which patrons not anxious to end their relaxation move on to after licensed premises close. The price of liquor is usually double that paid in beer halls. This raises the question as to why patrons are willing to pay double the price. Is it just to lengthen drinking time, kill themselves, blow their meagre wages or is there something else that the shebeen provides?

The last category, which is much in the minority, is that which sells concoctions. It is stated that both the Africans and the authorities regard these shebeens as undesirable. Further, they claim that this type
of shebeen is a 'drinking den' which is a source of most of the unpleasantness in the township. Such shebeens tend to be frequented by thugs and women of low moral character. They cater for their taste by selling cheap liquor and concoctions made from a number of ingredients. They are often used as meeting places for criminals and as clearing houses for stolen goods. It is only in this category that Lotter and Schmidt mention stolen goods. This is challengeable as, during my research, I found that such transactions do take place right across the five categories; the difference is the type and cost of the commodities being sold. The fact that prosperous underworld characters patronise category one shebeens indicates that that is where they too get their customers - at their shebeen. They could not possibly sell stolen cars, hi-fi sets and other modern household equipment in category five shebeens; nobody could afford them.

In all these categories the shebeener has to be a gracious hostess; an alert and sympathetic listener to the needs and troubles of her customers, a good conversationalist and an accurate cashier. These are also the qualities that most public drinking patrons expect of the proprietor (Macrory 1952 and Harrison 1971). Further, she needs to have a good memory for names and faces. Most women who run shebeens are unattached; divorcees, widows or spinsters or sometimes a young woman keeping house for several men. Although European liquor is available to Africans, there are still restrictions as to the amount of liquor an individual may take in South Africa.

The General Law Amendment Act No. 7 of 1968 stipulates that an individual may only have a maximum of two gallons of liquor. This restriction makes it difficult to run a European liquor shebeen. Therefore a surreptitious and ingenious business of running spirits from discount liquor supermarkets is proving to be highly profitable. It is
run by men who are often referred to as 'kings'. Their operation is almost like wholesaler/retailer dealings, a second time around. Each usually serves a string of shebeens that buy from him at prices slightly lower than that of the municipal bottle store. Sometimes he may even have a fifty per cent share in sales of a given shebeen. These men deal in large quantities of liquor. A court case in Johannesburg once revealed a Pimville operator having 4,000 cases of beer, 1,400 bottles of brandy, 700 bottles of gin and many other assorted types of liquor. When he was asked why by the presiding magistrate, he told the court that he intended 'having a party' (op.cit.p.7).

Although most of this discussion has centred around African residential areas and African patrons, other communities in South Africa have shebeens and do sometimes visit shebeens in African residential areas. This is at great risk, since the law prohibits any social mixing. However, shebeens are much more common among the Africans, the old custom of sharing liquor from one container having been retained to the extent that European liquor in shebeens is sold in bottles never in tots. The bottle is placed in the middle of the table and dispensed into glasses. The African drinker belongs to a fraternity of drinkers; he is gregarious, sociable and his sharing of liquor in a group significantly influences his tastes. Should a member in a group switch to or discover a new drink, he is likely to change the whole group's taste.

Although shebeen patrons drink in the company of women, they do not approve of wives drinking and hardly ever ask their wives to accompany them to a shebeen. Most shebeens are within easy reach of home. This was an important factor during prohibition, since proximity to a shebeen decreased the chances of one being apprehended by the police.
2.8 Clientele of Unlicensed Drinking Places

From the foregoing, Lotter and Schmidt's research has proved incorrect the often held assumption that shebeens cater for the dregs of society. They found that the percentage of people patronising shebeens was fifty-three per cent of the people who drink alcoholic beverages. The patrons tended to be younger, earn more and have a higher level of education than the non-clients. According to these two writers, it would appear that the 'modernised' element in the African community is better represented among the shebeen patrons than among the non-clients. The proportion might be higher if we consider the possibility of under-reporting which could be high in South Africa because of the government's ruthless measures to curb shebeen growth. For fear of arrest or of being implicated, shebeen patrons might respond in the negative.

Most respondents reported that they preferred drinking at the shebeen because these are within easy reach of the patron's home; there being no closing or opening hours, this flexibility allows patrons to utilize shebeens at times convenient to them. No formal dress was required and liquor could be obtained on credit. From the above one can conclude that the patrons are regular and not transient and that the characteristics prevailing in home territory taverns would also be apparent here.

It is interesting to note that the South African government is under great pains to have shebeens licensed. The legislation to license shebeens was introduced in 1982 and yet by August 1983 the Soweto Today (1983) reported that no licenses had been granted to any of the approximately 4,500 shebeens in Soweto. Speaking to some shebeen owners and patrons in Durban, it appeared that there were ambivalent views about the licensing of shebeens. How this new status would affect other activities in the shebeen could not be assessed (2). Also the inability of governments to understand the nature and essence of the shebeen -
which also gave rise to the expectation that the shebeen would disappear after the abolition of prohibition - can be attributed to the fact that often the shebeen is regarded as a 'place of alcohol consumption only'.

To regard the shebeen as a 'place where there is drinking' would be tantamount to regarding the Korean tea room as 'a place where tea is drunk' and disregard the important facts, that it serves as a place of rest and recreation, as a meeting place for small businessmen and an information centre (Lewis 1970).

2.9 **Comparison of the Functions of Unlicensed Drinking Places to those of other Public Drinking Places**

The functions of the shebeen have been found not to differ very much from those of other places where alcohol beverages are consumed. The shebeen offers liquor, rest and relaxation, conviviality, good company, women (sometimes to admire, sometimes for sex), food, music, dancing, cannabis and gambling (Lotter and Schmidt 1974). Of the English pub the following was said, "The pub is the home away from home, the place where the downcast goes to drown his sorrow but, mostly where people go for social life and entertainment, often in agreeable surroundings which they lack at home" (Mass Observation 1943). It would appear that other places of entertainment - community halls, cinemas, sport facilities - do not meet all requirements. De Kock also pointed out that shebeens might have latent functions in politics and other fields. While lower class shebeens may fulfill an integrational function of urban migrants, the upper class shebeen may alleviate feelings of social deprivation (De Kock 1977, pp.4-7). The major difference between Western European studies (with a few exceptions) and African studies is the recognition of the importance of the proprietor in the public drinking place.

2.10 **Women in Liquor Brewing and Selling**

Nelson did not study drinking places per se but tried to understand the
terms of exchange of goods and services. In this way she examined male-female relationships in a transactional sense. In her analysis she endeavoured to go beyond the explanation of various forms of social relations between men and women solely in terms of their function for capital or for the reproduction of capitalist relations of production. She examined these relationships from what she called the "relations of everyday life". This stemmed from a belief that relations between men and women are not immutable and fixed (Nelson 1977).

In economic production it has been found that men have greater access to social resources, whether they be food, political position or land. They also command a privileged position in terms of the command of labour, particularly women's labour. Thus she tried to find out whether women going into illicit brewing in search of independence from male dominance were only substituting one form of male dependence for another. Nelson's and other studies at this level on liquor trade found that liquor brewing had definite economic benefits for women and provided a large number of them with employment possibilities. Hellmann (1934), Longmore (1968), Mayer (1979) and Schmidt (1980).

Shebeening as an economic activity could not be doubted. Haggblade (1982) found that sorghum beer accounts for the great percentage of the alcohol consumed in Botswana and home brewed sorghum beer forms a significant part of that market. The following table shows an overview of the Botswana liquor markets in 1981:-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beverage</th>
<th>Annual Sales</th>
<th>Value of Annual Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>000 litres</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Beer</td>
<td>13,441</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wines - natural</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- fortified</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khadi (home-brewed spirit)</td>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum beer</td>
<td>93,725</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- factory beer</td>
<td>(28,725)</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- home brew</td>
<td>(65,000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>34,478</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P40.7</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Haggblade 1982,p.2)

We can see that home brewed liquor forms the largest component of Botswana's liquor market. Sorghum beer accounts for 70% of the volume of liquor sold and for 31% of consumer expenditure on alcohol. Home brews account for 69% of sorghum beer sold, while factory brews account for the remaining 31%. This position would not differ much in countries in the East and Southern African regions. One can safely assume that similar conditions would prevail in most countries. Lesotho has no factory brewed sorghum beer, therefore the quantities of home brewed sorghum beer might even be higher.

Mahir's (1981) study of beer, sorghum and women of the Upper Volta draws attention to the large amount of monetary transactions and profits within the traditional sector of farming community in that country. More specifically he deals with production, distribution and pricing of local beer. His study brings out the effects beer making has on farming as well as how it relates to contemporary developments in other spheres of social and economic life in Upper Volta.
An advertising slogan familiar to American audiences provides an apt description of beer not only in American life but in the African, British and European lives: 'Beer Belongs'.

From the literature review we can conclude that the social and the alcohol motives cannot be separated. The alcohol motive itself is primarily social; it is a motive that seeks to break down barriers between men, to release them from the strains of everyday life in the feeling of identification with a group.

2.11 Sociability and Play

Sociability and merry traffic seem to be the characteristics of public drinking places. The literature disclosed that sociability and playtime activities were the main behavioural expectations sought in these establishments. Because of these revelations, the theories of sociability and play were examined within the drinking establishments and also in a wider context. One is aware of the few studies that examine the drinking places from this perspective: Cavan (1966), Roebuck and Frese (1976) and Smith (1983) are the few studies that were accessible to the researcher which have this perspective. Such a review would greatly enable me to understand and analyse some of these aspects of the shebeens which I am studying. The literature does not make clear cut distinctions between sociability and play or leisure; the two are highly interrelated. However, it would be more profitable to discuss them separately.

2.11.1 Sociability Theory

Roebuck and Frese (1976) discuss sociability under four categories. I decided to use these categories:

(1) public drinking place sociability
(2) contemporary sociability
(3) classical sociability, and
(4) party sociability

2.11.2 Public Drinking Place Sociability

Earlier discussions on literature pointed out that studies on public drinking places emphasised that the primary purpose of these establishments is sociability, and not just drinking per se. Cavan has made a great contribution in making sociability and bar behaviour the key focuses for her study, Cavan (1966). As a result of this intensive work, a great deal of discussion will be drawn from her studies.

Cavan studied approximately one hundred bars in San Francisco. Her work empirically supports many of Simmel's observations on sociability, Simmel (1965), and many of Huizinga's notations on play, Huizinga (1950). She noted that public drinking places are open regions where all those who are there have a right to engage others, those that are known and those that are not, in conversational interaction. They, on the other hand, must be open to sociability overtures. It is difficult for patrons to sustain any one social encounter for long without interruption, because sociability is the most general rule in all public drinking places regardless of the class of patrons or type of drinking place, and also because all individuals and groups are open to encounters at any time. There are several ways in which encounters may be terminated. These include creating a lull in the conversation, breaking eye contact or moving away from the encounter site or using a phrase like 'see you later' or 'see you around'.

Patrons are social equals in public drinking places and little difference is paid to status outside the immediate sociability setting and the prior relationships of patrons (Cavan 1966). The content of the conversation was affected by the character of bar encounters which are open and of short duration. These characteristics restricted
conversation content to casual and general topics such as the weather, sports, music and gossip. Also, conversational restrictions were reinforced by the fact that the individual's external and personal attributes are excluded from the sociability setting. Bar talk was found to be inconsequential small talk and this facilitated interaction even between strangers.

Cavan also examined several rituals common to all public drinking settings; treating - by means of standing drinks for members in one's groups - greetings and farewells. She observed that the latitudes of behaviour are much greater in such settings than in more serious settings. Patrons can engage in a number of what would be considered improper acts without sanctions, for example quarrelling, belching, showing a great deal of over familiarity, sleeping, singing along with the music or in counter to the music and displaying marked signs of intoxication. Some patrons may exploit standing behaviour patterns for personal gain (ibid.p.6-7). A customer may ostensibly engage in sociability at the bar while surreptitiously making a deal to buy contraband goods or drugs. In this way the patron is conforming to the expected overt pattern of behaviour at the same time as he is engaging in covert activity that may be inappropriate if manifested openly. The kinds of improprieties that can be engaged in and the way the resulting consequences are treated vary with the setting.

2.11.2 Contemporary Sociability

Watson (1958), Riesman, Potter and Watson (1966) and Riesman et al (1966) developed models for contrasting different sociability interactions. Watson compares and contrasts sociable interaction with work-oriented and familial interaction on the basis of five criteria:-

1. the way in which each type of interaction relates the individual to society
2. the individual needs that each type of interaction fulfils
3. that aspect of the self an individual invests in the various types of interaction
4. the style of conversation prevalent in these different types of interaction
5. the subject matter of conversation in the three types of interaction (Watson 1958, refined by Roebuck and Frese 1976, p.219)

The three types of interaction provide for the normative integration of the individual with society, give the individual a chance to show his unique personal quality and allows him to dramatise that part of himself which overlaps with the culture of his group. These interaction settings also provide for conversation that centres around non-routine and special interests of the individual members. This involves a conversational style which emphasizes the novelty and entertainment value of topics under discussion.

She also examines factors affecting interaction in sociability: she identifies three types of pressures:
(a) historical and social class determinants of sociability
(b) the psychological determinant, and
(c) the structural properties.

2.11.2(i) Historical and Class Pressures

The major point here is the democratisation of the sociability setting. Historical sociability is related to leisure time. It was therefore no accident that, when the institution of leisure reached its highest development during feudal times, sociability also reached its 'purest form' (Veblen 1899). Since the 'golden age' both leisure time and sociability have been extended to the middle and lower classes. This has resulted in some changes in the character of sociability. This change is not only due to the increased amount of leisure but also to the emphasis on social and personal security (Watson 1958, p.272).
Because the newcomers to leisure activity still lack adequately developed, novel and interesting social resources, their conversations are reduced to routine and reiterative chatter. Furthermore, since friends interact more frequently than was the case in the past, this makes it more difficult for the parties to be novel, entertaining and dramatic at social gatherings; the same jokes are repeated.

2.11.2(ii) Psychological Determinants

Sociability from a psychological perspective is an anxiety reducing mechanism and a way of enhancing one's self-esteem. As a defence mechanism, people in a sociability group direct their aggressive tendencies through projection and scapegoating. The group may project hostility and frustration to their environment or to some other group. Sociable conversation then revolves around the outrageous acts of outsiders, thereby implicitly reaffirming the virtues of the in-group members. In this way, in-group members are able to reduce their anxieties (Roebuck and Frese 1976). Sociability performs an important function in providing acceptable explanations for aspects of the external world which are puzzling or threatening (Watson 1958, p.275). Above all, these social explanations of reality serve to maximise sociable interaction, because sociability deals with playful fantasy or the distorting of reality. Lastly, in a sociability setting the individual is often able to obtain reassurances from others about his/her own reality and importance, in this way boosting the individual's identity and self worth (Watson 1958, p.276).

2.11.2(iii) Structural Determinants

Marked contrast exists between work-oriented, familial interaction and sociable interaction due to structural properties that influence these sociability settings. Work-oriented interaction is achievement and task oriented, whilst the familial interaction is dull and routine. Sociability settings such as parties get their structural properties from
the guest list which defines the party as an in-group of people distinguishing themselves from the vast group of outsiders not invited. This tends to give small parties primary group qualities (Riesman, Potter and Watson 1966).

2.11.3 Classical Sociability

Simmel's essay on sociability seems to be the benchmark for many students of sociability theory (Simmel 1965). Although Simmel asserts that sociability interaction arises on the basis of certain drives or for the sake of certain purposes, it has no objective purpose beyond the success of the moment, the here and now. It exists for its own sake outside reality. To borrow his words..."it is the nature of sociability to free concrete interactions from any reality and to erect its airy realm according to the form-laws of these relations which come to move in themselves and to recognize no purpose extraneous to them". (Ibid.p.55).

He further points out that sociability is a symbol of life in the flux of a fascicle and happy play; yet it is at the same time a symbol of life (his emphasis).

The main principle of sociability is that each individual should offer the maximum of the social values of joy, relief and liveliness. In the process of providing these, the actors need to divest themselves of attributes external to the setting, such as social status, wealth, fame and other exceptional capabilities. The suspension of inner self also extends to certain external behaviour, for example to mode of dress. All these expectations are directed at optimising sociability for all members in a social setting. The optimization points to the democratic nature of sociability.

Simmel concluded that, in real life situations, equality and democracy among actors in a social setting is difficult if not well nigh impossible
to attain. Even when actors are from the same social class inequality prevails. As a result, democracy is something that is played on even among members of the same social class. He extends the postulation of "playing at democracy" by pointing out that it is possible only in an artificial world, where differentiating characteristics are ignored or considered irrelevant, for the sociability setting at that point in time.

Another important aspect of sociability is the character of its conversation, which requires a great deal of tact on the part of the actors because the external and internal personal elements must be left out. Watson, comparing conversation in serious and non-serious settings, found out that in the former situation conversational content and the topic of discussion is paramount. Whilst in the latter conversation becomes merely a medium through which lively exchange of speech unfolds (Watson 1958). Sociable intercourse might appear superficial, yet in its very distance from reality it may 'more completely, consistently and realistically reveal the deepest nature of reality than would any attempt at grasping it more directly' (Simmel 1965, p.56).

The freedom found in a sociability setting allows actors to initiate or terminate encounters at will. But sociability would not be fulfilling for many serious persons if it only provided mere escape from reality or momentary suspension of "life's seriousness". The more serious person derives a feeling of liberation and relief from sociability (Simmel 1965).

2.11.4 Play Theory

Huizinga regards play as a significant, special form of social function. He also regards play's manifold concrete forms as a social construction. (Huizinga 1980). Realising the complexities of play, he points out that play defies description because it is a primacy element of human experience (Ibid.). All species in the animal kingdom play.
Recognising that it is not easy to define play, Huizinga posited six characteristics, some of which are props to play in general and others to social play in particular. These are freedom, stepping out of reality, space and time, circumscription, order, permanency and secrecy. He argues that first and foremost play is voluntary and he has been supported in this postulation by Riesman, Potter and Watson who noted that modern party structure advanced 'spontaneity and freedom of movement' (Riesman, Potter and Watson 1966, p.336). In the same manner, Riezler pointed out that 'play may be the triumph of freedom' (1941, p.517). Cavan documented the freedom of verbal expression and movement in public drinking places (1966). She noted that public drinking places are a setting where people can engage in various self-indulgences and in other acts which would otherwise be regarded as improper. There is greater freedom in the latitude of permissible behaviour in these establishments. It is this freedom that has often led to the association of public drinking places with prostitution and licentiousness.

Huizinga's second characteristic of play is that of stepping out of reality, which makes play unreal and extraordinary. It is stepping out of reality into an activity which has a disposition of its own. Although the consciousness of play is 'only pretend', it does not prevent it from being conducted with all seriousness and with serious consequences for its future. The seriousness of outcomes has been noted even in games that would not be normally considered as play; for example there is an American play called 'Playing the Dozens'. (Hassler 1954), in the Diary of a Self-made Convict, described 'playing the dozens' in the following manner:

'There is a 'game' some of the boys 'play' in here called 'playing the dozens'. I have no idea what the origin of the name can be but the idea is that the participants try to make each other mad by hurling epithets.
The first one to lose his temper loses the game. I listened in on one and it stood my hair on end. The 'players' vie with each other in combining the most obscene and insulting accusations against not only the opponent himself but anyone for whose reputation he might conceivably have some regard. Mothers, sisters, wives, children all come under the ban and the players explore possibilities of degraded behaviour, generally sexual, of the most revealing nature.

Quite frequently, both players lose their tempers and actual fights are not unknown. Occasionally, a man will 'play the dozens' with someone who has not experienced it before and in such a case the consequences can be serious. One man was knifed not so long ago in just such an affair'. (p.126-27).

Further comparisons in this area can be found in the following works: Dollard's 'The Dozens'; 'Dialect of Insult', Bateson (1939) and Mead's discussion on teasing in Balinese Character (1942), Graves' work on cursing contests in India in 'The Future of Swearing' (1936) or Kochman's 'Rapping' in the Black Ghetto (1969) and going back to the dozens Berdie's 'Playing the Dozens' (1947). One can only have such latitudes in 'play'. One shudders to think what the consequences of such activity would be in a real life setting.

Space and time make play to be distinctive from the ordinary life setting both in locality and duration. We find that playing takes place within certain limits of time and place. Goffman (1961) in 'Fun and Games' commented on Bateson's observation that '...games place a frame around a space of immediate events, determine the type of sense that will be accorded everything within the frame' (Bateson, 1955:p.44). In the same manner as in sociability, external characteristics are not allowed to influence behaviour in an encounter and these are treated as irrelevant. Riezler comments that: 'No chains of causes and effects,
means and ends are supposed to connect the isolated area of play with the real world or ordinary life. If there are still such chains they are disregarded*. (1941:p.511)

In every play setting, order is supposed to prevail. Nelson (1954) points out that any kind of play generates its own morality and values. Seeing that rules are enforced and order maintained is the responsibility of each player. The rules of the game may not be the same as those the outside world would like to impose. Further, Huizinga (1980) noted that, as people meet frequently in play settings, they come to expect that their play setting and the play will always continue. There are many play groups that have become semi-permanent as a result of this expectation. For example, tea parties for the spouses of ambassadors, group sex parties, card groups, 'swinging' couples, just to mention a few of a semi-permanent nature. There are some whose actors' life style revolves around the play activity like the jet set, or the many groups within adolescent culture such as the cats, skin heads or punks, CI in Lesotho and many others. Finestone's description of 'cats' provides a good example of a social type which rejects work and familial routines in favour of a more expressive, present oriented life style in play activity (Finestone 1957). He succinctly states that the "concept of play indicates accurately the type of expressive social movement which receives its embodiment in the cat". (Ibid:p.8)

Secrecy is the last characteristic that Huizinga attributes to play. During prohibition a number of public drinking places were secret. In the contemporary period most of the illicit brewing and selling in such countries as Kenya and South Africa is secret. The charm of play is enhanced by the secrecy character. The secrecy of play is most vividly expressed in "dressing up". Hellman describes how a shebeen in South Africa solved their visibility problem: beer containers are sunk into
the ground for storage. During raids, police find these underground stores and destroy them but, as ownership of these drums cannot be proved, there can be no conviction made. This method was commonly used and alleyways were literally subterranean cellars. (Hellman 1934)

2.12 Informal Sector

Most of the studies discussed under the sociability and play theory relate to one section of actors in public drinking places, namely the patrons. The literature on beer brewing and selling reveals this activity as a 'cottage industry' and the main motive for women entering this sector is monetary gain. Even the Local Authority provides beer halls and beer gardens to get money for welfare programmes. (Wolcott 1974)

The informal sector has remained an elusive concept, defined in such terms as particular sections of economic activities using traditional technology, as those activities organised on a small as opposed to a large scale or as those producing goods for local rather than for national or international markets. (Banerjee 1981). Employment studies sponsored by the International Labour Organisation during the last decade showed that, outside officially recognised pockets of formal employment, the remaining labour force was neither idle nor unemployed but was engaged in a variety of occupations and activities in widely diverse working conditions (International Labour Organisation ILO 1972 and 1979). This co-existence of the capitalist type of employment along with other amorphous kinds of work has been labelled the formal informal sector dichotomy (Banerjee 1981) and has been accepted as a general characteristic of the developing economies.

The contrasting of the informal with the formal sector is very common in
these studies. The informal sector is viewed on the one hand as an unproductive and stagnant sector serving as a refuge for the urban unemployed and as a receiving house for urban migrants (Emmerij 1974 : p. 261). On the other hand it is viewed as dynamic, efficient and profit making, full of hidden but creative entrepreneurial potential (ILO 1972). According to the latter view, the negative characteristics cited in the first definition are a consequence of the economic and political structure which favours the formal sector. Setai views the informal sector 'as a heterogeneous, multi-dimensional or multi-layered phenomena, each layer possessing different attributes and therefore playing unique economic roles' (Setai, 1983 : p. 5). Thus informal sector activities cover a broad spectrum, from tutoring in foreign languages and music to dishwashing. Such a definite stratification is related to the skills of the participants, the middle class educated women taking the better paid jobs and the working class and 'marginal' women with few skills taking the lower status jobs. Because of the elusiveness of the informal sector concept it has increasingly represented a testing ground for theories in analysing wage generating endeavours.

2.12(i) Theories of the Informal Sector

An individualistic theoretical perspective assumes that the types of jobs taken, the sex distribution and the size of the informal labour sector are a result of random individual decision. Such an approach centres on the way in which women weigh their options and decide on a certain course of action (Arizpe 1977). This approach is limited as it can only show us why certain women choose a particular kind of job, but it cannot explain why women as a group tend to enter the informal sector rather than formal employment. The answers go beyond looking at the individual as the unit analysis. They are likely to be found in understanding how capitalistic developments affect women's economic situation. Informal sector development appears to depend on the socio-
economic policies of each country, on the economic structures within which it functions and on its relation with other sectors in the economy (Setai 1953). Above all, the participation in the formal sector and its implications in terms of women's subordination is determined by a complex inter-relationship of economic and semi-economic factors (Moser 1981).

Another theory is based on gender segregation. Women predominate at the lower end of the labour market where they cluster in specific sectors. Here they are segregated vertically on the one hand on the basis of gender hierarchy into the lower paid, least skilled and minor managerial work and, on the other hand, horizontally within particular sectors, especially those occupations which are an extension into the market of household based enterprise (Moser, 1974). For the woman, age, presence or absence of spouse and the extent of access to capital are identified as important in relation to inclusion or exclusion from different activities (Ibid.).

According to marginality theory: a population that has been displaced from agriculture finds it difficult to find a place in the modern sector because of the nature of industrial economies (Beneria 1981). Large numbers of people have no possibility of finding formal employment in developing countries because industrial employment has not expanded at an adequate rate in proportion to the increase in available labour. Thus, while waiting to enter the formal sector, the marginal population resort to self-employment. Recent studies tend to cast doubts on some aspects of this theory. Arizpe (1977:p.27) argues that marginality has always existed even in capitalist economies. Full employment in some countries has not prevented street vendors from pursuing their activities (Vilma Faria 1976 in Arizpe). This being so, the marginals must be fulfilling a specific function within the economy.
The concept of the informal sector has been subjected to much criticism (Moser 1978, Bromley and Gerry, 1979, Pons, 1980). Nevertheless, it is not my intention at this juncture to enter into that debate; rather I decided to put forward the theories as they appear in the literature.

One other theory related to this area is that connected with entrepreneurship. The uAchievement is the main characteristic for success in self-employment. According to the uAchievement argument, the difference in the rate at which different groups produce effective entrepreneurs is explained in terms of the difference in the level of the uAchievement content of their culture. The uAchievement is an internalised achievement drive, it is a psychological 'need' which may be felt in a high or low degree in a given individual. An individual's level of uAchievement is partly a function of the cultural milieu in which he is raised and partly a function of the developmental experience which are more or less peculiar to him.

Informal sectors are highly absorbent and provide occupational niches for a large number of less skilled labour. They also provide an avenue for upward social mobility, opening opportunities for the unskilled to move into non-manual occupations. Lastly, this upward mobility seems to depend less on formal education than does upward mobility through white-collar positions.

From the literature, we could conclude that the social and alcoholic motives cannot be disentangled. The alcoholic motive itself is primarily social; it is a motive that seeks to break down barriers between people, to release them from the strains of everyday life in the feeling of identification with a group.
2.13 Problems Associated with Research in Public Drinking Places

2.13(ii) Ambivalence and Value Conflicts

Ambivalence towards public drinking places occurs when the attitude towards their presence in the community is one of conflict between co-existing value structures (Pittman 1967). While patrons of public drinking houses hold positive attitudes towards such places — as convenient, useful establishments which are morally acceptable — they are also aware of condemnation by the majority of society, or part of it, which may want to put an end to them (Hannerz 1969). It is not uncommon to find attitudes veering from the extremes of asceticism and hedonism in the same community. Meyerson refers to such extremes as 'social ambivalence', a condition which limits the development of stable attitudes (Meyerson, 1940). The conflict has been directed to both those who consume alcohol and use public drinking places and those who run these places (Macrory 1959). Because of these conflicts, researchers in this field have tended either to emphasise the negative aspects or over-emphasise the positive aspects; this gives a skewed conclusion which makes the task of reviewing the literature difficult.

These ambivalent attitudes also apply to alcohol itself. Brewing is one of the most universal activities; some anthropologists have suggested that it provides a more universal aspect of culture than does the preparation of bread (Braidwood et al 1955). But, despite this widespread and natural occurrence, alcohol is subjected to rules and regulations more than any other food or drink. There are both written and unwritten laws and, in both cases, these laws are often characterised by ambivalence and strong emotional judgments (Cavan 1966 and Macrory 1950). We also find that alcohol drinking occupies a place that is both sacred and profane. On the one hand, it is associated with sacred rites, funerals and a variety of other special occasions of friendship,
solidarity and success. Yet, on the other hand, it is associated with an assortment of social evils, crime, destitution, vice, licentiousness, mental and physical illness, and is said to be destructive of the moral fibre of society as a whole.

To overcome problems that might ensue when one is studying such an institution, Dinitz urges that drinking places, like any other going concern or institution, should not be appraised on the basis of their abuses. Public drinking houses do function for certain reasons and in a certain way and with certain concomitant abuses (Dinitz 1951). By taking a value position on either side, one obscures rather than clarifies the underlying issues. Therefore, the solution lies not in persuasive, histrionic or subtle descriptions but in unbiased research, taking all these into full consideration.

2.13(ii) Stereotyping

Public drinking houses are often stereotyped. These stereotyped attitudes appear to be based on a combination of "hearsay, half-truths, misinformation, ignorance, prejudice, propaganda and biased and inadequate data" (Clinard, 1962:p.275-276). This stereotyping is also derived from a restricted belief that the only function of a public drinking house is drinking, licentiousness, gambling, etc. Another problem is that patrons of public drinking houses are often cited in alcoholism, broken homes, neglected children, motorway accidents, juvenile delinquency, crime and prostitution. Investigations have shown that not all public places fit the stereotype but that there are different types of drinking places, each with certain peculiar characteristics (Dinitz, 1951:p.74-81, Gottlieb, 1957:p.550-562, and Macrory, 1950:p.366-370 and 1952:p.625-930 and Archard 1975). Studies of particular drinking groups, for example those of skid row or ghetto, have shown that different drinking places have certain patronage and certain
functions and specific relation to the larger community. (Archard 1975 and Hannerz 1969).

Stereotyping of these places impedes the understanding of the myriad motives and uses associated with them. The stereotyping gives public drinking places a precarious status and the pattern of behaviour taken for granted as occurring in these settings is viewed not only as the antithesis of general standards of propriety in polite society, but also as destructive of the moral fibre of society.

Summary

Most of the studies on public drinking places are based on the belief that any institution which is so widely patronised must be fulfilling a certain function in society. The studies have been descriptive, historical or have concentrated on trying to find the function of these establishments and the reason for their existence. It is not surprising that these places appear to be providing a setting in which people meet, become acquainted and enjoy social relationships. The patrons of public drinking places participate actively to make the life of these establishments what it is; they are free to act, think and talk as they wish. The informality of public drinking places allows one to be unserious and provides for more laxity and freedom.

The literature also shows progression from an orientation that was heavily influenced by the medico-psychological theories of pathology, disorganisation and disease to one of viewing drinking and public drinking places as one of the ordinary societal institutions which are subject to use and abuse. The direction of these studies is on leisure, interaction, small groups, social networks and other aspects of everyday life which this institution facilitates. Interest is also spreading to unlicensed and illicit places (Nelson 1977, Connell 1965 and Roebuck and
Frese 1976). Connell's study was on the Irish peasantry and poteen brewing and its importance in the lives of the Irish. Roebuck and Frese's study was of an afterhours club in America where an assortment of deviant and non-deviant types met to socialise, negotiate and entertain one another after the legal closing hours of public drinking places. If these places were so detrimental to society, they might not have survived the harassment to which they have been subjected throughout their history.

The studies do not underestimate the possible harm these places can cause. However, in order to tackle the negative characteristics, it is necessary to understand the degree to which these institutions are important to society. A great deal of misunderstanding led South Africa to a series of ineffective and costly programmes in an attempt to reduce the number of shebeens (Lotter and Schmidt 1974).

Any analysis of a public drinking place takes us beyond the boundaries of sociology into economics, politics and leisure activities. This is indicative of the complexity of the institution.

2.14 Implications for the Study of the Shebeens

The literature review has revealed a number of trans situational standing behaviour patterns but the recurring characteristics were those of unseriousness, sociability and play, although, for the management, it is serious business. Throughout the recurring characteristics had the following implications for the shebeen:

1. Stepping out of reality into an unserious world and a world of play where behaviour is important only for that setting and consequential for the here and now.

2. Freedom in initiating or ending interaction and freedom in the kind of behaviour permissible.
3. Actors are supposed to be on equal footing and thus accessible and open to encounters.

4. Behaviour is limited in space and time.

5. Actors also expect that their play will endure over time.

6. Some order is expected, although in unlicensed establishments order might be more problematic than in conventional settings. Order is generated by actors in the way they present themselves routinely.

7. There is an element of fugitiveness and secrecy, setting their place and membership apart.

8. Endeavour to establish a certain identity.

9. Revivalism, in which there is an effort to bring back something that has been lost.

The literature revealed variations in use of which the ecological location, characteristics of patrons, the goods and services available, the space–time properties, rhetoric and history, the sociability and play were found to be the most general. The South African study has provided a beginning to the indication of variations. The question is whether these variations would occur in a country where the history is one of an egalitarian, unified community.
NOTES

1. In South Africa shebeens are illegal and the law enforcement agencies know what is expected of them. However, the South African government has decided to grant these establishments licences. Up to the end of 1983 only a few had applied for licences. Kenya is the only African country where home brewing is illegal.

2. Personal contact with some shebeen owners in Durban, April 1983.

3. Achievement is an abbreviation of "need to achieve" (McClelland, D.L., Atkinson, J.A., Clark, R.A. and Lowell, E.L., 1953, The Achievement Motive, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts). McClelland et al performed a number of tests on different cultural groups to establish factors that could influence achievement arousal. The studies were undertaken because it was believed that economic explanations are not sufficient in themselves to explain development of certain activities. They believed that the source of change in economic systems lies outside the system itself. Hence the need for economic theory to be linked to sociological and psychological constructs if it is to be maximally useful. See also McClelland, O.C., 1961 The Achieving Society, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co. He expands the achievement motivation by defining it in terms of concern for excellence in carrying out a task as reflected in competition with the standards set out by others or by oneself and in undertaking unusual or unique activities such as those found in the informal sector.
CHAPTER 3

THEORY AND METHODS

3.1 Theory

The literature from different disciplines was an exercise in search of a theoretical framework that would enable me to best explain the shebeen phenomenon. I also had discussions with scholars in different fields who are interested in studies of alcoholic drinking and public drinking places. Throughout this exercise I was aiming for congruence between the theories and the methods selected. I also had discussions with scholars in different fields who are interested in studies of alcoholic drinking and public drinking places. One disquieting issue was what effects such a study would have on the functioning of shebeens and on shebeen owners. I was mindful of the possibility of such a study being used to the disadvantage of the researched group, especially because the shebeen is a topical issue in Southern Africa.

The need to provide deeper understanding of public drinking places arose because of worldwide increased interest in the field of alcohol and alcohol drinking since the turn of the century. In the non-medical and psychological professions, scholars from the fields of sociology, social anthropology and social history have shown greater interest than other disciplines both in the Americas and the United Kingdom. The entry of these disciplines into this area has contributed to a change in emphasis and approach. Because of their influence, ethnographic studies have developed their own approaches which can broadly be divided into:

(1) societal-cultural studies
(2) ethnographic processual studies.
Both these approaches have great appeal to social scientists because of their characteristic provision of data from the "natives" point of view (Malinowski, 1922:p.25). Ethnography is derived from anthropology. It means a 'picture' or 'case study' with culture being the main concept for consideration. (Spradley 1979). According to Malinowski, the main goal of ethnography is to grasp the actor's point of view, his relation to life, and to realise his vision of his world (Malinowski, 1922).

Since most of the literature reviewed came from Western Europe and the Americas, I am aware of the charges and bias that could be directed at indiscriminate use of ideas drawn from these cultures. Every effort has been made to control such a bias. This undertaking was made easy because I have the advantage of being familiar with the Basotho culture. Cautious researchers in alcohol and alcohol related studies are aware of the dangers of indiscriminate application of concepts and the conclusion drawn from one culture to a different cultural milieu (Heath 1976). The results of such insensitive application have often been disastrous. This state of affairs is not only peculiar to studies on drinking and public drinking places. It applies to many other areas of human and social relations studies. However, because of the peculiarities associated with liquor and liquor establishments, it is much more important to be selective. For example, drunken comportment is not necessarily defined in consensus terms in different communities. What might be considered to be an exhibition of drunken behaviour in an Anglo-Saxon community might not be so regarded in an African society because the extent to which an individual allows the effects of alcohol to stimulate expression or lower inhibition is chiefly determined by the imprint of his culture. (MacAndrew and Edgerton 1969).

Moreover, behaviour in public drinking places is governed by different
rules and expectations. It is lax; people talk a lot, sometimes making exaggerated claims, and familiarity with members of the opposite sex is much more acceptable here than in any other setting (Cavan, 1966). Nevertheless the degree to which one may be familiar with another person or in other ways intrude on people's personal space is still determined to a large extent by what one has internalised of one's cultural values (Bacon, Barry and Childs 1965). Further, the constraints on one's behaviour when one is 'too drunk to know what one is doing' are also testimony to the fact that drinking behaviour manifested and viewed as 'too drunk' in one community could be viewed as an appreciation by a guest of his host's hospitality or as a sign of manhood in another (Clay, 1848).

This rather lengthy discussion is undertaken to sensitise us to those problems inherent in studies of alcohol drinking and alcohol drinking places. Especially as the theories and methodologies available have to a large extent been developed in a different cultural context from the one to be considered. Moreover, we are concerned with behaviour in shebeens which is influenced by consumption of alcohol. Thus, although the interest is in public drinking places, certain behaviour is more prevalent in public drinking places than in any other social context. For example laxity and over-familiarity.

The review of literature produced general guidelines about my basic concern about shebeens and some of the sociological questions raised in the chapter on the nature of the problem. The studies of similar unserious, time-out settings, like bars and parties, alerted me to some transitiutional similarities and differences to examine in Shebeen United Nations and Peggie Bel Air Spot. One is conscious that researchers in these studies were looking for answers to different questions. Nelson (1966) was concerned with finding out whether illicit brewing brought
independence or a different type of dependence from that which women have experienced traditionally. Lotter and Schmidt (1975) focussed on the functions of the shebeen. Although among their questions they asked respondents for reasons for patronising shebeens, it was to compare patronage of shebeens with that of other public drinking places. Above all, Lotter and Schmidt used survey methods for their study. While this might have been suitable for their purpose, I on the other hand, need a method to explain meanings of the activities of the actors and to capture systematically the dynamic significance of that behaviour in the overall context of the empirical study.

The thrust of the study is to find out how actors in shebeens manage meanings of their actions to produce particular constructions of their behaviour and how they account for their behaviour. It focuses on the process of interaction, transaction and exchange between individuals and groups participating in a defined and cultural milieu. It was necessary for me to find an analytical orientation whose tenets fit closely to observed patterns of behaviour. The work of Spradley and Mann (1975) and Roebuck and Frese (1976) greatly influenced me in the formulation of the theoretical framework. However, the American after-hour clubs and bars have significant operational differences from those of the Lesotho shebeen. An after-hour club operates outside legally stipulated hours, while shebeens operate during and after legally stipulated hours. Thus it is not only a wish to extend the 'play time' setting but to be in the 'play time' setting at all times. The after-hour club tends to be hidden from the general public eye: while the shebeen is very conspicuous even to strangers because of the big drums in which beer is prepared or by a mountainous pile of empty liquor containers or sometimes by the flying of a white, yellow or blue flag. (See Figure 1). Lastly, after-hour clubs
are managed by men while Lesotho shebeens are, to a large extent, managed by women. In Spradley and Mann's study (1975), women occupied a subservient role.

As a result of the reflections of Roebuck and Frese (1976), Spradley (1979) and Malinowski (1922), it was necessary to understand the perceptions and negotiating strategies of the shebeen patrons and shebeen owners in order to comprehend how these institutions appear to function comfortably amid prejudices and legal pressures aimed at bringing about their demise.

My analysis draws extensively on a number of co-relational orientations of transactional analysis, symbolic interactionism, decision theory and micro-social ecology. The combination of these approaches broadens my
analysis to include the environment overt behaviour milieu, the behaviour patterns, and how the actors, through the use of symbols, communicate social meanings to one another and achieve a common definition of the situation that they themselves generate, negotiate and maintain. It has to be remembered that these places cater for a pot-pourri of actors and therefore the need for common definition is significant. Since the approaches complement each other, integration is possible. The approaches mentioned above concentrate on answering many of the same fundamental questions. The transactional approach sees values, meanings and actions as a part of an environment, all the elements of which are brought into association through the search for benefits and principles. It focuses on what takes place and how. (Kapferer 1976). Symbolic interaction sees cognitive systems, values and meanings as being created and as creating behaviour independently of such principles as benefit and rewards. (Blumer 1969). But both view interaction and the nature of the relationship thus formed as sustaining and modifying the ideas, values and meanings which have entered the process of social activity.

The social ecology/behaviour setting approach focuses much on what takes place, where it takes place and when it takes place. If we adopt the model used by McCall and Simmons (1966) in their study of identities and interactions and add the 'who' question, we then have a complete picture. In explaining their reasons for concentrating on the "where, who, what and when" factors, McCall and Simmons provided two principal reasons:

(1) that empirically they are fairly clear cut, and
(2) yet they are also of human importance to ordinary individuals.

For the purpose of studying shebeens, this is important since we have never been provided with a clear picture of shebeens and often shebeen actors are not regarded as ordinary people. An interview I had with one of the Reserve Chiefs referred to shebeen actors as "terrible people
Underlying the decision approach is the assumption that men and women are social actors who work in a structured way with more or less conscious strategies directed towards desired ends. Gould (1971) maintains that a person acts rationally when his actions are directed to a goal on the basis of the beliefs that he holds on good evidence which has been exposed to open deliberation or argument or criticism. Therefore the question of "why" can be analysed within the processes of decision-making. This further underlies a cognitive mapping by the actor on why the actor chooses to go into shebeening or to go into a shebeen. Such actions are both self-regarding and other-regarding and complement the 'who' question.

It was necessary to adopt a triangulated theory approach for this study because of the nature of the units of analysis. Namely, the patron actors, the proprietor actor and the shebeen itself. The complex nature of the units calls for an approach that would provide a wide variety of data, connect the empirical relationships in the study and facilitate full interpretation of this data (Denzin 1970). By so doing I will be able to provide a unified picture rather than a fragmented setting with different actors doing their own thing unrelated to the total setting.

By drawing selectively from these theoretical frames of reference: the transactional approach, (Kapferer 1976, Barth 1966, Salisbury 1976), symbolic interactionism (Mead 1934), Goffman 1959 and 1971, Blumer 1969, McCall and Simmons 1966), the rational decision approach, (Gould 1971, Heath 1976) and microsocial ecology (Barker 1968, Gump 1979, Cavan 1966, Moos 1974 and Ball 1973), I combined the four levels of analysis in order to understand the decision process that the actors engage in - behaviour in the shebeen, social meanings in the setting, transactions of actors
within that universe and the relation of shebeens to the wider society. A brief comment will now be made on the relevance of each.

3.1.1 Transactional Approach

Belshaw (1965) argues that all enduring social relations involve transactions which have an exchange characteristic. Spiegel elaborates this assertion by pointing out that parts of these social relations are not 'out there' in a prefabricated universe waiting for us to find them and unwrap them but they are, so to speak, made 'at home' by man's own process of action. They arise out of man's transaction with and within his universe (Spiegel 1971:p.38). In this case, I observed that bo Mamosali used their traditionally learnt skills and ascribed position as food preparers to improve their social status.

If a field is transactional, all its parts are interdependent and should be conceived as being in functional relation to each other in an inclusive system of relationship. A 'system' is a word derived from a combination of Greek roots which literally means "that which stands (or falls) together". This does not mean that the whole is greater than the parts; rather the whole is a way of exhibiting the functional relation between parts and providing better understanding of whatever part is selected as a mutually contingent aspect of the whole (Barth 1966). Barth views a transaction as a process of interaction or bargaining relating to the observed outcome of what occurs during that process. (Ibid.1966). He defines transactional behaviour as a sequence of interaction systematically governed by reciprocity. In this way transactions can be viewed as subject to the rules of strategy put forward by decision models. Behaviour which can be viewed as transactional covers a broad spectrum: communication of information; sharing of ideas; passage of goods or services. The stress is on the
constructive process of meaning in a way in which relationships and the activities pursued in reference to them are defined. This facilitates the analysis of management of meaning by shebeen actors and the social, economic and political significance of the process surrounding the decision about patronising or running a shebeen. It is important to note that meaning sets, understanding and actions are not immutable but fluid.

3.1.2 Symbolic Interaction Approach

Blumer (1969) maintains that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. By things he includes physical objects such as 'categories of human beings, chairs, etc.', social objects like 'activities of others' and abstract objects such as 'situations he encounters in his daily life' (Blumer 1969:p.66). He continues by arguing that in symbolic interaction the meaning of things arises from the social interaction of individuals with one another and that social meanings 'are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters' (Ibid.p.67). It is against this background that a further scrutiny is made of the meanings that are socially created, maintained and negotiated as actors in the shebeen present, maintain and constantly operate a common definition of a dynamic and rapidly changing scene. The concern is with the underlying meanings of both the covert and overt patterns of behaviour that may be displayed.

Blumer's (1969) thesis that we should place social interaction at the centre of the stage and consider the meaning of the actors' definition of his situation conforms with that of Ball's (1972). This is especially so when Ball views the extension of the behaviour setting to include the initiation, maintenance and alteration of the actors' selves and identities. This led to the adoption of several symbolic interaction features in the analysis of our shebeens. This orientation encompasses
both the symbolic nature of the actors in the setting and the rhetoric
employed in the setting. Ball defines rhetoric as..."a vocabulary of
specific purpose: that is to say...a limited set of symbols functioning
to communicate a particular set of meanings, directed and organised
toward the representation of a specific image or impression. Such
vocabularies are not only verbal but also include visual symbols such as
objects, gestures, emblems and the like" (Ball 1972:p.170). The symbolic
nature of human interaction is incorporated in the study of shebeens.
Further, by employing Goffman's (1982) concept of 'front' and its
constituent characteristics, the presentational strategies of the
shebeens are examined, mainly in relation to how bo Mamosali use these
strategies to present to the actors the type of setting they desire to
project.

To complete this approach, Roebuck and Frese (1976) adopted five
assumptions. These are:

1. That behaviour is self-directed and observable at the symbolic and
   the interactional level.
2. That actors (both patrons and staff) have a social definition of the
   situation that is evidenced in their conduct.
3. That actors in a behaviour setting develop and possess
   rationalisations for their behaviour in order to make that behaviour
   presentable to both themselves and others.
4. That actors through their behaviour in a setting constantly present
   that setting to one another as the type of setting they take it to
   be.
5. That actors in a behaviour setting have concrete interests at hand
   (Roebuck and Frese 1976:p.56).
3.1.3 Microsocial Ecology

Researchers have divided behaviour settings into three components:
(a) the non-behavioural factors of milieu and time
(b) standing patterns of behaviour, and
(c) the relationship or degree of fit (synomorphy) between the non-behavioural factors and the standing behaviour patterns. (Wicker 1979).

Space or delineated area, physical objects, subsettings within the general space and temporal sequences at which events occur form parts of non-behavioural factors which are often included for analysis (Roebuck and Frese 1976). The standing behaviour patterns cover overt, stable, recurring action and activities taken for granted which occur within the behaviour setting. The importance of the relationship between non-behavioural and behavioural aspects is best described by Gump (1974) when he states that "The milieu and the standing patterns of behaviour, through the synomorphy that weds them, form the final environment unit. The designer does not design the environment unit, only its milieu. His influence is limited to that which his milieu, through synomorphy, contributes to the final standing pattern of behaviour and milieu unit" (1974:p.270).

Further to this, Baker (1968) has noted other factors that affect the synomorphy between behaviour and milieu. For example, milieu can affect standing patterns of behaviour among other things through physiognomic perception, thus an open flat yard encourages people to run around, while a small enclosed area fosters social grouping. However much the milieu moulds behaviour to its shape or quality, there are other non-milieu factors which affect the setting's final milieu behaviour. For example, the setting tends to select persons and vice versa, or there could be a desire of people to act like others. Thus, although the milieu has significant influence upon the behaviour pattern, it is far from being
exclusive. (Gump, 1974). Ball argues that the microecology should include not only the "...relationship between microspace social actors and their space related conduct and experience within it..." (Ball 1973:p.30) but also "themselves and identities that are generated, maintained or altered". I concur with these arguments because the complex nature of shebeens necessitates an approach that would provide holistic understanding of the establishments.

3.1.4 Decision-making Approach

Blau (1964) extends analysis of the behaviour setting to include problems of choice. Since there is a broad spectrum of human behaviour and choices, Blau makes use of Weber's distinction between 'wertrational' and 'zweckrational' in emphasising personal gain. There are many kinds of decision which can be regarded as rational. However, Blau focuses on the circumstances which may lead individuals to value an activity in which they are engaged for its intrinsic qualities in addition to the benefits it might bring. Jarvis views man:

'...as in pursuit of certain goals and aims within a framework of mutual, social, psychological and ethical circumstances. These circumstances constitute both means of achieving his aims and constraints on that achievement. A man's conscious or unconscious appraisal of how he can achieve his aims might be called sorting out the logic of the situation he is in'. (Jarvis 1972:4)

This view seems to be operational among shebeen patron actors in their choice of leisure setting and also among proprietor actors in their choice of means of earning a living.

3.1.5 Focus of the Study

In this study individuals are not viewed as wholly independent social actors. Although new structures emerge as a result of interaction between individuals, these structures acquire new properties which are not located in individuals but which feed back into and influence individual behaviour. With this assumption, as a point of departure, I
decided to point out the main areas of attention. By using the combination of the four approaches and extracting their complementary aspects, the following features were concentrated upon to provide us with a better understanding of the shebeen. Behaviour setting has been used as the unit of observation.

1. Transactions and the matrix under which they are accomplished; subsettings, locales and scenes in shebeens.

2. Rhetorical and time-space properties: the location of the shebeens, the arrangement of the physical structures, subsetting, furniture and storage of liquor, the type of image that the management wishes to create, present and maintain to the patrons. Further, an analysis of synomorphy between the social milieu and on-going activities.

3. Admission procedures to different subsettings in the behaviour setting; screening processes, biographical and personal front requirements.

4. Spontaneous cultural identification; oral poetry, songs, dancing and musical instruments played in the shebeen. From these there is a great deal of biographical data, and data about emotion and frustration release.

5. Standing behaviour patterns. These include overt and covert activities which are recurring and taken for granted as part of the expected activity in the setting and the degree of fit between them and the milieu.

6. Management skills of bo Mamosali; how they handle problem situations, mechanisms of resolving disputes and decision making.

7. Kinds of disruptive behaviour tolerated; permissible breaking of society's norms in the setting. Under what circumstances sanctions are applied, major violations of these.

8. Territorial imperatives: how actors use the different subsettings;
whether subsettings impose any constraints on actors' behaviour; what influences the choice of a certain subsetting for a particular activity; how hidden agendas are utilised in the setting by actors.

9. The form and content of encounters of actors in the setting, for example, initiation, termination and subject matter.

10. Redefinition of male-female roles relating to the organisation of the setting.

11. Typologies of actors; identifying characteristics like language used, jargon, liquor preference, wearing apparel and its significance, identities and perspectives.

12. Type of liquor provided and the degree of appropriateness to the social milieu.

13. Perspectives of the wider society and how shebeens relate to these perspectives.

14. Economic structures; redistribution of income and exploitation.

3.2 Methodology

In order to address a variety of theoretical and substantive questions raised in the previous section, a number of methods were utilized (triangulation). It was necessary to triangulate in order to obtain data relating to the different phases of my research, to different settings and different participants. Denzin (1970) recommends the use of different methods, different times, persons and situations in any study. Similar points of view have been expressed by other researchers. To cite a few: Lazarsfeld (1972) "Forword to the English edition of Marienthal"; Stacey, Balstone, Ball and Murcolt (1975) and Burgess (1982). It will be noted from the previous section that a multiple theory approach has been adopted, which Denzin refers to as theoretical triangulation (1970). Because of this it was necessary to establish theoretical congruence and research methodology. To achieve this I had to use an ethnographic
approach. Further, as the focus is on the dynamic and structural features of shebeens, an ethnographic approach would provide a comprehensive understanding of actors and activities in shebeens.

Protagonists of this approach argue that ethnography represents both a process and a product (Johnson 1978). As a product it is usually a piece of academic work which focuses on some social group. Although this piece of work has a central point, the discussion of the groups being studied often covers a lot of territory; the history, the aspects of the various environments, the physical, biological and social details of the things the group does and the beliefs they hold. Above all, this method provides for direct contact with the actors, which is more rewarding in terms of obtaining data as nearly representative of the group's character as possible. For certain groups it is better to go directly to the unconventional actors and their subculture. It is only with such a procedure that the natural context of the actors can be studied without the 'skewedness' typical of the traditional sources of data (Ball 1967). Ball describes traditional sources of data as data obtained from reports dealing with unconventional social behaviour or its organisation based on official statistics produced by various concerned agencies. It is also obtained from self reports by apprehended violators of formal conventions (Ball 1967:p.293). This study is an attempt to utilise actual direct contact with actors in their natural habitat in order to throw light on some aspect of this relatively unstudied area of social life.

For bo Mamosali, participation in an action legally perceived as deviant, namely brewing and selling liquor without a licence, is habitual; that is to say it is an activity regularly repeated on a routine businesslike basis. For the patrons, participation varies from habitual to occasional and irregular. It is not an aspect of a 'moral career'. If, on occasion, they get involved in transactions in
commodities that are of suspect origin, most of the time it is only situational and they are often members of the law abiding cultures. In the context of the shebeen, the transaction is ordinarily enacted by two kinds of actors; those habitually involved in such exchanges and those situationally deviant.

Since ethnography is not simply data collection but is rich in implicit theories of culture, society and the individual, it was felt to be the best method of choice. Three primary methodologies were triangulated: participant observation, in-depth interviewing and use of archival data. Additional supplementary and confirmatory data was drawn from shebeen proprietors in South Africa, panel discussions with individuals who are familiar with the history and the legal and social functioning of such establishments. These were Community Relations Police, historians, lawyers, chiefs and Cabinet Ministers and essays by primary school children.

Because of the complexities of the issues involved, triangulation was used in most cases, although the extent to which each method was utilised depended on the circumstances and requirements of the situation. I found triangulation helpful in that it enabled me to cross check the accuracy of data collected.

In perusing archival data, attention was paid to issues that dealt directly with premises that retailed liquor, how these were operating and attitudes of the administrations, both African and European. This method was used to get data for the history chapter which is considered important for our understanding of how shebeens came into being.

Of contemporary shebeens, conversation and activities in these establishments provided significant data. Photographs, videoed scenes
and children's essays and drawings complemented the major methods of collecting data.

The decision to opt for a direct research approach to the study of shebeens was influenced by a number of scholars who advocated participant observation as an appropriate approach when studying groups that represent a subculture that is at variance to the widely accepted norms of behaviour. Among these I can cite Cavan (1966), Ball (1966), Becker and Blanche (1960), Blumer (1969), Douglas (1970 and 1972) and Goffman (1982). Further, some of the patron members are uneducated which diminishes the possibility of having a reasonable return of questions. Above all, structured interviewing would have provided little data as most people who go to the shebeen have programmes which they may not wish to be disrupted by a non-shebeen oriented activity. A structured interview would have greatly affected the natural occurrence of activities in the shebeen.

Apart from events being transactional and interactional, Becker (1969) further points out that every event, every person, every group and every action has a history. Things get the way they are over a period of time. Thus historical data was collected as part of the multidimensional triangulation.

One other method which evolved during the participant observation process was recording oral poetry for analytical use.

The decision as to whether or not any particular activity or behaviour was to be taken as part of shebeen activity was based upon two criteria: the first was the frequency of the occurrence and second, the way it fitted into ongoing events.
3.2.1 Archival Data

Mills asserts that 'neither life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both' (1959:3). In archival perusal I was concerned primarily with data on the processes that led to the birth of shebeens, how these establishments came to being and what historical factors account for the tenacity of shebeens in the face of adversity for over a century. In other words, what are the factors that canalize and restrict the possible course of shebeens and shebeen owners. Historical process indicates that events are not static. The advantage of a processual approach is its ability to show necessary and probable interdependence that might govern the course of events (Goody 1958). It also helps in defining man's troubles through historical change and institutional contradictions (C. Wright Mills 1959). von Onselen (1976) has produced a macro-analysis of the role of alcohol in the development of European imperialism and Southern Africa capitalism and succinctly describes institutional contradictions. Furthermore, this historical analysis has brought an in-depth and broad understanding of the complex forms which were produced by the introduction of 'monetarised' liquor in the region. What is even more significant about this study, and is relevant for mine, is establishing relations in events. He relates events that took place in the region to the events that were taking place in Europe and how these affected outcomes in Southern Africa, especially for the indigenous population. Pons (1980) cites an impressive list to demonstrate the importance of systematic periodisation of history if the resultant analyses is to be used in understanding today's problems of Third World cities.

Primary data sources are British Parliamentary Papers, government dispatches, and archival material on church involvement in liquor issues. Material was drawn from the following denominations: Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC) (formerly Paris Evangelical Missionary Society), the Roman
Catholic Church (RC) and the Wesleyan Churches, documents on liquor trafficking and newspapers. I conducted interviews with selected informants of the LEC and RC top management, especially older members of the establishments, an eighty-year-old chief, a retired civil servant, who had been in the service from the early thirties, and two former District Commissioners, both of whom had worked in government during the prohibition period and after.

3.2.2 The 'Network In'

During the month of December, which was the first month of my field work, I agonised over locating the network path from myself to a shebeen that would provide any data, provided that data facilitated understanding of the shebeen setting. There was no way I could simply 'show up' at a shebeen without a good introduction. The personal risks were too frightening and I could have ended up with no data. I had a letter from the Chief allowing me to do research in the area, my University of Surrey papers and card to confirm my identity. These were not sufficient; after all, who knows about the University of Surrey in a slum area in Lesotho? Moreover, a number of people associated me with the National University of Lesotho; how could I then come to them claiming to be a student of some University they could not even pronounce? For most ordinary people in the street in Lesotho, there are only two important cities abroad, London and New York. If I had said I was at a University in one of these cities, I would have been easily placed. In fact, there were times when it was more expedient to produce my London University Library card than the University of Surrey student card. Even then I still had problems; I had overlooked one aspect in the cards - the photographs, which showed a person differently made up and attired from the one I presented in shebeens where I always wore a headscarf and traditional attire. There were moments of awkward questions as to why I
appeared different from the woman they saw on the identity card.

It took time to gain their confidence and even then there were periods when questions asked were carefully considered and answers were often abbreviated or had a heavy dose of caution. Sometimes patrons would move away as soon as they saw me approaching them. If I had been a much older woman, shabbily dressed, then I might have been ignored or indulged in my whim. But even this would have not necessarily resolved some of my problems. I had to present myself to a varied setting and endeavour to be acceptable to each subsetting. Even in shebeens that catered for the upper class and professionals, my problems of self-presentation were no fewer. In these establishments, I met people who, under ordinary circumstances, would have interacted with me as acquaintances or colleagues. Some were my former students, whom I had been teaching only eighteen months ago. How could I then be one of them under such unconventional settings where some people would not want it to be known that they were habitues. The most disconcerting situation was when it was rumoured that I must have been sacked from the University and that I had so come down in status that I had taken to shebeen crawling in Lekoeishing!

The woman who acted as my research assistant/escort greatly reduced some of these problems.

3.2.2(i) 'M'e Popie

I was able to overcome most of my difficulties in a much shorter time than I had anticipated due to my escort-cum-guard research assistant. Everybody in Maseru knows 'M'e Popie. It is unusual for a woman of her age (she is about fifty), who has children and a matronly figure, to be addressed by her childhood name. Normally, she would have been addressed as 'mother of so-and-so' (the so-and-so would have been one of he
children, usually the eldest boy - "m'a so-and-so). Being addressed by her "girlhood" name indicates great attachment, friendship and being at ease with someone albeit with some respect (since the mode of address "m'e denotes respect). The other person whom I heard being addressed by her "childhood" (or what is locally termed "girlhood" name) was the owner of Shebeen United Nations. Her presence often elicited the best behaviour and comradeship among the patrons.

Agar advises on establishing contacts outside the situation first and then going in with someone trusted and known in the area (Agar 1980). I can confirm the importance of such a step. My introduction to the area by 'm'e Popie, who commanded such wide acceptance in the community, was invaluable. She was not only an ideal bridge into the situation but was a constant companion and security. Whenever there was likely to be a difficult situation, she was quick to warn me. She always advised on our leaving but difficult situations were considered to be important aspects of the shebeen behaviour setting. They provided information; how people in a shebeen cope with a crisis, who does what, how and when. I was not always necessarily right to stay as it so happened that one day I was nearly bundled off by the police for being found in a subsetting where smoking of cannabis had been going on and a game of ma-dice had been underway. This was the only time when my University of Surrey student card, and the absence of the smell of alcohol or cannabis on my breath, helped me out of an awkward situation.

'M'e Popie was a Godsend. She had not only once owned a shebeen but had in the past patronised some of the shebeens in the area. In addition, she had worked in conventional settings throughout Maseru as a salesperson in a number of shops in town, a refectory supervisor in some of the local colleges and an auxiliary nurse in a nearby domiciliary clinic. She had also been a popular ballroom dancer. Her association
with so many establishments made her a well known figure across a broad spectrum of the members of society by the young and the old, the poor and the rich, men and women alike. When I met her she had just been made redundant from her latest post as community worker with the Catholic Relief Services.

She gave up shebeen business because she felt that the environment of a shebeen was not suitable for her young family. This concern for young family members has been expressed by other parents in the shebeen business and those not associated with shebeens. One of the children who wrote essays on their observation of shebeen life had this to say:

"The life of a shebeen child is a mixed blessing, often the negative outweighing the good... Most patrons disregard the presence of shebeen staff children in their behaviour. They believe that the morals of these children are not their responsibility. Consequently, patrons are very lax in their speech and manners. They make love overtures to all and sundry, their language is vulgar and insulting". (2:3:9/6/83) Moshe is twelve-and-a-half years old. Appendix for more essays).

This child's mother is a Mamosali.

'M'e Popie is a single parent with a very large family. This is a common characteristic of women who opt for shebeen running. She was born in Lekoeishining and had lived in that area all her life. She was an outside/insider who knew the language of the actors in shebeens and the language of the community in general.

3.2.2(ii) Meeting 'm'e Popie

It was apparent from the outset that I needed an escort or companion. Further considerations also revealed that it was not just an escort I needed but someone who would facilitate my entry into the shebeen world, somebody sufficiently well known there to command respect and attention.

At the beginning of December 1982 I went to Lekoeishining to meet a lady teacher with whom I had an appointment. Although she had once run a
shebeen, she was no longer in the business: another woman still brewed and sold liquor within the teacher's premises. On arrival at the woman's home, her family informed me that she had just gone to a friend's place. A child was immediately dispatched to go and call her. I had gone to Lekoishining in the company of my sister-in-law who was anxious to see me delivered into the hands of a trusted guardian. Typical of the Basotho etiquette, we struck up a conversation with 'm'e Popie who saw us waiting around. She was curious about my sister-in-law's presence in Lekoeishining. Soon the conversational focus became my research. After talking for some time and having drawn a blank about the other woman, 'm'e Popie offered to take me around. This turned out to be a better arrangement as 'm'e Popie had more free time than the teacher would have had once the school reopened. I was with 'm'e Popie throughout the duration of my fieldwork.

3.2.2(ii) Starting Point

The same afternoon that I met 'm'e Popie, she undertook to visit all the shebeens in the area. The purpose of this exercise was actually to locate shebeen establishments and sound out shebeen actors. Two points were to be made clear:—

(1) that she would be accompanying a research student, and

(2) that the research might entail spending days in the shebeen and asking questions about the actors' activities.

That evening we discussed 'm'e Popie's progress; how many establishments she had visited, what was the rate of business and what kind of reception she was given. The following day 'm'e Popie continued with her rounds to places she had been unable to visit the previous day. At the end of her visits we had a long discussion on the different shebeens; where they were located, possible problems of access and entry, in addition to the other three areas we had discussed the previous day. On those two days I
did a reconnaissance of Lekoeishining as a familiarisation process.

On the basis of our preliminary work, we decided to do a joint reconnaissance of all shebeens and effect introductions. The rest of December, prior to Christmas, was spent on this exercise. By the end of that period I had selected Shebeen United Nations for my study and had earmarked fourteen others for future study and comparison. As shebeens are not registered places of business, there is a possibility of missing some, especially if the usual telltale objects like mountains of empty liquor containers, beer cans, big drums used for liquor preparation and so on are not obvious. Omitting to visit a shebeen sometimes created problems because those whom we visited came to know that we had not been to other shebeens and became suspicious of my motives, demanding to know why I had picked on them.

Such an attitude is understandable considering the dubious 'legal' position of shebeens and some of the activities that take place therein which are often perceived as deviating from the general norms of behaviour by the wider society.

In my introduction I have mentioned the fact that I intended to visit all the shebeens in Lekoeishining. To the best of my knowledge, I did. Two hundred and eighty-six shebeens were visited. Word travels fast in slum areas and my movements were closely watched. In all the establishments we visited I indicated a likelihood of subsequent visits.

3.2.3 Participant Observation Interviews and Use of Tape Recorder

In participant observation my concern was mainly with collecting data for most of the aforementioned foci derived from theoretical orientations, namely transactions in the shebeen settings, rhetoric and time space properties, admission procedures, standing behaviour patterns, norms, hidden agendas, nature of encounters, role organisation,
typologies of actors, types of liquor and economic structures.

Halfway through the research period, indepth interviews were conducted with some patrons and staff. Interviews with staff were carried on outside business hours and in some cases outside the shebeen setting. The aims of the interviews were:

(a) to obtain additional data on the more invariant and stable features of the shebeen (Roebuck and Frese 1976 and Denzin 1970)

(b) to obtain data on bo Mamosali profile

(c) to assess my participant observation reconstruction of the shebeen scene using actors' information and perception of it. (Roebuck and Frese 1976), and

(d) to triangulate methodologies and data sources (Denzin 1971 on triangulation).

Towards the end of the field work, further indepth interviews were conducted in order to fill some of the gaps in the first interviews to recheck the data and also to probe deeper into issues I could not have covered without serious consequences during the first interviews. By this time I had become a fully accepted member of the shebeen and was often approached by patrons and staff for advice on personal problems; such spontaneous opportunities were used to make further inquiries.

A small number of selected residents of Lekoeishingning were interviewed to assess my reconstruction of the shebeen derived from participant observation and interviews. Other complementary methodologies used were selected members panel interviews, essays by ten-and-a-half to twelve year old school children (a senior class in a primary school in Maseru) and use of photographs. The complementary method approach yielded a more comprehensive data on the use of shebeens, interest at hand, typologies of actors, typologies of shebeens and staff profiles and provided a
comparison of perceptions of actors and that of society in general.

3.2.3.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation was chosen as a method in order 'to grasp the natives' point of view' and obtain data for the aforementioned foci. Of the four types of observer roles, namely:

(i) complete participant

(ii) participant as observer

(iii) observer as participant, and

(iv) complete observer:

participant as observer and observer as participant strategies seemed to be the two that would best provide the required data. The other two were rejected for very obvious reasons; it would not have been possible to fully participate in all roles of shebeen actors as it was pointed out that shebeens are places where the straight and the deviant congregate to socialise, negotiate and entertain one another. I do not think that being under the influence of alcohol throughout the eight months period would have yielded the data required. On the other hand, complete observer status keeps the researcher on the fringe of activity. Becker and Greer define participant observation as

"that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under the study either openly in the role of researcher (participant as observer) or covertly in some disguised role (observer as participant), observing things that happen, listening to what is said and questioning people over some length of time". (Becker and Greer 1972:102).

The two strategies afforded me an opportunity to get close to the social action yet at the same time not too close to lose conceptualisation of the research. They provided a check and balance mechanism.

The owner of the shebeen and her assistants' open acceptance of me served to enable this research mechanism. I went to the shebeen every
day of the week except on very few occasions. I would get to the shebeen early in the morning, sometimes as early as five o'clock, and stay on until late at night, about seven or eight o'clock. Departure often depended on the atmosphere in the shebeen; if it was becoming too dangerous to stay on, I would leave. Because the shebeens were close to each other, violence was not only confined to Shebeen United Nations but tended to spread around. On some occasions I stayed on until all the patrons had gone home at between ten and eleven o'clock at night: mainly on days when I had to interview staff members or discuss some of my data with staff or patrons who slept at the shebeen, acting as watchmen while being provided with a sleeping place.

Shebeen conversations provided an important source of participant observation. Initially these tended to be random and little effort was made to select persons or subject matter but, as the problems of the study became clearly defined and the nature of the shebeen setting better understood, attempts were made to direct interaction in such a way that some degree of systematic information could be gleaned from them.

As there was no restriction on my entering different behaviour subsettings in the shebeen, I was able to meet a wide variety of patron types. Note-taking was highly unacceptable; consequently the tape recorder was extensively used. The advantages of the use of a tape recorder became apparent quite early in my fieldwork. Apart from its being favoured by shebeen actors, I realised early in my fieldwork that shebeens are not places for asking questions. One enters a discussion and a question is asked and answered in discussion fashion with counter statements, pleonasm and unparliamentary language. These were all recorded and the actors enjoyed listening to the replay of their conversation, sometimes even correcting statements already made. There was no way I could have made surreptitious notes, therefore extensive and
detailed note-taking on shebeen events could only be done at home or away from the shebeen setting.

Data collected with these tools were on shebeen events within their temporal, spatial and social context; for example, impromptu singing or recital of oral poetry in the establishment. A singer could be requested to repeat a song and this gave me time to get a better recording. Note was made of who did what, where, when and with whom. Recordings of the actors' definitions and explanation of events and experiences were also made. Notes made at home supplemented the recording taken in the behaviour setting. Care was taken that in the reconstruction, the words and substance of the original conversation were retained.

The data collected were based on:

1. Participation with various actors in a variety of shebeen activities like playing cards, chatting, joking, standing a round of drinks, selling liquor, actually purchasing liquor or ingredients for making beer and sometimes doing minor jobs in brewing. In the purchase of ingredients and sale of liquor I was able to estimate the costs and profits made by bo Mamosali.

2. Observing the behaviour of actors in the different sub-settings; dancing, playing moraba-raba or madice, engaging in heterosexual encounters, romancing, eating, fighting and how bo Mamosali handled violent displays of behaviour.

3. Listening to conversation and interactive imprecations and profanity.

4. Engaging in lengthy discussions with most of the actors, sometimes giving a lift to some patrons.

3.2.3(ii) Interviewing Schedule

Five major sections covered the interviewing:
(1) biographical data
(2) identities and perspectives
(3) use of the shebeen and behaviour in the setting
(4) typology
(5) any other information given spontaneously.

The biographical data covered both specific and unstructured questions; for example, age, educational achievements, occupation, family background, marriage and family ties and companions. The identity section covered areas of role identity and self concept and self designated shebeen roles. Perspectives covered the type of lifestyle of the actors and their views of the world. Use of the shebeen as a behaviour setting covered areas of the actors' use of the shebeen, what they expected from it, the kind of people they expected to meet there and their observation of what other actors do in the shebeen. On typology, the respondents identified different categories of the shebeen actors.

Following Clinard and Quinney, categories constructed by member participants were compared to categories constructed by researchers based on observation. (Clinard and Quinney 1973).

3.2.4 Use of Photographs

Earlier in the chapter I pointed out that photographs were not included in my original repertoire. Just as the entire panorama of activities in the shebeen could not fall within visual range at any time, it was also impossible to engage every patron in conversation. In order to overcome this limitation, I felt that an audio-visual camera would be of help. Not only would I capture a wider variety of activities, I could also play the tape over and over to further pinpoint areas that needed clarification, investigation or concentration.
I discussed the possibility of using a video camera with the shebeen actors and promised that they would be able to watch themselves on a "bioscope". Thus they had some control over the data, as they did in relation to the tape recordings. This appealed to most actors. Unfortunately, the promise to play back the video tape for the actors was never fulfilled. It became impossible to find a time suitable to all patrons. It turned out that I would need a number of sessions to ensure that all actors who wanted to watch the video were given the opportunity. This was an impractical proposition as there was no video laboratory or technician who could accommodate such a request.

Then I decided in addition to use an ordinary camera. With this method the actors had the feedback they wanted, as they could see the photographs. Furthermore, those who wanted copies of photographs were given copies.

Berger and Mohr recommend the use of photographs as another way of telling us things. There are two different ways of achieving this; an ideological way which treats the positivist evidence of a photograph as if it represented the truth, and the popular and private use which cherishes photographs to substantiate a subjective feeling. Continuing their argument, they point out that photographs are a social/cultural construct, the sign language of clothes, facial expressions, bodily gestures and social manners. In other words, photographic appearances constitute a language. In using photographs I had hoped to capture some of the constructs that Berger and Mohr had enumerated. (Berger and Mohr 1982).

I am well aware of the arguments on the shortcomings of photographs, especially in the area of validity, as it is argued that the scenes can be orchestrated. In such a busy setting as a shebeen, I did not have
such an opportunity, even if I had had the inclination, which I had not.

The intention to use photographic equipment was to capture events as they occurred spontaneously. The fact that the photographs are not well focussed bears testimony to the pressure and urgency under which they were taken. The advantage of photographs is that they disclose a cross section of events which were developing at that instant.

3.2.5 Self-Definition and Social Experience in Oral Poetry

The decision to use oral poetry as a method of collecting data was a result of my participant observation and, like the photographs, was not in the original scheme.

Scholars of contemporary African studies encounter difficulties in making distinctions between "popular" culture and traditional culture (Coplan undated). The problem arises because traditional values are idealized for their capacity to give an integrated expression to all aspects of human life and symbolic representation to the essence of the human conditions (Barbu 1976). On the other hand, those associated with sociology of urban culture believe in its capacity to focus on the relations between class and culture; the artist and his work, market organisation and cultural production (Barbu 1976:47,55).

I have observed that in the shebeen setting such distinctions are difficult to make. The miners seem to have drawn the material for their poetry from both the rural and urban industrial environment to serve their needs based on the perception of their total situation. The miners' poetry is commonly referred to as Lifela tsa li tsamaea naha or lifela tsa liparola thota, "Hymns of the Wanderers". A detailed exposition will be given in Chapter 5 where this method has been extensively utilized. The decision to defer detailed expansion in this section is to establish a close bridge between the method and the data
collected, as this is a novel procedure.

Suffice to point out that this sung poetry has been found to help define new realities, formulate new self images and create and sustain changing institutional order (Jules-Rosette 1981). Geertz, expanding on this thesis, points out that cultural forms are articulated through social action within institutional frameworks that link individual membership and participation to collective efforts at structuring reality (Geertz 1965). Recognised modes of this poetry reflect upon reality and give it form. This poetry has also shown that it provides a bridge between disintegration of old forms and the reintegration of new ones. It is for this reason that sung/oral poetry was included among the methods adopted, as I believe that popular arts enhance security of being by cognitively ordering the world of self and others. After all, as a vehicle of meaning and interpretation, oral poetry draws upon the cognitive order provided by earlier and co-existing forms and at the same time reconstitutes that order. (Giddens 1976)
CHAPTER 4

SHEBEENS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Although the early history of shebeens in Lesotho remains strangely obscure and scanty, there are clear pointers to its possible importance in social anthropological, economic and law enforcement studies. As already indicated, researchers in these fields found that shebeens are both ubiquitous and indispensable social agencies. Further it has been noticed that their importance extends well beyond the provision of alcohol and other forms of refreshments to their role as centres for a host of social, economic, political and other activities.

Because of the character of shebeens, certain historical questions sprang up. Should we think of the shebeen as the end product of a prolonged period of institutional and social evolution from previous centuries? If so, we must then consider the forces that shaped their progress and ensured their survival. How influential were changes in the economic fortunes and social aspirations of different classes, and governmental controls in the development of the drinking industry? How vital an impact did the industrialisation of the Republic of South Africa have on the traditional Basotho drinking patterns? von Onselen's cogent exposition of the liquor trade clearly shows that the liquor trade, industrialisation and capitalism had far reaching effects (von Onselen 1976) in changing the social life of the indigenous population in the region. Further, von Onselen shows the close relationship of alcohol to the politics and economies of nineteenth century South Africa, a situation that seems not to have changed much as noted by recent literature on liquor issues in the southern African region. This is not
peculiar to Southern Africa. Schatzberg (1980) has aptly illustrated the importance of the political economy of beer in a case study of how things tend to occur in the political economic sphere in Zaire.

Although my aim in this study is not to provide another political economic expose of liquor in Lesotho, these studies, together with material obtained from the archives, confirm my belief that "monetarization" of traditional beer in Lesotho and the introduction of commercial European liquor are strongly tied to the political and economic historical events related to shebeens. These events need to be discussed in order to understand how shebeens came about and what gives them their special characteristics, like being managed by women and being unlicensed.

If a systemic perspective is adopted it may be noted that different systems combined to nurture and sustain the presence of shebeens in Lesotho. On the 8th May 1916 the Resident Commissioner's dispatch to the High Commissioner had this to say about "canteens":

"I am informed that Sir Herbert Sloley (District commissioner Leribe) was of the opinion that these canteens were of some service to the travelling native public and was averse to taking action, partly for that reason and partly because Chief Jonathan was personally financially interested in them". (H.C. No. 51/16).

It is noteworthy that, although the Assistant Commissioner expressed concern for the social comforts of the travellers, he was not unmindful of the political consequence of strong arm tactics against canteens. After all, Chief Jonathan was the Principal Chief of Ha Mathata with such political power that caution had to be exercised in matters that affected him.

By contrast, Poshuposhu, who had a canteen in the same area as Chief Jonathan, was ordered to shut down his canteen and to leave the area (telegram from Assistant Commissioner Leribe to Resident Commissioner...
Maseru 10.3.1916). Poshuposhu was an ordinary member of the community, and therefore could be dispensed without much ado. To illustrate further that the issues relating to the canteens and their administration were not straightforward, Chief Jonathan wrote to the Assistant Commissioner on 23rd January 1917 that:—

"He understands to remove and refuse people from Matsieng, Berea and Ramanallas, and he does not understand if he is refused himself" (refused to run a canteen)? Translated by H.M. Sekese.

Permission to own or run a canteen did not depend on a person's ability to manage an enterprise or his financial backing but, according to Chief Jonathan's letter, upon who you were and where you came from.

It is curious that the topic of the presence of canteens in Lesotho featured even in discussion as distant from alcohol as the "inclusion of the native territories within the Union". [These were the Protectorates of Basutoland (Lesotho), Bechuanaland (Botswana) and Swaziland]. "The Friend" (Thursday, June 17, 1915) printed the views of a gentleman whom they described as "someone who does not dislike being styled a negrophilist", whilst the writer's main theme was the inclusion of Lesotho in the Union of South Africa. One of his reasons for advocating such a step was that the local administration was incapable of dealing with the ever increasing number of canteens in the country. Such an annexation would enable the Union government to deal with this menace. ("The Friend", 17.6.1915, The Problem of Basutoland).

The economic importance of the illicit liquor trade was already apparent by the beginning of this century. The Resident Commissioner's memorandum on "Drink Trafficking in Basutoland" (14 July 1915) notes that:—

"The profit made by the native smugglers is of course considerable, a bottle of liquor costing 2/- or 3/- can be disposed of in Basutoland for a sheep or 10/-". (Page 3)
It is against this background that I feel it is necessary to examine some of the historical events that are believed to have contributed to the state of affairs with regard to shebeens. In this section I will endeavour to examine the historical events perceived as having nurtured and sustained the growth of shebeens. I am mindful of the view that historical continuity may not be the most useful construct for dealing with controversial issues and behaviour, especially those relating to disadvantaged groups. It is believed that an historical stance assumes that these issues are mute compliances with historical and cultural imperatives rather than dynamic responses to prevailing conditions. From as far back as the early sixties, Cloward and Ohlin argued that "The Historical continuity.....ignores the extent to which lower class cultures today are predictable responses to conditions in (our) society rather than persisting patterns". (Cloward and Ohlin 1960:p.75).

Having taken cognisance of these criticisms, I still consider that in this particular case it would be professional dereliction to ignore the conflicts of social interest that have dogged the liquor trade in Lesotho since the last century. These conflicts are the modus operandi of shebeens in the country. In supporting historical analysis, Clark (1983) argues that different types of public drinking places have generally developed out of distinct historical events and social usage. Some historical events and social usage have placed the ubiquitous shebeen amidst the song, sin and insobriety of the egalitarian Basotho.

With that note of caution, I hope to highlight those events that brought about shebeens as a response and a reaction to them by the Basotho.

Too little systematic research has been done to answer with authority some of the questions raised earlier in the chapter. Nonetheless, there is prima-facie evidence that shebeens have a longer history than any
other retail outlet in the kingdom and have become important institutions. The heading of this chapter is too broad and the sources too diffuse to allow anything but a modest beginning in the study of the historical processes that culminated in the proliferation of shebeens throughout the country. However, it is hoped that this beginning will stimulate sufficient interest for further studies.

Historical perusal also provides a framework for the processual analysis of the strategies employed by a dominant group in which their transactions, both deliberate and unconscious, resulted in certain outcomes. In this particular instance, one such outcome was the rise of shebeens. Such an analysis would also throw light on how and why these establishments were 'allowed' to function or grow, even when it is evident that a certain dominant group was very much against shebeens or canteens: for example, the 'Aborigines Protection Society' 1885, The missionaries, especially those of the Wesleyan Missionary Society 1886 and the Paris Evangelical Mission Society 1859 as well as the Colonial Administration. These historical processes are not mutually exclusive nor can one indicate with precision the beginning or the end of each of them. They tend to lead into and overlap one another. As Lesotho moved from being a country with an agriculturally based economy to a migrant labour reservoir, the social and political features were always present.

Aspects of the historical development of the Basotho during the past hundred years have been presented by a number of writers including Wilson and Thompson (1969 and 1970), Sanders (1975), Hamnett (1975), Kimble (1976 and 1983), Burman (1976), Murray (1980) and Phoofolo (1980). In most of these studies, however, the focus has been on political and economic history and to a much lesser extent on social history, thus missing out on the social institutions that make the Basotho nation. As a result, one needs to read between the lines of most of these studies to
discover the combination of the social, economic and political context of Basotho lives. The underlying premise for such an exercise is the belief that the Basotho history has been largely influenced by interaction between people of diverse origins, languages, technologies, ideologies and social systems.

Furthermore, the exercise of establishing the relationship of historical processes to the development of the shebeen helps to assess the impact of these processes on the changes or adaptation strategies of a community. In an anthropological study by Ashton (1967), emphasis is put on the societal functions of beer consumption in relation to social structure. Gay's Work (1980) on career options for the Basotho woman forms the beginning of serious consideration of the shebeen in contemporary Lesotho and its implications for the survival strategies of women. However, it does not examine the clientele nor provide an in depth exposition of the shebeen-keeper or bo Mamosali.

To trace the evolution of shebeens from their emergence to contemporary times, it is necessary to consider the development of shebeens under the following areas :

a) The dual legal system operating in the country
b) The contact with European traders
c) The emergence of canteens
d) The industrialisation of South Africa
e) The emergence of oscillating migrant labour
f) The preservation of traditional systems
g) The different economic expectations.

These historical developments are of particular significance in setting the shebeen in its micro and macro perspectives.
An historical input, modest as it is, serves a vital function in our understanding of shebeens and their location in the scheme of things in the lives of the Basotho. While the research was based on a micro level, the data reveals that the dynamics of these institutions go beyond the confines of local boundaries into wider social, economic and political spheres.

4.1 General Reference to Alcohol Drinking

The traditional importance of beer and beer drinking among the Basotho and other cultures is so familiar that only a general reference to it is necessary. It has been documented as the means by which transactions were sealed and the processes of exchange made (Dikobe 1981, Krige 1952 and Ashton 1967). Group and ceremonial drinking has always been frequent and solitary drinking appears to have been extremely rare. (Hutchison 1961).

Convivial beer drinking has always played a central part in serious discussions of state matters as well as in cementing old ties and creating new ones. It is apparent that alcohol was chosen for its physiological as well as its psychological effects on the person which facilitated (albeit with diminished clarity) amicable settlement of issues. The choice was a rational not a random one. No other food or drink could have effected the lowering of inhibitions or the reducing of tension.

Often court deliberations were sealed with a shared gourd of beer. With the disappearance of the traditional court system (Khotla) some other institution was bound to develop to fill the vacuum. Most of the shebeen clients stated that to them a shebeen represents Khotla and has some characteristics of a Sesotho Khotla. (001:2:10:6/12/1982)
The rationale for using liquor as a retail commodity is clarified later in this chapter.

4.2 Trade with White Settlers

The coming of Europeans to southern Africa with their 'monetarised' liquor disturbed the patterns in which liquor was produced and consumed. Its sacred characteristics were diminished as haggling about it struck at its dignity. The Boers began to trek into the hinterland towards the end of the eighteenth century. Hitherto, the Boers' experiences and encounters with indigenous peoples was with the nomadic Khoisan. The Boers could only engage in a limited trade with the Khoisan as their nomadic way of life did not allow for acquisition of too many goods. Within a short space of time the white settlers had achieved as much trade as they could hope to have with this group. There were adverse reports about the effects of liquor on the Khoisan and an outcry from the missionaries to stop using liquor as a mode of exchange in trade and in other transactions. (Fawcett 1836). This injunction further affected the amount of trade the Boers could undertake with the nomadic Khoisan.

The Basotho, like all other communities, were anxious to acquire salt as well as guns and gunpowder as this was a period of intense warfare in the region. They had cattle in abundance which was important in demonstrating a man's wealth. The Boers were anxious to acquire cattle, horses and ivory but had salt, guns and liquor in abundance. Of the three items the Europeans were quick to realise that liquor facilitated trade to their advantage. (Neumaric 1940). They perceived that the sale of guns was not in their best interests because the Africans could use these weapons against them and thus resist subjugation. Alcohol became such a popular means of trading that Moshoeshoe I, the Colonial Administrator, and the Missionaries became dismayed that some white
traders and farmers were bartering in cheap brandy produced in South West Cape colony (Cape Smoke) and drunkenness was becoming widespread among the Basotho (Thompson, 1955).

Moshoeshoe had always encouraged trade, especially in guns and horses, but his anxiety to procure them did not blind him to what was happening. He quickly realised that the purveying of cheap alcoholic drinks had a demoralising effect on his people (Casalis 1857). von Onselen (1976) points out that the less discriminating and captive colonial markets solved the problem of the disposition of large quantities of poor quality alcohol from the European markets and from the Cape colony. As the Europeans became more fastidious about what they drank, the brewers found themselves with large quantities of unwanted liquor. The colonies provided an opportunity market that was too good to miss. In spite of strong demands by the missionaries for prohibiting the sale of liquor to indigenous people, the traders went ahead with their business and the Colonial Administration was ineffectual.

The conflict of interest is clear and it took on a character and relationship beyond the bounds of simple economic exchange. On the one hand, Moshoeshoe was in desperate need of firearms and horses because of constant threats of Zulu or Boer incursion, yet he realised that a drunken army would not be of much use to him. On the other hand, the white settlers quickly saw the advantages of bartering in liquor which was not only a cheap method of advancing their economy but also of reducing the potential of indigenous militancy and threat.

The perception of the settlers set a pattern that was to underlie most of their transactions with the Africans, be they economic, political or social. This has been succinctly set out by van Onselen in his analysis of Randlords and Rotgut (1976). He examines the alcohol trade to dissect
class relationships, change patterns of domination and develop imperialism in southern Africa. Most important, he focuses on the strategies of the white ruling class and the problems of the capitalists in disciplining labour resistance during the colonial period. He examines the political and economic struggles over liquor as a means of understanding the shifting class allegiances and the conflicts that characterised the transformation of Southern Africa from an agricultural to a mining and industrial region. He further examines the ways in which alcohol united the most unlikely bedfellows such as capitalists, farmers, manufacturers, brewers and mine owners, to create an economically and psychologically dependent black labour force. It was against this background that Moshoeshoe endeavoured to curb the use of European liquor in Lesotho.

Notwithstanding his need to procure firearms, we note the action Moshoeshoe took to combat the threat of European liquor in his 1845 European liquor proclamation. Appendix (iii)

Most Basotho today feel that this law is still operative, as there has never been a proclamation to repeal it.

Poulter gives a full explanation of the problems attached to operation of dual systems in his discussion on legal dualism in Lesotho (1976). The strong objections to the importation of liquor into the country did not break the tradition of drinking or the trade in it but resulted in many paradoxes which abound in issues relating to public drinking places and to drinking and which can only be understood in terms of the old and new configuration of political, social and economic factors in operation.

Lesotho witnessed a great revolution in drinking tastes during the nineteenth century. The Basotho were introduced to an alcoholic beverage much stronger than any that they had used hitherto and the manner in
which they could get this drink differed vastly from the traditional one. An individual who had a commodity that was desired by a settler could trade that commodity for a bottle of cheap brandy. For the first time a man could get his drink without having to rely on his wife to make it, nor did he have to wait for community or group activities in order to get his drink. This significantly altered the values that had previously governed alcohol usage. These changes go beyond the individual sphere or the community organisation to wider national and international considerations.

4.3 The Great Trek from 1795 onwards

The Great Trek into the hinterland by the Boers and other European groups which started around 1795 resulted in heightened contact between the Basotho and Europeans. They reached the borders of Lesotho during the early part of the nineteenth century. This contact led to dramatic changes in the lifestyle of the Basotho.

During most of the nineteenth century there were numerous indigenous political units, some of which were relatively homogeneous (Wilson and Thompson 1971), but the boundaries were indeterminate for the majority of these communities until 1870. Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, the Sotho-Tswana group occupied most of the central plateau (Appendix iv). By the time the Khoisan settled on the banks of the Senqu (Orange) River and long before the Voortrekkers followed the Khoisan, the whole area of the high veld from the Drakensburg to the borders of Namibia and Zimbabwe had for many years been known as the land of the Basotho (Setiloano 1976:19). The Basotho, Botswana and Bapeli have a common lineage (Appendix vi). Hence they are commonly referred to as the Sotho group.

125
The Sotho-Tswana land was greatly reduced by the movement of the Boers into the hinterland which resulted in the establishment of the two Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Free State. It also divided these communities so that they now occupy three separate and distinct countries. Contrary to the ideas propagated by European historians who seek to fix the claims of the white man in Southern Africa (Muller 1968), this area was not an empty no-man's land teeming with game and unoccupied by man. Settled communities had lived there and conducted their affairs in a manner that was 'orderly' and even 'civilised'. The Basotho-Tswana were not warfaring communities and thus tended to have large settled communities but, because they were pasturalists and cultivators, movement from one place to another in search of better agricultural land was prevalent. The need to provide grazing for their stock and for better cultivation was always paramount. Once the Great Trek began there was a scramble for territorial claims. Claims on boundaries by both the Africans and Europeans often conflicted and this led to long drawn out frontier disputes.

For most of the African communities there was great anxiety to prevent further encroachment on their land by the settlers but unified African strategy was impossible as there was little unity among the ethnic groups. Being aware of the divisions among the Africans, the Boers and the colonial government saw this fundamental fragmentation as a tool to subdue and divide the African communities. When the struggle for land began, power between the Africans and the white settlers appeared to be evenly matched. Had this situation been maintained, the Africans might not have had such an unfair deal but the involvement of the colonial government tipped the balance in favour of the white settlers. Its better organised administration and sophisticated ammunition assisted the tipping of the balance of power. White advance meant black contraction.
The settlers required power for the capitalist transformation of Southern Africa (Davenport 1978). The white settlers needed labour on their farms and in the gold and diamond mines. However, it had been evident, as in the case of Lesotho, that where crop and animal farming was successful the African was not willing to work for the European. Van Rensburg noted that there was a total labour shortage in the Orange Free State until 1903 or 1909 (Van Rensburg 1964).

To commercialise farming and industry in South Africa the African had to be deprived of land so that he would be forced to tender his labour for the industrialisation of South Africa.

In 1869 the Basotho had to concede most of the land they had hitherto occupied and farmed for a long time as a result of the Treaty of Allival North (Sanders 1975:306-7). By 1872 Lesotho had lost most of its fertile west lands to the Free State. They were left with a country that was two-thirds uninhabitable montains and only one-third of which is habitable and arable (Spiegel 1979:15 ILO 1979). The country became too small for a growing population and it became inadequate for agricultural undertakings. In Lesotho only 13 per cent of the land is arable. Land division and subsequent accompanying legislation put paid to any possibility of acquisition of extra land necessary to support agriculture. The indigenous methods of cultivation and grazing were based on unlimited land resources, providing for rotational cultivation and grazing. Thus, when the Basotho were left with small infertile patches of land, they were forced into a dependence on wages earned by those who worked for white farmers or in the mines or from employment in the town. (Thompson 1975). When the resulting wages could not meet the needs of the family, alternative means were sought to augment them. It was often the women who got left at home and who shouldered family
responsibilities. The sale of beer appears to have been one of the popular alternatives available to them and had been proven to be profitable. It is inaccurate to refer to contemporary Lesotho rural population as being peasant. The land distribution provided a "tributary mode of production" (Amin 1978). This produced the existence of a village community and a social and political structure which was exploited by one group through the former exacting a tribute. For Lesotho the tribute being exacted was, and still is, labour. By this process Lesotho, a country with an immediately available labour force, became a labour reserve for capitalist South Africa.

The early nineteenth century agricultural system of the Basotho shows a clear complementarity between female and male agricultural work. The dual importance of pastoralism and cultivation defined the organisation and division of labour between the sexes (Phoofolo 1980). Male involvement in agricultural activities was more in its pastoral aspects; their concern was with cattle, sheep, goats and horses. On the other hand, women were concerned with the more labour intensive crop cultivation. They were concerned with the cultivation, hoeing, weeding, bird scaring, harvesting, threshing and winnowing of the crops.

The women were greatly affected by the reduction of land area. Those who were left in the village had little land on which to eke out a living and it became imperative to find other ways of augmenting their produce. For most women, the alternatives were governed by the skills they had in beer brewing and selling which was, and still is, a skill in which most Basotho women are competent. The rationality of the choice as a profitable undertaking has been shown by the women studied by Gay at Ha Sechaba (1980) when she found that, given their options in the economic world, women had better gains in liquor brewing activities. These cover economic activities where liquor is paramount, like the shebeens,
setokofele (stock fair) and other co-operative brewing.

Shortly after the Boers settled on the western borders of Lesotho, a number of licensed and unlicensed canteens sprang up along the boundary (Appendix VI). In addition, by 1890 there was a flourishing distillery in Harrismith worth over £4,000.

We have already discussed the development of canteens/shebeens. By the end of the nineteenth century the liquor trade was well and truly established along the borders of Lesotho and there are indications that this trade was spreading into the Kingdom. Although the sale of European liquor was prohibited in Lesotho, widespread smuggling of alcohol rapidly made the 1854 legislation ineffective. It was not uncommon, even then, for many Basotho women to trade profitably in smuggled alcohol (Cape of Good Hope Assembly paper G4 1883). As the white settler population in the Free State was very small, it is quite clear that the target population for these establishments in the Free State was the Basotho in the east. All this shows how land allocation, culture contact and political and economic transactions forced a Mosotho woman to work out her own survival strategies in an emerging capitalist world.

4.4 Missionaries in Lesotho

Missionaries came to Lesotho in 1833. They were French Protestants from the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. About five years later the French Catholic Missionaries joined their fellow countrymen. While the Catholics were liberal about the use of alcohol the Protestants preached and expected complete abstinence.

In 1878, at a Missionary Conference in Grahams Town, concern was expressed about the increase of licensed and unlicensed canteens along the Basutoland border. So great was the concern that the missionaries
believed the Africans would decay and disappear. While this would get rid of the "troubles" caused by the Africans, they felt that so drastic a measure would be too heavy a burden on the day of judgement.

4.5 The Dual Legal System

In the section defining liquor, a brief mention was made to the possibility of the influence of a dual system of law. The definition of liquor in Lesotho Statutes excludes traditional home brewed liquor. In 1854 the first law governing the sale of liquor was written, specifically to cater for European liquor. At no point did Moshoeshoe 1 or his successors foresee a situation in which so sacred a drink (Joala ba Sesotho) could be so desecrated as to be a retail commodity in the so-called dens of iniquity. An elaboration on the dual system would clarify this point and the part it played in the existence of shebeens.

Two systems of law operate in Lesotho; an indigenous system based on the traditional customs of the Basotho and an imported system based on the Roman Dutch Common Law. When Lesotho became a British Protectorate in 1883, a system of 'indirect rule' was introduced. Under this arrangement considerable authority was left in the hands of the Basotho to administer customary law in their own courts and to regulate the distribution of land. In 1884 Regulation 12 of Proclamation No. 2B was issued by the High Commissioner (Cape Proclamation No.41 of 1877). This Proclamation provided for the continued operation of Cape Colonial laws in the then 'Basutoland'. These had applied to the Kingdom during the annexation to the Cape (1871-83). The Sesotho laws draw inspiration from an ancient African culture. However, many of the modifications in them that have taken place during the past century are a product of missionary influence and British administration.
The laws of Lesotholi as they have come to be known empowered the Paramount Chief to provide for the peace, good order and welfare of his subjects. The Roman Dutch law had been introduced specifically to meet the needs of the white population.

The operation of the dual legal system caused problems for the resident European administrators. On one hand they had the power to apply laws prohibiting the sale of liquor without a licence; on the other, joala brewing could not be prohibited and, as the traditional drink, did not come under the jurisdiction of the written law. Correspondence on liquor traffic between the Resident Administration, the neighbouring countries' governments and the Colonial Office shows the importance of and the frustration experienced by the administration in its attempts to stop this business. Thus The Friend was to point out that:

"In Basutoland itself native canteens are being opened everywhere and constitute a still more serious menace to the sobriety of the people. The Government does nothing, indeed can do nothing, to prohibit these" (The Friend, Tuesday June 17th, 1915) (my own emphasis).

Correspondence from 1880 to 1930 shows a consistent pattern of frustration experienced by the administration in relation to the law governing the establishment of public drinking places, the sale of liquor and the enforcement of relevant laws, (Passim in Volumes 17 and 18, British Parliamentary Paper session 1881-1888; published in 1971 and Liquor Traffic Correspondence from 1909-1930).

The impossibility of the situation is clearly demonstrated by Chief Jonathan's response about canteens in his area:

"Chief Jonathan said to us messengers he is unable to stop the sale of beer (joala) to people of the district under his caretaking. Moreover, a complaint comes from the Free State people who have no right in Lesotho matters. He says if the High Commissioner stops the sale of beer, he cannot prevent him but it will be that he asked by his Chieftainship, he is unable to deprive himself." (Dispatch LNo. 74/17
The translation in this dispatch is not quite clear, but according to the original text in Sesotho the last sentence should read "Should the King (Paramount Chief) ask me to stop the sale of beer I will inform him that I (Jonathan) am unable to deprive our people of their traditional food".

Chief Jonathan had a strong point because the customary laws empower him to look after the welfare of his people. In this statement he is pointing out that in the interest of his people he would find it difficult to stop the sale of beer (joala). However, the High Commissioner could do so for his authority comes from a different legal system.

Added to the difficulties of attempting to administer the dual system was the fact that Lesotho had become a British Protectorate. Therefore the South African laws stipulating the siting of liquor establishments in relation to local settlements did not apply to Lesotho. The President of the Orange Free State complained to the High Commissioner that the status of Lesotho made it difficult to control the establishment of public drinking places. He argued:--

"The licensing boards have given what I believe to be a wrong interpretation of the law ... by granting licences within the prescribed distance from the border upon the contention that Basutoland is not native but British territory." (August 27, 1883 dispatch from President of the Orange Free State to the High Commissioner, Cape Town).

The Secretary of Native Affairs had expressed the same sentiments when he wrote to the Colonial Secretary on July 26, 1883 that:--

"...To all intents and purposes it (Basutoland) is a native territory and I think that view would be taken by the Free State Law Courts".

Underlying the application of the Sesotho laws is the "repugnancy clause" (Poulter 1976). The general feature of British Colonial policy
was to permit the customary law of African peoples to continue in operation to the extent that such laws did not offend the British sense of morality and good conscience (Daniels, 1964). The social drinking of the Basotho could then be assumed not to have posed a threat to British morality and good conscience and hence its administration was left in the hands of the Chiefs.

It is obvious that any system of law which offers two rival sets of rules without drawing clear boundaries between their different spheres of operation is almost certain to foster attempts at manipulation and failure of practice. A good deal of the correspondence relating to liquor control during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shows how the dual system created gaps that could be manipulated to establish liquor retail premises. It also reveals the problems that beset European administrators in trying to control the spread of such premises.

4.6 Emergence of Canteens/Shebeens

Early references to shebeens and shebeen keepers are sparse and cryptic. However in every annual report made to the Resident Commissioner by the Assistant Commissioners of Leribe, Mafeteng and Berea districts from 1883 to 1890, there is mention of an illicit liquor trade and the existence of unlicensed canteens (British Parliamentary Papers 1883 to 1884 Vol.17 and British Parliamentary Papers 1885 to 1890 Vol.18, hereafter referred to as BPP). Up to the 1930s shebeens were referred to as canteens. This term will be used in this section as it is used in most of the literature consulted for this section.

By the end of the nineteenth century illicit liquor selling was undoubtedly a common activity in the Kingdom as evidenced by reports and correspondence in volumes 17 and 18 of BPP Africa and data from the archive Folio 16 on Liquor Traffic in Basutoland. During that period the
canteens were viewed as having the characteristics of victualling houses.
The sale of European liquor in Lesotho became an administrative issue long before there were signs that illicit liquor would provide such a lucrative business. As already pointed out, as long ago as 1854 Moshoeshoe I, encouraged by the PEMS missionaries, issued an ordinance prohibiting the sale of European liquor in the country. However, this ordinance did not entirely achieve its objective. The number of unlicensed canteens on either side of the border was increasing at a rate that was impossible for the understaffed police force to control. By 1881 canteens thrived along and inside the border, 'Cape Smoke' brandy being the most popular drink (MacKintosh MCMVII). The missionaries described the liquor in canteens as an "abominable and maddening poison, a cheap and most vile compound" (1872), while von Onselan described the quality of liquor that was imported into southern Africa during the nineteenth century for African consumption as not only of poor quality but as unfit for human consumption and 'highly lethal' (von Onselen 1976).

During this period the main canteen owners were men, especially the chiefs. Most canteens were to be found in administrative centres along the border with the Orange Free State, close to some of that republic's towns like Ladybrand, Ficksburg and Wepner. The proximity of towns on both sides of the border made it possible for liquor traffic to flourish, as unlicensed canteens existed in both countries (BPP Vol.17, p326).

Three reasons account for the management of canteens being under the control of the Chief. The first is that the liquor sold in the canteens was mainly European liquor which did not require the skills of women in brewing it as it came ready to drink. Mention of women in this business was that of a helper (No.4 136/16 Regd. F 122 April 7, 1916). The second
is that the Chief had the authority to commandeер messengers to fetch the liquor from the Orange Free State on horseback. Given the quality of transport in those days it would not have been easy for women to act as couriers, though by the 1950s women did act as couriers, helped by their voluptuous bodies and the many skirts they used to wear (002:23:50:10/1).

The third factor was that the chiefs controlled trade during that period. President Brand of the Orange Free State was to write to the High Commissioner that:

"The Chiefs preferred having the illicit traders within their villages, and at their mercy rather than that their people should cross the border and purchase drink at high prices" (enclosure in No.23, October 1, 1885, BPP Vol.18 p.64).

Furthermore the Chiefs felt they were providing a service to their people, whose welfare was their responsibility, hence their conviction that they should provide the liquor even on an illegal basis.

Although the presence of unlicensed canteens caused general concern from the Orange Free State, which was concerned with obtaining cheap, sober labour from Lesotho, the local administration showed concern only if there were serious violent outbreaks. The canteens were threatened with closure if there was "drunkenness and disorderliness" (16.10.1916. Minute of Resident Commissioner to the Assistant Commissioner Leribe, hereafter RC and AC).

It is evident from official correspondence that one other characteristic of the contemporary shebeen developed during the last century, namely transactions in contraband goods. On 20th October 1885 the High Commissioner had this to say about canteens:

"The canteens that have been established within the Free State and close to the Basutoland Frontier appear to be centres of gun and spirit running as well as places for the disposal of stolen stock" (No.22 BPP Vol.18, p.57).

Reports of transactions in stolen property can be found throughout Vol.18
Although, up to the 1920s, there is not much evidence that women were actively involved in canteen running, reports from the gold mines in the Transvaal show that Basotho women were extensively involved in illicit liquor selling. The Aborigine's Protection Society expressed concern about the activities of Basotho women in illicit brewing and selling, especially as they were acquiring the reputation of being 'Skokian Queens' (BPP Vol.18, p.576). A report on the illicit liquor problem on the Witwatersrand specifically mentioned the part played by Basotho women in the illicit liquor trade (Report of Unofficial Commission by South African Temperance Alliance (SATA) and the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) 1935, p.16).

It is significant that the retail commodity in the early canteens was brandy. This required no female labour as it came ready made from across the border. Also, because it had to be smuggled, the Chiefs were well placed to get into the business. As administrators in the country they were rarely accountable to anyone. They issued passes for crossing the border and they were entitled to send messengers on official business. These messengers were not infrequently carriers of liquor. A young Prince reported at a conference on alcohol in Maseru that, as a young boy, he could remember messengers going to the Free State wearing heavy coats instead of the traditional blanket. He thought this was to impress on the Europeans across the border that the Basotho were becoming civilised. But one day, when he was asked to attend to the horses, he saw the messenger being met by a Chief and, from inside his baggy coat, he took a bottle of brandy. (Proceedings of the Workshop on Alcohol, Maseru 1983).

The nineteenth century was an unsettled period for Southern Africa. The
Basotho were still smarting under the unfair seizure of their land, stock raids were common and above all there was a great deal of internal unrest. These factors led to mass movements internally and externally. It was not uncommon to find the Basotho "squatting" on the farms along the border. The farmers sometimes did not object to this as the presence of Africans could be turned into useful farm labour. To compensate for meagre wages some people started unlicensed canteens. Lagden believes that these places drew the worst characters, but above all they drew people who were in search of information either about their stock or about Boer movements. When the Boers found their stock they often seized it (Lagden 1909, Vol.2). There is a common story that a man looking for his sheep went into a canteen and started making enquiries. An old lady, picking her teeth and believing that the person did not understand Xhosa, said in that language "as we are picking our teeth it is it (the sheep) my child".

The beginning of the twentieth century brought a continued and accelerated canteen trade. Profits from the illicit trade were considerable and people were prepared to take risks. Information on canteens peters out after the 1920s. By 1930 they are referred to as shebeens and the proprietors are shebeen queens (Hellman 1935).

As the influx control laws of South Africa tightened, and the Nationalist Government took over, many Basotho women returned to Lesotho. Border controls on the South African side became strict. Thus easy movement between the two countries was restricted and this affected the trafficking of liquor. This was probably the turning point in the management of shebeens and the type of liquor available. From the 1940s this form of retail business acquired a more organised and regular character. Signs denoting that liquor was available and the types of brands which could be obtained became commonplace. A flag acted as an
advertisement, the most common colours being white, yellow and blue. Each colour depicts a different brew, and when an establishment has run out of liquor the 'flag' is taken down.

In 1961 restrictions on the sale of European liquor to the Basotho were lifted and the risk of transporting liquor from South Africa was removed. The consequent availability of European liquor enabled women to enter this activity which had hitherto been the prerogative of the Chiefs.

All this happened against a background of other major events inside and outside the country. The land had been drastically reduced and thus agriculture diminished. The mines in South Africa were attracting large numbers of able-bodied young men, educational and economic expectations were changing, the effects of contact with other cultures were becoming manifest and cultural adaptations and resistance were the order of the day.

4.7 Emergence of Oscillating Migrant Labour

By 1873 the Basotho recovered sufficiently from their loss of fertile wheat lands, the wars of 1865–68 and the 1870 famine to be able to export substantial quantities of grain to the mining camps in South Africa: 100,000 bags of grain and 2,000 bags of wool and imported manufactured goods worth £150,000 (Chronicles of Basutoland German 1967). This boom had unexpected adverse developments for the country. It generated acute inflation and some Basotho started to migrate to the mines in response to the demand for labour (Murray 1981: 11). By 1875 it was estimated that 15,000 men out of a population of 137,325 were obtaining passes to work outside the territory for long or short periods and; by 1884 this number had doubled (Ashton 1952: 162). Murray provided a comprehensive historical development that led progressively to increased dependence by
Lesotho on labour migration and describes how Lesotho was transformed from a granary of Southern Africa to a labour reserve for South Africa (Murray 1981: 1-26). Of interest to this study is the fact that this development has become a way of life which affects the family and societal economic organisation and the development of the shebeens can be related directly to it.

The migrant labour system affects the de jure population (those who are recognised citizens of Lesotho) and the de facto population (people who actually reside in Lesotho at any given time). This has led to large ratio differences between the sexes. With the de jure population the ratios are 93.5 men to 100 women; with the de facto population the ratios are 75.7 men to 100 women (1976 census preliminary tabulation, Lesotho). This state of affairs means that a large number of Basotho women spend a great deal of their lives without men and, as a result they shoulder, amongst other things, the bulk of the responsibility for bringing up families on their own.

The story does not end there. Although work on labour migration focuses more on male migrants, of every ten migrant workers one is a woman (Spiegel, 1979). Women went to urban areas or left their homes in the company of their husbands or on their own initiative. Some archive material reveals an interesting aspect of the saga of 'run-away wives'. The migrant labour phenomenon had profound implications for women in managing family affairs and in the shebeens of Lesotho.

The degree of complexity of the Lesotho migrant labour became more frightening when the ways in which it was perpetuated are considered. The mining companies bring the miner away from home without his family and put him in living accommodation provided by the employees. The men are accommodated in single sex compounds within the mining areas. The
African miner is confined to the compound and no families are allowed. Conditions are appallingly uncomfortable and movement in and out of the compound is highly regulated. In an effort to contain their labour, the mining management sets out to provide beer halls or beer gardens where the miners can buy their liquor. A high degree of rationality was achieved under these circumstances as the worker was effectively sealed off from subversive forces which might lead him to complain about his conditions. The well-proven method of using liquor was again employed. But in spite of this a silent rebellion developed; men found ways of getting out of their compounds to drink in the shebeens in the 'yards'.

Although labour migration continued to attract a number of Basotho men, the wages of the mines often hardly met the basic family needs (Report of the Unofficial Commission into Illicit Brewing 1936 and Longmore 1968). Thus it was not only the single woman who had to earn a living; those women whose husbands or fathers were working in the mines had to make up their inadequate wages.

The combination of these events ensured the survival of the shebeens. They provided women with a much more secure employment and at the same time they provided men with a social milieu with which they were familiar and in which they felt comfortable. Since shebeens are set within the home only a limited number of people can be admitted at a time. In such a setting the opportunity is afforded to develop friendships and other social networks. In contrast, the beer halls are impersonal and the men encountered different drinking patterns there. Basotho were used to drinking in small groups, sitting in a circle and sharing a pot of beer. In the beer hall a large number of people are drinking under one roof, sitting at tables. This makes seating re-arrangements inflexible because they were dictated by the fixed furniture arrangement. There they drink by the pint, a container not large enough to provide a couple of shared
rounds of drink. Thus a pattern of drinking outside the home is encouraged. It also had the result of men being able to buy their liquor from a retail outlet. Lastly, it means that the individual can drink alone; there is no social obligation to share his drink. A new pattern of drinking was steadily being established which would later be taken back to Lesotho.

Those women who come into urban areas, or shall we say join migrant labourers, find that there are few opportunities to open shebeens. They have limited skills and employers are not keen to hire them as there is a high risk of their being absent because of pregnancy, tending a sick baby, or being removed by an irate husband. The male dominated formal sector guarded mens' interests under the allegedly 'heavy' work of the mines, roads and other unskilled opportunities. Opportunities for women in the unskilled sector are few and highly competitive. Women had to find a means of earning a living that would ensure security, accommodate the incumbent problems of being a mother, a wife and a woman, in a career in which she was competent enough, if not a career that would require minimum time to learn the skills.

Shebeens had become a booming business and continued to compete successfully with other public drinking places. Because their character expresses African values and meets the patrons' needs and expectations, evidence has shown that they compare favourably with, for example, the beer halls (see Wolcott 1974 and Nelson 1977). Even though men are now taking up shebeening, the commodity of their shebeens is mainly European liquor - in visits to shebeens in the course of this research, no men were found standing behind the big drums, straining beer.

Revealed in this phenomenon is what Caulfield describes as "a culture of resistance" (Caulfield 1974). She argues that "cultures of resistance"
are not simply adaptive mechanisms. They embody important alternative ways of organising production and reproduction and value systems critical of those of the oppressor.

Merton provides us with a detailed analysis of individual adaptive modes, especially for those who are located in the lower reaches of the social structure (Merton 1963). He starts off by pointing out that the combination of cultural emphasis and the social structure produces intense pressure for "deviation": The ill-equipped persons in the community are expected to attain the same standard of living, or at least an acceptable standard of living, as those better equipped. Merton points out that this is an incompatible demand when one is denied the effective opportunity institutionally to reach certain limits. Recognising that "legitimate" means are often ineffectual for this group, they search for effective and expedient means. Some of these means may be viewed as deviant. According to Merton, this process is an innovative type of adaptation. For as long as social mechanisms for controlling certain behaviours are operating effectively, then the strains that have been described above can be kept within bounds and thus limit the change of the structure. It is the nature of the latter and the dynamic process operating within the social structures that causes change and innovation (Merton 1963). This relates very closely to the life history of shebeens in Lesotho.

As has already been noted, it is the educationally ill-equipped women with few economic resources who opt for shebeen activity. Furthermore, it is apparent that the mechanisms for the control of liquor trafficking were not only ineffective, they were also confused.

The shebeens have come to be linked to the major economic system by a twist of events. Although they are unlicensed and have been a strong
rival of the established public drinking places, there seems to be an
unwritten acknowledgement that these establishments serve a purpose and
are here to stay. They have become a subordinate mode of production
linked to the dominant production mode.

The industrialist needed a happy and subdued labour force and this may
account for the covert permission under which shebeens are allowed to
function. They are a social formation organised by a dominant mode of
production.

Thus far we note that the labour migration phenomenon exposes women to a
variety of experiences most of which reflect the exigencies of their
position. As married women are left behind by their husbands, the
conjugal relationship specifies a combination of heavy domestic
responsibilities with a variable degree of economic insecurity. In
addition, effective household management depends on the reliability of
cash remittance. On the one hand this allows the woman to experience
relative security and on the other, to experience bitter frustration,
acute personal stress and emotional desolation because of her husband's
absence. If the woman is single, this failure of a conjugal relationship
exposes her directly to the vicissitudes of a labour market that is
heavily prejudiced against her (Murray 1981: 156).

4.8 Preservation of Traditional Agricultural Systems

Although labour migration drew a large number of Basotho into the
industrial labour force, Basotho women have remained on the periphery and
have continued to devote most of their energies to a steadily
deteriorating agricultural undertaking. The organisation of traditional
agricultural systems has already been discussed. The crucial point is
that it depended on unlimited land resources. With the reduction of the
size of the country, only 13 per cent of arable land (Spiegel 1979:160 and 1979?), and an increase in population, this system was bound to fail. In addition over-grazing, severe soil erosion and expanding residential areas continually reduce the area of agricultural land.

Women who have been involved in agricultural activities find themselves with very little, if anything, to do. With the insecurities already mentioned they are put in the position of having to find the means of earning a livelihood and improving their status if they are not to become completely subjugated. For these reasons they go into the brewing and selling of liquor.

The attachment of the Basotho to land and the value they place on soil is a curious factor, especially as soil (mobu) belongs to the King and a person occupies a piece of land at His Majesty's pleasure. However, despite the importance that men still attach to land, women have recognised its limitations in terms of improving their own status. They are moving away from the land.

4.9 Cultural Shifts and Different Economic Expectations

A number of complex processes brought about the shift in values and the development of different expectations, particularly affecting the position of women and education and the spread of trade in diverse commodities. After the arrival of the missionaries in 1833, churches and schools were established and women were among the first to be converted to the new faith and to show enthusiasm for schooling. Lesotho is one of the few countries in Africa where the proportion of females and males in schools is evenly distributed and where the educational median of women is consistently reported to be higher than that of men. Literacy and access to education has fostered in women the desire to participate in wider national and international issues and to seek employment outside
the traditional agriculture. However, the restrictions imposed by family responsibilities and female discrimination tend to limit the aspirations raised by exposure to education and different cultural values.

The long trade contact, recently-built large supermarkets and the preponderance of mobile salesmen, has brought about an underestimation of the value of traditional products like pottery, grass mats and other household utensils and has conferred special importance on imported goods, making them the preferred goods. As these cost more than the traditional products, the money had to be secured somehow.

Summary

Eighteenth century Lesotho witnessed a great revolution in drinking habits, as important in its own way as some of the current economic and social changes. Around the middle of the century consumption changed from brewed sorghum beer to poor quality brandy and wine which were stronger and easier to obtain on a commercial basis. By the end of the century a second major revolution took place; diamonds and gold were discovered in Kimberley and the Witwatersrand. With these came a much more defined drinking establishment and home brewing on a commercial basis.

The initial pattern of social and ritual alcohol consumption was affected by the introduction of trade and barter. This resulted in new variations, including drinking at the trading post. Then came the displacement of the Basotho from their farmlands and the establishment of liquor selling places along the Lesotho border.

The complex dynamics of change during the nineteenth century meant that the development of the shebeen was not unilinear or homogeneous and, by the 1920s the term "canteen" had largely been replaced by the use of
"shebeen". The growth in the number of shebeens was determined by a number of causal factors, including a major expansion of potential demand caused by demographic increase and changes and the prosperity and rising expectations of the shebeen customers. Such forces helped the steady transformation of shebeens which began to acquire their own peculiar character, the ever present shebeen queen or Mamosali behind the 40 gallon container. People started drinking by the front door, sitting on benches nearby or in the yard or garden. Advertising by way of a flag (phephezela) became commonplace.

It seemed likely that the lifting of restrictions on the sale of European liquor and the opening of bars to the Basotho would bring about the demise of the shebeen. The many commercial and social organisations did not affect the functioning of shebeens and increasing administrative control seems to have had no impact on their increase. While law enforcement might have closed some shebeens, many others survived, clustering around the residential areas and on the main roads. The crucial factor in shebeen tenacity is its flexibility and its evolutionary mutability. It responds to long term fluctuation in the social and economic climate. In their earlier days the shebeens answered the needs of poor folk, many of them migrants into the city. Matching rising consumer expectations they now cater for a wide spectrum of clients. They respond to shifts in drinking tastes, even though the metamorphosis in drinking taste was frequently stimulated by the twists and turns of governmental policies.

The operation of a dual legal system provided for the manipulation of the law either not to do anything about the shebeens or to apply ineffectual measures. Most important in this situation was the political undertones governing attitudes towards canteens. The Colonial
administration had to tread delicately lest it antagonised the local chiefs. On the other hand, the South African government was so frustrated by this soft pedalling that it perceived it as collusion on the part of the British government to undermine its efforts to industrialise South Africa.

Not only was there a dual legal system, there were also double standards. The supply of liquor helped to ensure political tranquility and its economic significance was impressive. It also provided a durable link between cash and subsistance economies. Canteens did not always work to the advantage of the capitalist system as is aptly shown by von Onselen (1974).

The historical analysis is not an end in itself. It tells us more about the formal anatomy of this social institution but rather less about the pulsating muscles which make it work. This section affords us a glimpse of the institutional process through the administrative rule book and the legal procedure. It is meant to complement the rest of the thesis in which the study of the interaction of the shebeen proprieter and her clients is examined.
Footnotes

1. The character of the canteen is not appear to be clear from the data. They were sometimes referred to as eating houses, boarding houses or liquor canteens (Minute No.162 from Imperial Secretary to Secretary for Justice, 16 February 1917). From the correspondence it appears that in some cases "canteen" denoted an establishment of low repute. Sometimes distinctions were made between "dry" and "wet" canteens, but this was not often done. The Sesotho translation of canteen "Makantining" does imply an establishment of low reputation.

2. PEMS - Paris Evangelical Mission Society, now known as the Lesotho Evangelical Church.

3. The Missionary Conference at King Williams Town. The Little Light of Basutoland No.10, October 1872, p.36-40.

4. Lesotho Archives F0/10 32/24/2.

5. Cape Proclamation No.41 of 1877.

Appendix

Chronological List of Historical Events that affected the position of the Basotho, especially the position of women.

1794 The start of the exodus of the Boers from the Cape Colony. (However it was not until the 1840s that the Boers made substantial contact with the Basotho).

1775 Lesotho in an economically healthy position. 1.7 cattle and 2.8 stock units per person (cattle, horses, sheep and goats). By 1931 the number of stock had declined and the number of people had increased in a greatly reduced land area, forcing many Basotho men to seek employment in South Africa.

1833 Missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society arrive in Lesotho.

1834 Lesotho had large quantities of grain stored for between four and eight years. As women were to a large extent responsible for crop production this must have enhanced their position.

1844 Lesotho exporting grain to the European farmers in the colonies of South Africa, a factor that would further improve the position of women.

1854 Ordinance passed prohibiting the sale of European liquor in Lesotho.

1867 Diamonds discovered in Kimberley and a demand for African labour.

1869 Lesotho annexed by Great Britain at the request of Moshoeshoe I.

1869 The Convention of Aliwal North resulting in the Basotho losing their rich corn lands to the Free State. This further drove the Basotho into the white man's economic system as farm labourers, servants, mineworkers and liquor couriers.

1871 Lesotho was incorporated into the Cape Colony, exacerbating the
problems of the dual legal system.

1877 Demand for grain from Lesotho fell as American and Australian grain is given preference.

1879 Liquor could be sold to indigenous people if they had a written permit from a government office and were "well behaved" important members of the community. In reality this meant the Chiefs and their Councillors.

1886 Gold discovered in the Witwatersrand area. As both the localities of diamonds and gold are not far from Lesotho, many men were to leave home for long periods to work in the mines.

1903 Drought hits Southern Africa and for the first time Lesotho imports grain. The country has never recovered enough to provide enough food for home consumption. Complete dependence on South Africa began.

1948 Basutoland Dry Canteen Proclamation. Provision was made for a new establishment known as Basotho Beer Shops which were supposed to sell traditional brewed liquor only.
Chapter 5

ECOLOGY, RHETORICAL SPACE-TIME PROPERTIES AND USE OF THE SHE BEEN

This chapter is primarily concerned with the data showing the physical layout of shebeens. It also aims to show what happens, when and where in the shebeen milieu. The focal issues are the ecological, rhetorical space time properties, rhetoric entrance procedures, use of the shebeen and actors' interests at hand.

Earlier I pointed out that definite forms of social stratification exist in the shebeen universe which coincide with the aspirations of specific socio-economic groups. Review of the literature has revealed that this, however, is not only peculiar to shebeens, other researchers on public drinking places have noted such a character (Cavan, 1966). Further, I indicated that all shebeens are sub-settings of family homes as shown in Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.5. Figure 5.3 shows two rooms which are used both as business premises and family homes. Figure 5.1, a drawing by Tumo, a 12 year old whose mother is a Mamosali, shows the kind of situation in which some family members find themselves when the facilities for business and family needs are so limited. While Figure 5.4 (of Peggy Bel Air) shows a shebeen subsetting in a homestead where a room or two can be let for business purposes.

As I found four categories of shebeens in Maseru, I decided to study one of each from category one and three as these appear to be common. Detailed information about each shebeen will be given when they are being discussed.
5.1 Stratification in the Shebeen Universe

Category One

Shebeens in this category are run on sophisticated lines by women and sometimes by men. The clientele comprises mainly members of the high income group and prosperous members of the underworld. Internal decor and furniture arrangement set Category One shebeens apart from other houses and other shebeens. They are often lavishly and expensively furnished. From the outside the house looks no different from the one next door. The only telltale sign would be a high pile of empty beer cans and liquor bottles - a very common eyesore in Lesotho.
Category Two

A category two shebeen resembles category one but lacks some of the luxurious trappings. It caters mainly for the middle socio-economic group. The room is still comfortably furnished. Such a shebeen stocks few spirits but has large quantities of beer, maybe of two or three brands. The patrons are not too fussy about designers labels. However, the proprietor stocks brands that patrons request most frequently.

In both these categories one finds in addition to the social class content differential life styles that determine their type and characteristics. Some actually cater for specific ministries, departments or organisations. It is not uncommon to find one catering mainly for university lecturers or Ministry of Health staff. In these settings patrons can discuss very controversial issues without fear that what they say will be repeated outside.

Category Three

Most shebeens are in this category. It includes shebeen United Nations. Shebeens in this category cater for a wide variety of patrons, but distinctions are made in terms of service and type of drink, and according to their social standing and their relationship with the proprietor and territorial imperatives are very conspicuous. Patrons carve out territories for their groups in which they structure their social relationships.

A brief example would help us to understand this phenomenon. Two patrons enter and stand at the entrance of shebeen United Nations; one asks for "a mixture of two", the other asks Mamosali if she "can organise three" and then they go into another room. Mamosali mixes pinapole and skop donnor into one sekala. She then pours three measures of hopose into another sekala. She takes the likala to the two patrons,
who have gone into another room. She knows where to find them, behind the door next to a large empty oil drum. An habitue who walks into shebeen United Nations can tell where certain patrons will be. Friends know which places to go to if they are looking for their mates. I have often heard patrons saying "you are sitting in my place (or chair)".

Since these shebeens are patronised mainly by the traditionally oriented Basotho, locally brewed liquors are much more common than either of the two mentioned above. A bottle of spirits can be made available on request. It is also not unusual to find a senior officer sharing a drink with a junior member of his establishment whereas outside the shebeen setting such behaviour would be regarded as incongruous and would call for comments. This confirms the status levelling nature of unserious settings, together with its potential to create an atmosphere different from that pertaining outside its confines.

Category Four

Shebeens in the fourth category tend to sell concocted and sometimes adulterated liquor. They brew only one type of liquor. The dwellings are usually shacks made out of packing crates and sheets of corrugated iron, situated in dilapidated surroundings which are rather untidy. They have very few comforts in terms of seats or shelter. It is in these shebeens that one observes serious physical and psychological impairment.

The patrons are unkempt, have open ulcers and show obvious avitaminosis. These shebeens cater for the tastes and pockets of these patrons by selling cheap concoctions. Some of the drinks sold here are called 'Kill me quick', 'My days are running out', 'the grave is open', 'isishimiya' - an onomatopoeic name suggesting the swaying gait of an intoxicated man.
Figure 5.2 Ecological Distribution of Liquor Outlets

Key: o Shebeens
     △ Licenced public drinking places
     ♂ Community Centre
5.2 **Ecology of Shebeens**

In contrast to the 'problem' approach, the focus here is on the physical locality of the shebeen as a community institution in the theoretical tradition of Halbwach's 'social morphology' (1960). Figure 5.2 shows the spatial distribution pattern of shebeens in Lekoeishing together with a measure of their ecological relationship to other licensed liquor sources and other community institutions. It also relates in gross fashion the pattern of distribution of shebeens to internal variations in the suburb's social structure.

Every social institution necessarily must carve out for itself a place in space (Pfautz, 1960). As a typical 'customer institution', the shebeen tends to be located with reference to its competitors in the struggle to maximise its accessibility to the people whose needs it serves. As can be seen in Figure 5.2, there is a heavy concentration of shebeens as one gets nearer to the town centre or follows the major traffic arteries into town. Also there is a high concentration of shebeens where there is a high population density.

Despite the demonstrated pervasiveness of alcohol outlets in the community, there are variations in the extent to which different residential areas contain shebeens. In the Introduction, reference was made to the relationship between house ownership, social structure and the distribution of shebeens. In general, there is a trend towards an inverse relationship between shebeens and the socio-economic status of an area. The proportion of shebeens increases as one moves to lower status residential areas.
5.2.1 Number and Types of Liquor Sources

Licensed liquor establishments can be divided into two main categories, those establishments where liquor is sold for consumption on the premises and those where bought liquor is to be taken away, known as "Off sales". There are no such distinctions in unlicensed establishments, where the tendency is for consumption on the premises, except that a child may sometimes be sent with a container to get liquor for his/her father from his usual shebeen.

In Lekoeishining there are only two establishments licensed to sell liquor for consumption on the premises (see Figure 5.2) but, as well as shebeens, cafes and restaurants, grocery shops sell liquor without a licence. These have not been included in the geographic distribution of liquor sources as the focus of the study is mainly on shebeens. The flaunting of the laws in Lesotho is very common, even petrol stations sell liquor without a licence. These other retail outlets, including cafes, were not considered significant for the study, as they lack the sociability and play characteristics which are essential shebeen characteristics. Outside the immediate boundaries of Lekoeshining are two other licensed establishments for consumption of liquor on the premises.

There is only one licensed off sales establishment in Lekoeishining; however, there are seven off sales establishments within the immediate vicinity. Those shebeens in Lekoeishining which trade in European liquor buy it from these off sales.

Most on-premises consumption establishments or bars, except for private clubs, are part of an hotel. People are therefore forced to go to hotels if they want to drink on legal premises, unless they drink in their own homes.
My house-to-house survey showed that 286 families in Lekoeishining admitted that they sold liquor without a licence as their only means of earning a living or supplementing family earnings. As people are not always forthcoming with information about shebeen running, the figure of those who admitted to being in the business was surprisingly high. This figure made the ratio of local shebeens to the number of households 1:6. This conforms with ratios found by Lotter and Schmidt (1975) in South Africa which varied between 1:4 and 1:6 in different townships. Households that engaged in setokofele (intermittent selling of liquor for special purposes) are not included, as their purpose and character differs from that of shebeens.

5.3 Entrance Rhetoric

As the entrance rhetoric for the two shebeens have certain differences, the topics of rhetoric space-time properties and use of shebeen will each be discussed under the specific shebeen.

5.3.1 Shebeen United Nations

Shebeen United Nations is part of a complex of other rented rooms and shacks, varying in size from six by ten foot to eleven foot square. Figure 5.3 shows the ground plan of Shebeen United Nations. The numbers 1, 2 and 3 denote space division and organisations based on different status of shebeens and furnishings.
2A, 2C, D, E, F, Z = 6 different shebeens under one roof

P = shed used by a plumber and primus stove repairer

S = shack built with plastics and cardboard boxes - another shebeen and home for three people

Q = old back of a truck used as sitting space

R = broken down bucket latrine cement foundation - also provides seating facilities

Y = tins used as chamber pots at night and seats during the day

T = dug out open toilet walls made of old rags and blankets - about 3 feet high

1, 2, 3 = different drinking places for patrons

= Fence

Figure 5.3

There are eight rooms facing outwards around the roughly triangular courtyard (Figure 5.3). Most of them have been added to an earlier structure, therefore there is an array of different building materials, red unbaked bricks, grey cement blocks, stone and mud. There is no ceiling to the rusted corrugated iron roof, making rooms unbearably hot in summer. The walls and floor are broken, cracked mud. When it rains, the roof leaks and rivulets flow down the walls to form pools on the
floor. The entrances to the rooms are situated to serve three purposes: to attract the casual customer, to enable Mamosali to observe what is going on in the other subsettings and to enable her to screen patrons for appropriate subsettings. When a patron enters the physical confines of Shebeen United Nations, there is still a social boundary to cross. This social boundary is created by the different groups in different subsettings of the shebeen. This acts like a gate-keeping activity which allows some persons to remain within certain territorial limits of the shebeen.

Figure 5.4 Bo Mamosali preparing Liquor
Figure 5.4a: SEBAKA SA THITELO SA TAMENE
(Place of brewing in a shebeen)
An array of containers and utensils used in a shebeen. Note space taken
by drums and business related utensils. By 12 year old Sam
(2:6:1983:001)

Shebeen United Nations is home to more than thirty people. Although
the permanent inhabitants of the complex are estimated at this figure,
the temporary population could not be calculated as it is composed of
shifting population of relatives and friends either seeking refuge while
unemployed or spending short periods en route to or from the mines. Some
may be just visiting Maseru for a variety of reasons. Others are
patrons who, worse for drink, could not make it home or for whom it
might not be advisable to take the journey home. One morning between
4.30am and 5am, I counted up to sixty people who appeared to have spent
the night here. This further indicates the community centre aspect of
the shebeen.
The location of Shebeen United Nations is in a mixed residential-commercial configuration and it blends into these surroundings. The site confers direct benefits. It is close to the centre of town in which the major business concerns and all government ministries are housed as well as institutions like diplomatic offices, international organisations and para-statal establishments. Also, it is easily accessible to the customers, as one customer remarked:

"You see I can call in here on my way to work, to start the day right. During the break I can also nip down for a quick sip without my taking longer than the stipulated break. Thus my boss notices nothing amiss. At lunch time, I can have my food with a drink to wash down the lumps and help digest. Don't forget even my digestion is no longer good. On my way home from work, I drop by without too great a detour, now I will get home happy". (0012:41:26:3/2)

Another patron pointed out that he can:

"slip out from work without a 'special' (permission). My boss would not even be the wiser". (0011:41a:26:3/2)

Whilst another said:

"At work they believe I have gone to the bus stop to see my old lady off". (0013:41:27:3/2)

These absences are effected without the permission or knowledge of employers or supervisors. Civil servants often joke about the elaborate measures they devise to get away undetected. One of these is an officer who will leave his jacket on the back of his chair, have papers and pens all over his desk; some of these papers might have the beginnings of a letter or a report. All this gives the impression that the incumbent is somewhere within the building, even though he might not be visible at his desk. One asked me:

"Don't you know 'm'e we leave pens and coats?" (0032:61:5:1/3)

The second benefit is that, because of the propinquity of the shebeen to the commercial area, bo Mamosali incur minimum expenditure for the conveyance of their ingredients from the shops. They can either fetch
them personally, carrying the packages on their heads, or they can send the *Lipamakoti* (male patrons at the beck and call of *bo Mamosali*) to get the goods. Or some man in the shopping centre can bring the goods in his hand cart for a *sekala* or two.

The external environs of Shebeen United Nations convey an impression of fervent activity, pleasure, accessibility; at the same time there is an atmosphere of serious business.

Shebeen United Nations comprises of two rooms marked A1 and A2 (Figure 5.3). Two sides of the plot are unfenced, and people often use the grounds as a thoroughfare. Although the external environs give an impression of unrestricted movement, unwritten norms govern entry into the subsettings of the establishment. The entrances of Shebeen United Nations do not open straight into the open arena but are situated at the end of a ten foot passage. In category three shebeens, of which this is one, distinctions are made according to the patron's social standing and relationship with *Mamosali*. To identify and treat them properly some screening procedures have been devised. Special patrons use Room A1 (Figure 5.3) which at least has basic functional furniture. People allowed in this room are described as *Batho ba baholo* (2) which means people respected for their status, age or both. Most of the patrons permitted to go in fit into these descriptions. Importance and age are the main criteria, in that order. First-timers in the company of a known regular *motho e moholo* are generally admitted to A1. Unknown persons not in the company of a regular patron and undesirable persons are denied entrance into this room. As *Mamosali* or her assistant, is usually positioned near the door, the screening procedures are made easy. She can assess the patrons while she is selling liquor to them. The mode of dress also aids in screening. One can identify the miners
from Batho ba baholo: miners usually wear their mine boots, wear one, two or three blankets and carry elaborately decorated sticks and they always have a plastic wrist band bearing their mine number. Figure 5.3 shows variations in mode of dress often observed at shebeens.

Figure 5.5
Variations in mode of dress. Some patrons are wearing blankets, others are in shirt sleeves while some are in jacket and tie.

Another important aspect which aids screening procedures is what Ball terms "feeling respectable" (1970 and 1972). Some people may find the Al scene not to their liking, while others know that they would neither be welcomed nor considered "respectable" which is a criterion for being motho a moholo. Ball's Problematics of Respectability provides a comprehensive analysis of respectability as a problematic relational category in behaviour settings. Many people may feel embarrassed or out of place in some behaviour settings. They may be aware that their mode of dress or appearance is different from that of other members; they may not know how to act or what to say when in these settings. This can be viewed as a process of natural selection or self elimination.
Room A1 is referred to as the reed-room or maternity room (Ka lehlakeng or Mot soetseng). Traditionally when a child is born, a long reed is conspicuously stuck in the roof above the door. This room is out of bounds to strangers and visitors and only close family members are allowed in. There could not have been a more irrefragable way of expressing restricted admission into this room as every Mosotho knows what Motsoetseng means in terms of admission. Patron Tom once asked why I did not go Ka motsoetseng as I belonged to the "important people's" group; this showed that even the patrons classed each other.

Room A2 caters for the young, less conservative patrons often referred to as the trendy lot (Bo lightie, those who have seen the light, or mahipi). Among these one finds university students, clerks, self-employed tradesmen, literate miners, mobsmen and a fair proportion of young female patrons. On face value this room appears to be a free for all, but actually it is a "hippie front" for information dissemination about possible 'jobs'. A prerequisite is knowledge of the offbeat world, mien, dress and use of a certain language called setsotsi (language of the underworld). Greetings and screening routines are conducted in a gracious but firm manner. There is a great deal of backslapping and noisy overt hilarity outside, masking these procedures of sorting out the different groups.

Area 3 is an open space with a less restricted clientele although there are subtle segregations and territorial carving of space. Apart from lacking in minimum comforts, this place is unprotected from the wind, sun, cold and rain, and the smell from the beer debris and dregs combined with the stench from the bucket toilet and the open pit lavatory (T, Figure 5.3) is nauseating and choking. Although 3Q and 3R are often occupied by the very lowly placed patrons and those who are
not habitual patrons, generally most patrons may sit anywhere commandeering anything from a chair, a stone, a stump or the versatile empty paint tins, which are often used as commodes at night and as seats during the day.

Figure 5.6

Patrons sitting on a makeshift bench

Figure 5.6a

Note the versatile tins - commodes by night, seats by day
5.3.2 Peggy Bel Air Spot

Peggy Bel Air Spot belongs to category one of the shebeen. Classy shebeens are not referred to as shebeens; they are referred to by a number of terms, 'spot' being one of them. I am never sure whether this is derived from spot or sport. In Peggy Bel Air Spot the house is big enough for one room to be set aside for business. Sis Peggy, as she is indulgently called, owns the house.

The room is comfortably furnished with wall to wall carpeting, built-in bar counter and refrigerators, common characteristics of these shebeens (Figure 5.7). A hi-fi emits soft jazz and blues. A wide variety of European liquor, often more than one brand of whisky, vodka, gin, brandy and cold beer, is available together with mixers, ice and snacks and, usually, barbecued meat.

Figure 5.7
Admission to 'the spot' is very restricted. A patron knocks and the proprietor opens the door without moving out of the way. Recognised patrons are promptly admitted. If the door is open, then greetings are exchanged with the patron still standing outside. Regular patrons then walk through. First timers in the company of known regulars are generally admitted. Unknown persons not in the company of regular patrons are subjected to a stare from the proprietor and asked whether he/she needs help. His/her entrance can be forestalled with a polite excuse such as "we are having a family discussion". Here again, self-screening may occur as some people may not like the atmosphere.

Peggy Bel Air Spot has an ambience that turns it into a world of its own. When one enters this spot, it gives the impression of a place designed for a special kind of social life. In most cases it is here that Basotho male values are given ceremonial treatment. The meaning of masculinity is restated and underlined for all to know. Here men gather in isolation from the women in their society. It is almost as if men come to the 'spot' to glean what reassurances and support they can from one another. However, unlike men's ceremonial groups in other cultures, some women are allowed to enter this ritual men's house. Most patrons likened their 'spot' to a traditional court (Khotla) where men met to deliberate over serious matters and mundane everyday affairs. As one patron pointed out:

"This is a court (Khotla) where we can talk freely and socialise freely without the constraints put on us by society". (005:63:10:2/3)

Although women are allowed, it is almost as if they are being done a favour. Sometimes one may be asked "Have you come to the court (Khotla), madam?" To a masotho woman it is clear that this is not a welcoming statement. As a result, very very few women visit the spots.
If they go, they go in the company of a male patron. A man is not expected to ask his wife to accompany him to a shebeen. Thus the woman who goes to a shebeen may not be in the company of her husband as he would not ask her to go to Khotla with him.

The obvious male design manifestation is far less important than the covert messages that pervade the atmosphere. From the moment a male patron crosses the threshold into the shebeen he assumes territorial rights: this is his place, created expressly for men like him. He exudes confidence and ownership. Although there is no sign on the door announcing "Male only", such claims are part of the customs and mores that guide male and female behaviour alike.

We observe that, by a subtle process, an occupationallly deviant management consistently presents a respectable behaviour setting to a group of situationally deviant patrons. These presentation strategies are employed in both the shebeens observed. Unlike staff, patrons have no career interests in the shebeen; however, they keep offbeat time and sometimes offbeat company. Some deviant and criminal groups do utilise the setting for serious activities, but all actors have vested interests in helping to maintain the shebeen's respectable, unserious behaviour setting, whatever the purpose at hand. As one patron responded during an interview:

"See, different people come to the shebeen for different reasons and purposes although ostensibly it is to drink." (004:63:41:2/3)

5.4 Space Time Properties and Use

Although Shebeen United Nations and Peggy Bel Air Spot belong to different classes, it was observed that several spatial features in shebeens provided support for a variety of encounters for many actors. Some structures offer maximal physical and social exposure for social
encounters while others provide for seclusion and exclusion from the rest of the establishment and the outside world. Difference in hidden economics between the two shebeens are discussed in Chapter 8.

The most outstanding feature in shebeens as previously mentioned is the seating arrangement which can ensure that actors maintain some kind of contact with one another. They can either sit abreast of each other in self-contained groups, or sit in a circle, however crude. However, in some cases, seating is arranged so as to maintain ongoing encounters without the intrusion of others. Most shebeen seating arrangements are not permanent as is the case in conventional public drinking places. Here patrons can arrange the seating to suit the purpose at hand and, if patrons do not wish to be disturbed, they sit in a close circle that will not permit intrusion. On the other hand, if the group does not mind interruption, the arrangement is usually a loose one with gaps which can be filled by newcomers wishing to join the group. In places like Shebeen United Nations there are never sufficient seats so that patrons either stand or squat on the floor or the ground.

Another common feature in both shebeens is the cooperation of staff and patrons to sustain the impression and definition of a respectable setting. Each shebeen has its own ground rules and infraction of these is met with severe sanctioning from actors in the establishment. Some of the rules seem humorously blasphemous as can be seen in the "New and Old Ten Commandments":

170
Old and New Ten Commandments.

1. For being found drinking water or coffee when liquor is available - 10 years, no fine.
2. Refusing an offer of liquor - 2-4 years imprisonment.
3. Diluting liquor with water - 12 months.
4. Being found in the company of non-drinkers - 9 months imprisonment.
5. For vomiting after drinking - life sentence.
6. Failing to pay liquor accounts - 180 days.
7. Drinking liquor at home when a shebeen is available - 12 months and whipping.
8. Found sleeping at a table with a full glass of liquor - 15 years hard labour.
9. Refusing to smoke while drinking - 10 years solitary confinement.
10. Refusing to buy liquor when you have money in your pocket - 20 years without bread and water.
11. Drinking liquor with the Shebeen-Queen - she collects no account that month.

Their underlying meaning is clear for everybody. Even if the penalties stipulated may not be enforced to the letter, there are other ways of showing displeasure and these are often effective. One of these is the complete ostracising of any intransigent member. I observed that the patrons spoke to the proprietors as though they were a legitimate service work force and there was no sign of furtiveness or disrespect. Emphasis was always put on self-respect, as Mamosali admonished a patron:

"Listen, Sol, we are not age mates; however if we do not respect one another, there is no way we can work together". (01:20:16:5/1)

The way the shebeen gives legitimacy to the illegal activities carried out in it is significant as a public relations image. It achieves this by setting out certain locale and time for them. Thus madice are played as far away from the shebeen as possible, at times when there are few policemen on the beat. Or, in the example given in Chapter 1, the television set was not brought into the shebeen. This time-tabling is aimed at presenting and maintaining a respectable front.

Most of the discussion in this section will be based on Shebeen United Nations as it is the one that offers a varied patronage and programme.
Although there are subsettings within the shebeen, the close proximity of actors to each other, the lack of precise physical boundaries and the high physical mobility of actors who move in and out of subsettings facilitate frequent, brief, fluid social encounters among those acquainted and unacquainted. Even people desiring exclusivity are potentially open to conversational approaches from all actors in the shebeen. In their running conversation with several groups and individuals around the setting, the floaters tend to foster and link group encounters\(^3\) between known and unknown persons. The physical movement for changing location in cross-sex encounters is not confined to one sex group. A person wishing to move from his group might suddenly, and with a note of urgency, say:

"Hold here please, man, (handing over a sekala or cigarette) - I am coming just now, I want to catch that tsoti (ironically means a lawless person) before he disappears." (009:13:50:21/12/82)

Or a patron may vaguely utter "I am coming" and, with that statement, he or she moves out of the group, leaving something behind to give an impression that he/she is not deserting his/her group or drinking mates. It serves as an assurance.

5.4.1 Shebeen United Nations: Space-time Properties

Although structurally the shebeen is divided into three sections, various activities at different times of the day further subdivide the subsettings to suit the activities at hand. Thus a place can turn into a floor show or gambling arena or a barbecue place. Area 3 is more susceptible to these metamorphoses than the other two subsettings.

Time properties of shebeens are not straightforward to plot because the establishments are not governed by any closing or opening regulations. Closing time is governed by availability of liquor, willingness of patrons to leave, exhaustion of patron funds and proprietor's other
commitments, such as preparations for the following day or family needs. In the same manner, opening times are governed by the arrival of the first patron, as shown by a conversation between an early patron and Mamosali. This patron arrived at the shebeen at about 5.30am.

**Botso**: Hela! Mamosali, can you organise a two shilling sekala?
**Mamosali**: (Ignores him and continues sweeping)
**Botso**: Manyeo (mother of so-and-so) hurry up - I need to leave for work at 6am.
**Mamosali**: Ha! Botso, how can you come for liquor so early in the morning (but she gives him 20 lisente worth of beer)

(15:1:23/12/82)

If at midnight a patron is overcome with a desire for a drink, he can go to his shebeen and ask for liquor. However, due to the political situation, the presence of army personnel in the streets has curbed much nocturnal movement. Average closing time in summer is now 10pm. Gone are the days of late closing or all night merriment. In winter it is about 8pm as patrons have to leave early to look for a sleeping place or to secure a less exposed sleeping patch up on the hill overlooking Maseru. Those worse off for drink sleep at the shebeen and are ready for sociability the next day.

**Area 3: Appropriation of Setting**

Incoming patrons first enter the shebeen setting in area 3, which is suffused with all kinds of activities and music. I observed that different collectivities of patrons use the area in one or more ways at the same time, or in similar ways at different times. Activities may be drinking, intimate verbal interaction, dancing, listening to music, serious business negotiations, impromptu skits, display of a patron's abilities at oration, playing moraba-raba (a game that resembles draughts) or smoking cannabis (Zolo-cannabis rolled into a cigarette), or just observing the ongoing scene. There is no programmed entertainment but the activities in the area, for example music that is
played by different sets, lend a production aura to the scene. As one patron remarked:

"There is always something going on here. In days gone by this place was famous for entertainment. This is a place for focho (mine slang for a dance that was very popular in shebeens but considered too vulgar for performance outside that setting). Man! there were boys who could beat (play) the organ. There was nothing to beat this place, man!" (004:15:6:23/12/82)

Activities in Area 3 tend to unify a large observing and participating audience including patrons from rooms A1 and A2 or other shebeens. Surprisingly, even people from the immediate neighbourhood may watch from the safety of their own yards or are frequently drawn to Area 3. Most shebeens in rural areas possess this power to attract the whole neighbourhood.

Although activities do not vary appreciably from day to day, there are some differentials in shebeen happenings. The number of customers present and the type of clientele in attendance throughout each operating day give a shift like process, and activities vary over time during each shift.

Graph 1.1 shows patron number fluctuation at different times of the day. It was observed that patrons start coming to the shebeen very early in the morning. There is a drop after 8.30am, when offices open and the unemployed go job-hunting, but at 10am, or firm 'tea-break', to 1pm the numbers steadily increase. There is another drop from 2pm to 5pm, after which people leave work and flock to the shebeen in need of a drink to help wind down. At weekends the numbers change only slightly in the afternoon (Graph 1.2). The numbers are rounded up averages. There are great differences in numbers, dictated by pay days, between the first and last weeks of the month and the middle weeks.
Graph 1.1 Patron attendance during the week

Graph 1.2 Patron attendance during the week-end
First thing in the morning 3R tends to be very crowded; different groups sit around the cement slab drinking, exchanging information about job possibilities, wanting to be in a conspicuous place for those itinerant employers who need casual labour - what the patrons call 'piece job', or playing the 'dice' (to get money for drinks and food for the day), passing around cannabis cigarettes (zolo). These two activities can be undertaken in the 3R area because it is sufficiently far from the entrance of the shebeen not to implicate the management should the police come by. Also, the smell from a nearby rubbish pit and the burning rubbish masks the smell of cannabis. In this way, the 'respectability' of the shebeen is maintained. About midmorning, when hope for a piece job has disappeared, patrons drift nearer the shebeen and 3Q becomes the popular spot. The rest of Area 3 is dotted with groups of patrons sitting around with their drinks, conversing, joking and laughing. These are men who are self-employed with no pressure to get to work at a specified time, men who have been working the night shift and are having a convivial drink before going home to sleep, and men who, though unemployed, feel they occupy a higher standing in society than most of the patrons in Area 3 as a whole.

Among this group one finds dismissed junior civil servants and clerks, lower and middle cadre workers, eg. ex-junior school teachers, health assistants and First Aid workers.
When patrons start moving nearer to the establishment, interaction among patrons increases. 30 has the moraba-raba stone. This game draws patrons from different subsettings of the shebeen. Though it is basically played by two people, one can find as many as ten people around the game. The bystanders are there to encourage the player they favour. Moraba-raba is a man's game, therefore one hardly ever finds women here. As they play, the players engage in a running commentary on their prowess at the game, in bed and in every sphere of life. These commentaries are interposed with insults, and discreditory remarks to the opponent, like:

"I will beat you until you wish you could crawl back to your mother's womb. I have got him, I have got him by ..."
This game brings together a wide spectrum of patrons Batho ba baholo, bo lightie and other uncategorised persons. There is no indication of class consciousness - what is important is display of manliness by winning the game and impressive oration (Figure 5.7).

Other patrons who are not around the moraba-raba stone, sit around or on the rear platform of a scrap truck. These patrons play their homemade instruments, like sekhankula (a mouth violin belonging to the chordophone category), singing their own extemporary songs, and blending music with the ongoing activities around them. There is no distance between the folk artist and the audience, no separation between folk production and consumption. Others work on their handicrafts, making brooms, decorating popular Basotho sticks (melamu), or repairing shoes or primus stoves. This place is the most suitable for them because they can display their wares to a large group, some of whom may buy their wares or their skills. The moraba-raba and the impromptu skits appear to facilitate mixing of different groups.

As bo Mamosali are busy at the fireplace, preparing liquor or doing their washing, patrons engage them in flirtations of a light and sexy vein, though at times these may develop into earthy direct propositions and parries to them. One patron made up the following poem, having observed one such exchange between a patron and Mamosali:

"Listen you who have travelled wide
I arrived here at Shebeen United Nations
Madam 'Matsela has met with my brother Khanta
Indeed I am observing this lady
But it was in the context of their loving intentions.
To befriend (a woman) requires no advice
What causes such laughter?
'Beer drinkers' court each other standing..."(104:38:17/3)
Drinking among patrons usually follows a ritualistic reciprocal drink routine. A member can either buy a drink for the group, or they can pool their financial resources together and buy a four litre quantity of liquor (*sekupu*), and drink from a shared *sekala*. This is very much reminiscent of traditional practice, where liquor was brought in an earthenware pot and men drank from a calabash. During lunch time, after work and during weekends Area 3 becomes crowded and busy with myriad activities. As there is more space here than anywhere else in the shebeen, it is popular for traditional dancing, singing, showing off one's attributes in oral poetry, and for other impromptu sessions. All the activities that occur in other settings are also evident here - drinking, joking, serious negotiations and intense discussions. Sometimes people buy fish or meat and barbecue it when Mamosali removes her beer drum from the fire. At weekends, the popularity and activity of Area 3 reaches its peak in mid-afternoon, when members of the community are free from work or household duties and can enjoy a few hours of leisure. Even when they cannot be described as shebeen patrons, they are not barred from observing activities in their neighbourhood's important establishments.

Sometimes some of the 'new churches' use this forum to deliver their sermons and try and get converts. Hymn singing is not uncommon in the shebeen, even when there is no ecclesiastical presence. Sometimes there is an accordion and drum to accompany this singing.

As a whole, areas 3, 3Q and 3R appeal to self-contained groups of regular patrons but the mobility, spatial arrangements and noisy
sociability of the subsetting foster those problematic disruptions that often lead people to believe that shebeens are places where there is a great deal of fighting, some of it very serious as depicted in Figure 5.8, a shebeen scene by 11-year old Lolo. The mode of dress of the three men shows that they belong to different groups; the miner with a blanket slung over his arm, heavy mine boots and a stick; the man on the floor with a knife and unbuttoned shirt is a lightie and the man off his chair could be motho e mobolo.

![Figure 5.8: Drawing of fierce fighting in a shebeen when people from different actor groups make attempts at bridging the gaps. Lolo, 11 years old, has titled this drawing Violent Fighting](image)

As the day progresses, a number of patrons wander from group to group to cadge a drink, having exhausted their few hard earned lisente. The following conversation started when a patron moved into another group:

*Tots:* What do you want here, man?  
*Keke:* Hau! can't I ask just for a sip, just a mouthful?  
*Tots:* I don't drink with you, who are you anyway? Get away, go, go, man. (0024:19:58:21)

In some cases other members of the group might intervene and pass him the sekala, or the floater might decide to move on.
Patrons thus use the setting for a number of activities: as a convenient setting where they hope someone will pick them for a job, as an accessible place to talk, unwind, drink, play, meet friends, a home territory bar, a home away from home, a stage to display one's artistic talents, as a cultural centre, as a political forum.

The noise, hilarity and mobility of the hurly burly of drinking places reaches its peak about 3pm at weekends and 6pm during the week. By then patrons seem to be less concerned with personal appearance, as evidenced by the condition of their clothes and cleanliness. As another child observed in her essay:

"These people get up early and spruce themselves. At the end of the day the person is (grey) dirty after a number of tumbles. His trousers are beer-drenched or is it beer?" (l:2:9/6/83) Relebohile.

**Room A2**

This room has limited space which limits the scope of activities. Unlike the area outside, it provides a shelter from the rain and the cold. Patrons in Room A2 are hidden from prying eyes. Some of the patrons here indicated that they would not like it if their girl friends or wives knew that they were patrons of shebeen United Nations. When asked why, their reply was that:

"You know too how you women are. You are troublesome and uncomprehending. Women do not understand nothing about spoto (shebeen)" (0055:80:41:1/4)

This room is furnished with benches that are arranged against the wall, thus patrons are forced to sit in a face-to-face position, while the walls separate them from the rest of the setting. Because the room is small, people sitting on opposite sides of the room are only an arm's
length away, and a sekala can be passed across the room by stretching over. Sometimes when members want to play cards or other table games a makeshift table is put in the middle and the scene is set.

Restricted mobility forces patrons to select their seating position with care, because being in one room does not necessarily mean that all the patrons in it form a unified drinking group. The following exchange shows how the internal arrangement and restricted space forces patrons to position themselves in such a way as not to cause inconvenience, above all so that they can achieve sociability:

Mashea: Don't sit far homie. We will make room for you here.
Mashea: No, mfana, these drunkards might kick our sekala. (0034:63:90:3/3)

Mashea, turning to his neighbour, asks him to move a bit, so as to make room for Thabo.

As in the other subsettings in the shebeens, different collectivities appropriated Room A2 in one or more ways at the same time, or in one or more ways at different times, for verbal or physical interaction, drinking, serious business negotiations, or for pick up purposes as this room tends to have in it a number of unescorted young women patrons, most of whom are school dropouts. Sometimes patrons use it for a nap or to share zolo. Activities and routines did not appear to vary appreciably throughout the week. The room fills up more during weekends and at the end of the month than during weekdays. The setting appeals to self-contained groups of regular patrons who wish to remain together and who wish to avoid numerous contacts and encounters with others that might disrupt their togetherness.

During the mornings and mid-afternoons the room is usually used by only a few patrons, so few that someone can stretch out on the bench and sleep. Some of the patrons here do not work and their main occupation
is doing the rounds of homes where there is "keep wake". Here they spend all night, singing hymns and being provided with tea and bread. During the day they come to the shebeen and sleep. The room is likely to fill up after working hours and at weekends. More serious negotiators (in criminal activities) tend to come at those times also.

The room is used as a semi-secret setting for social intercourse and pick-ups. Some patrons use it as a home from home and may be provided with washing water if they have come straight to the shebeen from their nocturnal activities. As Sono demonstrated:

Sono: Can I have water to wash 'Mesame?
'Mesame: Ao! Did you not sleep at home?
Sono: No, I went to Thabo's home. You know his uncle has died, so I went to attend the "awake".
'Mesame: Where will you wash?
Sono: In there, only a few Tsotsies are in there.

(39:2:26/1)

The room is also used as a convenience setting, an accessible place to talk and make important contacts, a temporary hide out for those who want a secret and exclusive drinking setting. Some treat this configuration as a rendezvous, where they await the assembly of other group members. Often patrons ask Mamosali whether their mates have been there or have left a message for them. Often someone within the setting can provide the answers to their questions, as patrons know each other and know whose friends are whose.

Room A1

This particular subsetting of shebeen United Nations facilitates the most intimate encounters found in such establishments. This is provided for the inner core of the patrons. As it has been pointed out, it is a room for Batho ba baholo. It also affords the least opportunity for contacts with outsiders. Often the light is very poor in the room as the only source of light during the day is through the door which is
often blocked by queues of patrons and Mamosali conducting business. At night, light is provided by only one candle. The physical attributes reduce visibility and audibility. The seating arrangements provide for a face-to-face close body contact. Further, the physical features enable intimate interaction within an exclusive group and promote physical and social separation from ongoing activities.

Batho ba baholo use this particular room for intimate verbal exchange where discussions range from the ridiculous to the sublime and include serious and profound politics, or serious negotiations, including illegal transactions which some of the patrons would not have entertained or contemplated outside the shebeen setting. Some patrons use the subsetting as a rendezvous or place of assignation or a love tryst. Drinking, joking and eating are everyday activities.

Batho ba baholo use the setting primarily as one where unserious business activities are conducted, but often serious discussion and transactions are conducted. They regard the setting as a place to unwind or to be themselves. As one patron said:

"This is a place where I can be a mosotho and behave like one. You see, I don't have a shirt on. I am just like those men outside". (0010:42:100:42)

It is also from this room that Mamosali conducts her business. When family members come by, they use this room. It is also a bedroom for Bo Mamosali, which means it is a very private room.

5.4.2 Peggy Bel Air Spot

Coming into Peggy Bel Air Spot, patrons enter the setting which is suffused with a jazzy atmosphere. The first thing they see are patrons lounging in easy comfortable chairs around a table spread with glasses and drinks. This atmosphere could be mistaken for a private party.
Although patrons sit side-by-side during conversational encounters, they place themselves so as to attain face-to-face positions. They can also change seats to make contact with other patrons.

The setting in Peggy Bel Air Spot facilitates private and intimate encounters, since only regular patrons routinely come here. Serious negotiators move in and out of the setting as the interest at hand changes. They reported that activities remain routine over time. Drinking, joking, discussion comprise major activities, although business activities may be conducted. Variations in use depend on the composition of the group.

Summary

The shebeens' spatial features, physical structures, entrance routine and service routines promote physical demarcation and distribution of patrons and their activities in the setting. They also promote the type and quality of social encounters that may occur in the shebeen. Various types of actors engage in various activities over time, and these activities are governed by the patrons' interest at hand.

The rhetoric employed by shebeen actors tends to maintain and reinforce ongoing behaviour as acceptable within a legally ambiguous space-time configuration. Bo Mamosali or proprietors provide the patrons with a differential semi-secret and sometimes exclusive and exciting setting. On the other hand, the patrons appear to accept the rhetoric presented to them, including the legitimate selves presented to them by the management.
This legitimation is achieved through verbalised ideologies and sanctioning of overtly expressed non-conventional behaviour. For example, Mamosali would reprimand a patron whose behaviour is so violent as to cause disruption and attract the presence of the police. In another case the researcher observed two patrons who brought a double mattress to the shebeen and proceeded to publicly 'auction' the commodity (12/3/84). Obviously the mattress had been stolen from a shop. Such exhibitionist behaviour with regard to such transactions is taboo. The two gentlemen were immediately told by Mamosali to take the mattress away. Also, patron actors make this setting available to each other as the kind of setting they define it to be, a legitimate time out setting.

The ecological and physical settings in which actors situate and locate themselves provide for a differentiated patronage, exposure and accessibility that changes over time. The actor's interests at hand dictate how he positions himself within the configuration. As Roebuck and Freese (1976) and other studies on public drinking places have shown, most overt acts such as drinking, conversing, horseplay, flirting, eating, or standing each other a drink constitute the main standing behaviour patterns.

Above all these common standing behaviour patterns, the shebeen setting facilitates certain activities that most patrons would not entertain when outside the shebeen or would even condemn, such as overfamiliarity or the condoning of some illegal transactions, if not overtly, at least privately.

Furthermore, we note that the setting's patterns denote not only what the main activity or manifest function should be, but also what
secondary and side activities or alternative uses are fitting and proper within the setting. Goffman (1963) defines main activity as one that absorbs the major part of an individual's attention and interest. Side involvement is an activity that does not threaten or confuse simultaneous maintenance of a main involvement.

Having established what kind of setting shebeens are, it is only logical to find out who are the shebeen actors. The next chapter will examine the patron actors.
Footnotes

(1) Setokofele derived from stock fair; they are liquor and meat parties which usually start on Friday night and end on Sunday. Unlike shebeens which are confined to low status residential areas, setokofele are a common event in all residential suburbs. Setokofele are intended to raise substantial amounts of money in one weekend. People have been known to raise up to M1,000 in a weekend.

(2) Batho ba baholo (plural) means important or big or old people (singular: motho e moholo). By virtue of their status or age, these people are accorded certain differential treatment.


(4) Shebeen patrons continue to use the old currency of £.s.d. though this denomination was last in circulation in the early 1960s. Lesotho has its own currency of Maluti and lisente. Young patrons who have never used £.s.d. still request their liquor in shillings or zoka (sixpence).

(5) Tsotsi: although this term generally refers to a certain youth subculture characterised by murder and stealing, it is also used as a form of addressing a young adult who believes he/she is an artful cheater of the system or is progressive.
CHAPTER 6

TYPE OF SHEbeen ACTORS

One of the main interests in this study is the understanding of shebeen as a social institution within the community. An analysis of shebeen actors is necessary to achieve this. As stated in the introduction, it is important to know who goes to the shebeen, when, to do what and with whom. This also has a bearing on the eleventh focal area as listed in the theory chapter. This focal area is concerned with typologies of shebeen actors.

In reconstructing these typologies, the perspectives of different actors provided the data on the shebeen actors, their identities and self conception, their social meanings and their world views through which they verbalized their behaviour. This is in keeping with the methods outlined in chapter 3. The data are obtained directly from the self knowledge of the actors about their identity, social meaning and world view. It was obtained from social encounters, conversations, gestures, body language, mode of dress and type of activities. Some interview material was utilised for biographical and illustrative materials.

My concern was to get both differentiations among the actors and synomorphy with the shebeen. The typologies are derived from the categories suggested by the actors themselves. Information gained from the input of the shebeen owners about themselves is dealt with in another section because it is derived from a different theoretical perspective from that of patron actors.
6.1 Sung Oral Poetry

The use of oral poetry, referred to as Basotho miners' poetry or lifela tsa litsamaea-naha le lifela tsa liparola thota\(^{(1)}\) and songs in the setting was a unique approach incorporated in this scheme.

To make it cognisable for readers who are not familiar with sung poetry, I chose to give a detailed description of this particular approach as close as possible to the data collected.

Among the Basotho men, social identity has traditionally been articulated through forms of "poetic-musical recitative composition" (Coplan undated, p.10). When the mines were newly opened, many Basotho journeyed to these on foot. These were long distances of more than two hundred miles. To make the journey less tedious and to set the walking rhythm, they composed epics of poetic self-praise, reflections and social commentary. Most of these compositions were improvisations based on chants they had had to learn at initiation schools.

Composition of poetry among the Basotho has a long history and is well documented by Damane and Sanders (1974) and many other literature scholars. The important characteristic of Basotho poetry is that it establishes historical continuity of the Basotho nation and its family lineages and clans. It further elaborates on a Sesotho theory of the person around a code of moral action.

We find that the lifela tsa Litsamaea naha help to resolve the disjunctions between their home and the mine life compound as domains of experience, relating self-image to social values in the total environment. Similarly, the poetry sung in the shebeens helped resolve the disjunctions between the mines and returning to Lesotho. The poets seek poetic self-definition in the shebeen setting.
The concept of oral literature is an unfamiliar one to most people brought up in communities with a long history and tradition of literacy. It is only in recent years that scholars began to show interest in the oral poetry of the miners. The sung oral poems, like the British Industrial folk ballads of the mines, are not merely for entertainment. As MacColl (1954) puts it:

"there are no nightingales in these songs, no flowers....their themes are work, poverty, hunger and exploitation....They are songs of toil, anthems of the industrial age".

Thus sung oral poetry is composed by the individual orator and expresses his experiences about economic, social and historical change. If we accept Arnold's (1965) description of poetry as nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, "that is in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth", (Page ix) then to disregard these poems would be losing valuable data.

The poems provide the researcher with very rich data because they are an unrivalled source for overcoming the problem of personal value judgments inherent in methods where the researcher is the initiator or precursor.

It is because of the nature of oral poetry that I found it was a valuable source of important data on how the actors perceived themselves and interpreted the world around them. The significance of oral poetry is in the actual performance and in the response of the listeners. The actual enactment of the poem involves emotional situations of the experiences of the narrator, his pain, his expression, vocal expressiveness and movements all indicating the sincerity of his experiences. Oral poetry provides information that would otherwise only have been obtained by long tortuous interviewing. It was unrivalled as a means of obtaining personal information and experience as conventional interviewing was not particularly easy in a shebeen. The performer of
oral poetry is more involved in actual social situations than the writer in the more familiar literate tradition (Finnegon 1970). The poetry is also a conscious product of the artist's response to the world around him. Another important aspect of oral poetry is that it provides entertainment. In the shebeen, other patrons provide a supporting role to the recital by ululations and shrill sounds. The following excerpt illustrates the richness of data in oral poetry:

Listen to one another
Here is my name for singing
It is Rabotso of Thabana Mohlomi
Ntaote on top of the plateau
See he is alone - he is alone the wanderer
The day I arrived
The day I arrived here on earth
I descended from God's place on Thursday
On Friday I was on the way
On Saturday I was in Lesotho
That day there was rejoicing
Among the women folks there was rejoicing

It is this ululation
In the home of mother Malisema
The person who is talking
is talking because he is hurt
On that day they had a feast for midwives
A feast for a boy child
That was when I was given the name that was my father's
Rabotso
A person who lives under hardships across the Vaal
I lived among the Europeans
A country that has known hardships (102:17:10:15/1)

In this poem the poet has given us his name, place and day of birth and some of his experiences in South Africa and his views about that country. Emotions, attitudes and thoughts of the poet are expressed in the recitation. This sung poetry provided personal biodata, data on profiles of other members and other groups in the shebeen.

The relationship between artist, society and literature is succinctly described by Scott who points out that art is not created in a vacuum but is an undertaking by someone responding to the community's need for knowledge.
"The sociological critic, therefore, is interested in understanding the social milieu and the manner and the extent to which the artist responds". (Scott 1974:p.10)

This correlation between literature and society shows that literature is a conscious product of the artist's reaction to the world around him. For him, the conditions in the world and his situation in life constitute an ever present challenge.

It has been said that among non-literate communities, oral poetry takes the place of newspapers (Finnegan 1976). Poems can be used to report and comment on current affairs, for political pressure and propaganda and to reflect and mould public opinion (Ibid.). The topical functions of poetry are especially significant in the contemporary situation in Lesotho where poetic licence can be used to verbalize their problems — political, economical or social — at the same time avoiding the open dangers of speaking directly.

Since the shebeen is perceived as Khotla for men to discuss a variety of issues, some of which are highly controversial while others are of a mundane everyday nature, the sung oral poems provide a vehicle for transmission of these issues. After all, the artist composes his poems in response to experienced situations. Thus the Khotla element is confirmed.

I also used songs composed by the different performers in the shebeen. These too were of topical importance in showing how the actors perceived their world. Political songs are not of recent origin in Southern Africa and the recognition of their data potentiality has long been acknowledged by scholars in social science. Denisoff did a sociological analysis of urban propaganda songs, using songs of persuasion, as long ago as 1966. (Denisoff 1966). Using "poetic licence" to taunt a government supporter, one patron sang the following song on his homemade choralophena
"They have taken his blanket
They have taken Mokhahle's blanket" (112:3:40:7/12/82)

A blanket is a symbolic garment among the Basotho. In folklore the blanket of the King's son is symbolic of kingly powers. The singer was using this symbol to convey usurpation of power by the current government.

Anyone who is familiar with the political situation in Lesotho would clearly comprehend what the artist was trying to transmit. In spite of such a taboo subject, the singer incurred no punishment which he would have surely received had he said this under "normal" conditions. The apparent innocuous nature of the song was received with a tolerant shrug. This reaction would not prevail anywhere else in the country.

Anthropologists have used African folk stories to generate theories to interpret so-called primitive cultures and determine their social functions. A great deal appears to have been based on unquestioned assumptions, and oral literature has been regarded as a kind of 'survival' from the past giving the impression of custom and not relating it to contemporary situations. Little has been discussed about the nature of the audiences reached, local assessment of the setting and the position of the story-teller. In this study this data is used for its significance in relation to verbalization of contemporary issues.

6.2 Typologies of Patron Actors in Shebeens
6.2.1 Bokobonyana (2) (The Small Blanket-wearer)

Bokobonyana form the largest numerical group at any time frequenting the shebeen. They come singly, as well as in all sorts of combinations, from first thing in the morning, and often remain until the liquor has been
sold out or they have run out of money or the shebeen has closed up. The female members sometimes come unescorted and also in a mixed sex group of two men to ten women.

The group members wear their blankets most of the time whether it is hot or cold. They wear them in a style and manner that shows that they are a functional apparel, often covering tattered clothing. Better materially endowed Basotho usually wear their blankets at ceremonies or when it is cold.

This group covers a wide age range between fifteen and fifty years. They are barely literate. In terms of lifestyles they form two groups: the migrant labourer and the low-skilled worker. The migrant labourer has three sub-groups - the newly returned migrant labourers who have temporary accommodation at the recruiting agency and the ex-migrant workers who have no fixed place of abode and sleep rough because many of them cannot afford to pay rent. They consequently have to carry their belongings wherever they go, hence the wearing of blankets all the time and men awaiting openings at the recruiting agencies. In recent years the waiting period can be months or years. These men also sleep rough. The low-skilled workers live in rented rooms in and around Lekoeishining. Bokobonyana are usually from outside Maseru and most of them come from rural areas.

The women in this group are usually young - under thirty years old - and have an indefinable marital status.

6.2.1(i) Self-Perspectives

Bokobonyana view themselves as a group that has been exploited and downtrodden, relegated to the bottom of the social ladder through the combined policies of South Africa and Lesotho. Under recent policies, South Africa has not been eager to re-employ a large proportion of the
Basotho migrant workers. On the other hand, Lesotho has for a long time had to rely on female labour as this group formed a large proportion of the residents. Also Lesotho has limited job openings for this group of men who can no longer be employed by the mines. One patron describes how his lack of material possessions is not a true reflection of his labours:

One cannot dispute with God about poetry
If things were according to my work output
I would have a red ox span for ploughing
I would be having a feathered plough
I would have bought a tractor
My child would be asking for sugared water

This group believe that its members are hard working and should have credit for their labours. Although they support the basic social tenets of the Basotho, those of hard work and provision for their families, the odds are stacked against them. Without money they cannot go back to their families to expose their failures. Availability of jobs is not within their jurisdiction. They feel that the views held by the general public about them are incorrect and unjustified. They believe that the wider society regards them as a drunken, indolent and habitually deviant group. They are a hardworking, honest group who do not have the power to influence their fate.

6.2.1(ii) What Bo Kobonyana do and with Whom

Bo kobonyana are regular patrons who spend most of their time in the shebeen as they have very little else to occupy their days. They occupy most of the areas 3R, 3Q and 3, interacting among themselves. The interaction can take any form; drinking, smoking, talking, singing, playing moraba-raba or reciting poems. One patron sang about how he came to the shebeen:

"My friends left me here at the litter ground
The foot-sloggers carried me along
Yet they were coming to leave me here at the spot
Since that day I have been a regular of this place"

(114:24:23:11/1)

He further elaborated on why the group has to sit in the open air :-

"Man of the foot-sloggers my buttocks are burning
I am sitting on a stone exposed to the wind
I am not a hipi, I have no tie
They gave me skop-donnor (4) and said I am afraid of spending money
They said I should come and drink my liquor outside in the dust"

(114:24:70:11/1)

This shows that his having no tie and not belonging to the hipi group bars him from having a comfortable place and from purchasing much more expensive liquor.

This group is the most carefree and uninhibited in the shebeen. Since they occupy a large open space there is a high degree of movement, with patrons insinuating themselves in and out of various encounters, some of which are lengthy. They may be joined in some of their activities by other patrons. They are the most sociable and the most socially active group in the shebeen. They move from one group to the other exchanging greetings, gossip, jokes, discuss yesterday's happenings, repartee, cadging a drink or a puff of tobacco or zolo, play-acting, playing moraba-raba or ma-dice to get money for the day's drink. The management and other groups seem to appreciate and accept their exuberance and spontaneity. Their acts, especially those that are culturally oriented, attract patrons and member of the community. In this way they improve the shebeen's public relations with the community.

Like most other patron groups, bokobonyana frequently discuss their personal biographies and serious personal events. It is easy for them to engage in such discussion, especially through poetry, where poetic licence provides an opportunity for freedom of expression. The information is given in such a way that it does not interrupt the main
purpose of coming to the shebeen, that of playing and relaxing. The shebeen atmosphere provides an abreactive climate without the pressure of a traditional therapeutic setting. One patron responded in this way when another fellow asked him how he contracted a venereal disease -

"I was on a visiting to my in-laws. I endeavoured to circumcise a cat naked. Then my woman's mother cautioned me 'This is a cat and it will wound you'. I scoffed and told her I have circumcised bigger cats. Indeed I circumcised it but it lacerated me between the thighs."

(115:100:35:30/4)

The patron tells us that although the lady he had gone out with tried to warn him, he boastfully disregarded her warnings and this resulted in his contacting the disease.

In Sesotho there are many songs about embarrassing incidents occurring at the place of a man's "in-laws". It seems to imply that there is no place more embarrassing or perplexing than the home of his in-laws. The more a son-in-law tries to impress is in-laws, the more he gets himself into uncomfortable and embarrassing situations especially with his mother-in-law.

On a more serious note the group discusses their unemployed status and prospects in the job market, especially with reference to the problems of recruitment. Information about openings and opportunities are exchanged and work contacts made. A patron describes how this information is disseminated. He points out that :-

"In the shebeen we bump into each other in milling around. We meet friends we last saw when we were working in the same mine. As there is a high incidence of mobility in the mines most of us lose contact with friends and relatives. In the shebeen it is highly probable that I will meet friends. As we talk about our families, work, drought, we might also learn of a company that is recruiting and this might be a chance for me to get a job. Some recruiting clerks come to the shebeen and this afford us an opportunity to talk to them about getting a job".

(0066:101:3:1/5)
Bokonyana are the most active group in traditional dance and songs and sung oral poetry. They bring their own musical instruments, some home-made, others of European origin. Their music still pulls together more people than any other form of music. They follow the Basotho traditional habit of making up their own personal songs and of blending music with every phase of life. The patron in this photograph is playing his own home-made chordophone instrument. Young and old, male and female patrons congregate around him.

Figure 6.1
Moneri playing his Sekhankula
Chanted slogans have always been used in Lesotho to give direction and inspiration to those involved, whether it is resistance against the Colonial power or ridiculing local parties or praising Mamoseli or her brew. It is not uncommon to find such chants in the shebeens.

Because of their large numbers and their preference for home brewed liquor, this group forms an economic base for Shebeen United Nations. They take part in performances more frequently than the other patron groups and this also tends to attract prospective patrons and therefore increase the number of consumers. Some shebeens employ these self-made musicians to attract patrons. One local resident observed that:

"Shebeen patrons know how to create an atmosphere of pleasure and leisure. Apart from getting drunk the next most important activity is jollification". (04:24:3:9/1)

Because they are gregarious and exuberant they often engage in amorous antics which might either be playful or have serious intentions. Such behaviour runs the gamut from light endearing remarks like "my darling" to open proposal and hugging. While one poet was engaged in his oration, a mate was seriously trying to woo a woman patron. Immediately his poetry changed to include this activity:

"The butterfly changes
'Matsela meets my brother Khanta
His impatience cannot be controlled
Because here our love overflows
Men! Beer-drinkers get excessively drunk
They lose their senses

Listen to me you foot-sloggers
Now the butterfly changes
The wild beast of ha Mojela sings
No! Wooing requires no advise
I am watching this lady
But it was by consent". (103:28:22:15/1)

Resume

Though most of Bokobonyana's activities revolve around sociability, cultural activities and negotiation for jobs, some of their conduct is
concerned with illegal activities such as selling stolen goods, dealing in cannabis or even planning to take goods from "off the back of a lorry" - that is stolen goods. Although this group utilizes the shebeen mainly for social purposes, it also engages in serious activities and uses it as home territory. Additionally, the shebeen serves as an information centre and clearing house for what is happening and what is available. They meet to interact with friends, possible employes and dealers. Serious as well as sociable encounters transpire. Most of them are segmental deviants. They are the shebeen's largest numerical patron group and are the most important actors from the standpoint of ongoing activities and performances. They generate, sustain and reflect the shebeen setting more than any of the other groups of actors.

6.3 Bo Moshana

This group is also known by a variety of terms like Ba-Shana or Ba-Fana which are friendly ways of addressing a young man. It is a shortened form of "boys". I recall asking a patron about the occupants of room A2. His response was that "it's only Ba Shana in there". He then went on to identify those who were in there: "It is bra Tsepo" and so on. Bra is an abbreviated form of brother. Sometimes they are referred to as bo Lightie meaning those who have seen the light, that is those who can read and write or those who are under weight and not yet mature. The group does not particularly like this term because some of them are fairly mature people and bo lightie gives an impression of immaturity and unseriousness. The description of this group as being ma hipi is not welcome either. A hipi denotes someone who is deviant and belongs to a certain subculture and dresses in an ultra modern way. Bo Kobonyana relish using this term to annoy Bo moshana. The members address each other as bra so and so, or as moshana. They wear jeans. Although
casual, they are always clean and well dressed.

Bo bra, bo fana and lightie refer to male actors, whilst ma hipi applies to both male and female actors. Hipi women are very young girls or women who are school drop-outs but, because they have had some years of schooling, they feel they are not "blind" as are Bo Kobonyana women. Their ages range from thirteen to the early twenties. Often they are well dressed and made up; most of them smoke(6) cigarettes. They are always being fought over by the members of their groups and it can be dangerous to poach another man's woman. Fights and unspeakable insults are often hurled at each other whenever there is such a dispute. One patron delivered such an impressive list of invectives with the speed and fluency of a praise singer that for days he was the talk of the shebeen.

The male counterpart of this group is also young with an age range between sixteen years to the early thirties. There are great variations in this group in terms of education, occupation and marital status, yet there appears to be a common binding element making them one group. The less educated associate with the highly educated to improve their standing in the eyes of other shebeen actors. As one of them commented:-

"You have to move with the times man. If you associate with bo Kobonyana people will look down upon you. Also remember bra Choks is finishing his law studies at the University - you see he might help me one day, you never know". (0056:83:10:4/4)

Another jokingly remarked that :-

"I carry the officer's bag", (0057:83:13:4/4)

implying that, although not necessarily a butler in the European sense, he is a gentleman's man.

The high in status associate with the low in status in their endeavour to show that "we the Basotho are an egalitarian community" and that "we do not despise the low in status". The majority are well educated; most
of them having been to high schools or technical colleges, they are educationally equipped to work at blue and white collar levels. Most are employed in government, the private sector or are self-employed in skilled occupations. Some men in this group are married, while the women are without marital ties although they may have children. Bo Bra play conventional roles in the straight world.

The membership language is often couched in the argot of the underworld; a mixture of bastard Afrikaans and vernacular languages of the region. The language is referred to as 'setsotsi' or 'fly taal'. The management takes a chary view of some members of this group. They are the most vulgar and pugnacious group: consequently, incidents of violence are common among them. Often Mamosali has to intervene and some receive banning orders for substantial periods. There are shebeen norms which govern ways of applying discipline when a member goes beyond the accepted levels of laxity, aggressiveness or other behaviour. This aspect of shebeen life will be discussed further in the chapter on behaviour in the shebeen setting (chapter 7). Suffice to note that transgressions are not lightly tolerated, although wide latitudes of behaviour are accepted.

This group has no career interests in the shebeen but some of its members are involved in underworld activities. Most of them are acquainted with many underworld persons and may even engage in business transactions with them, transactions that they would not entertain outside the shebeen universe. They appear to be situationally deviant. Thus, although they are anchored in the conventional world, they have access to an unconventional world in which they can occasionally play marginal roles without commitment. When the fun is over, they return to their conventional world without contamination. They are social participants in the wider conventional society and support the basic social institutions. They desire the pleasures and excitement of the
shebeen world as well as the security of the conventional world.

This group enjoys less freedom of movement than bo Kobonyana or Batho ba Baholo because its members are perceived as troublemakers and bo tsotsi. They are less knowledgeable about traditional music and dance and, because they are anxious to appear enlightened, they are hesitant about joining spontaneously in the many activities of the shebeen.

6.3.1 Identities and Perspectives

Bo Moshana view themselves as swinging, light-hearted and hell raising players who, though anchored in the conventional world, have ready access to the unconventional world.

Though somewhat rebellious about sex and morality, they identify with and support basic social institutions and, as already pointed out, some of them are married. One actor in this group took pride in his parents' status. He is the son of a doctor and his mother came from one of Maseru's old and well known families. He was always cleanly dressed with highly polished shoes and wore dark glasses in spite of the fact that room A2 is very poorly lit. One patron from bo Kobonyana remarked that he must be a tsotsi as tsotsis always hide behind dark glasses. The moshana to whom the remark was being directed became very angry:

"I am not a tsotsi; I don't steal other people's property. Hey sonny, I am Tau, you are just a nobody in this community. Who are you to call me a tsotsi?" (0060:90:14:18/4)

He is not the only one in this group who comes from a good background. One actor boasted about his family:

"My grandfather was a minister of religion, my uncle is an elder in church and my brother is a doctor. The whole Lekoeishinging belongs to my family. Man! we can't all be officers". (0061:90:16:18/4)

Occasionally I walked home with some of the actors whose families reside
in Maseru West. Being seen in the company of the researcher enhanced their perception that they belonged to the conventional world and that their occasional dabbling in marginal roles was not a permanent aspect of their lives.

6.3.2 What Bo Moshana Do and with Whom

Since members of this group are in full employment or at colleges, most of them come to the shebeen after work and most often at weekends. Those who are not as occupied, like many other unemployed actors, spend a good part of the day at the shebeen talking, drinking or lounging around. They come in groups of two or more, having arranged the rendezvous in the offices during the day. Generally, patrons from such backgrounds patronise category one or category two shebeens but category three still gets a share of this group.

Since they do not mix as much as bo kobonyana their activities are limited to within the group and they talk and drink among themselves. They claim they come to the shebeen to listen to the music and watch the impromptu acts which are common there.

Some say that they come to the shebeen to see how bo Kobonyana, whom they perceive as "exciting pariahs", spend their days. As one of bo moshana remarked:

"One finds all kinds of exciting characters here at United Nations. Characters you hear about but can only believe that such people are real when you have seen them here. You meet gamblers, criminals, odd people, sons of Ministers - government and religious - people like Mankopa who can steal your shoes off your feet". (0025:32:16:20/1)

The few activities that draw bo moshana into the wider circle of the shebeen are moraba-raba or throwing the dice. Otherwise many regular patrons, and the management, take a chary view of this group because "these mahipi think they are better than us - they think they are clever
and know it all". Interaction between bo moshana and other patron groups and the management is segmental and sometimes not as warm as is the usual character of interactions in shebeens. Not all bo moshana receive such out of character treatment as one Mamosali explained:

"If they have been regular patrons and have behaved themselves and do not cause too much trouble, they are alright and we treat them as we treat everybody. The problem is these young boys lose their heads and give us a bad name". (05:32:20:20/1)

The women in this group are even more marginal than the men. Although this feature is not confined to women in this group only; generally, women patrons in shebeens are only just tolerated. Some male patrons are wary of women patrons because:

"You can never trust a woman; they talk too much. They are always cadging a drink or a cigarette. One is never sure whether they are after one's money. Woman patrons are alright but I don't want to be too close to them". (001:2:14:6/12/1982)

Other female patrons view hipi women as unfair competitors and remain aloof from them or interact with them on a one to one basis. Some view them as prostitutes out to "impress the men". Social encounters between men and women from different groups occur more frequently than those between women of different membership groups. One hipi woman pointed out that:

"The other women patrons are always abusive towards us. They don't talk to us nicely. The worst ones are the ones in room A1 (ka motsoetseng), yet they are supposed to be mature people who should be more understanding and knowledgeable. Anyway, we don't care. I never ask for their beer; I use my own money". (0042:65:80:4/3)

Bo moshana do contain a high proportion of small-time law breakers who sometimes pull off big jobs. Negotiations and purchase of illegal goods and services are frequent occurrences especially with regard to household goods. There is a certain language used during such transactions. For the protection of the establishment, the management is often kept out of such negotiations. There is an elaborate strategy to make it appear as if the management is not aware of such transactions. Two bo moshana
walked in with a box containing a litter of dogs. Without any preamble they started to auction them. With great protestations, Mamosali told the two to take the dogs away as she did not want any trouble. After some deliberations, they obliged and disappeared with the dogs into the crowds of Lekoeishing.

Some of the "small-timers" take delight in elaborating on strategies of how to get goods. It is difficult to gauge what is an honest account and what is just empty youthful boasting or repetition of someone else's story. Although most patrons are very conscious of what is a right or wrong transaction in goods of questionable origin, such activities are viewed as acceptable ways of "making one's living in these times of hardship". A moral code is utilized to rationalise the behaviour and to interpret the social norms in such a way that the negative legal construct is negated.

The whole shebeen universe seems to be plagued by incongruities, some of which are very obvious like the shebeen itself, which is an unofficial undertaking. The more intriguing ones are those pertaining to the attitudes and behaviour of the patron actors. In seeking to explain the apparent inconsistencies between attitudes and behaviour, patrons appear to be using certain cues to form a meaningful and integrated explanation of their action. This poses theoretical problems in trying to infer meanings from actors' actions and one finds oneself on shaky ground. Theories put forward by social psychologists to explain the relationship between attitude and behaviour on the surface appear to have a potential for being useful in understanding actions. Of the theories proposed, attribution theory seems to have been extensively utilized even in non-conventional situations such as deviancy. The central tenets of attribution theory is that interpersonal descriptions are the outcome of
an attempt by the actor to explain his behaviour. (Eiser, 1980).
Therefore a statement about a person's attitude is no more and no less
than a statement about his behaviour, the latter being logically linked
to the former. But attribution theory falls short when one examines the
attitudes of shebeen patrons who are generally against deviant activities
and do not relate their behaviour to participation in a deviant activity
within the shebeen. This shortfall is made up by the advice to look at
lay conception which has been the kingpin of this analysis, hence the use
of oral poetry.

In the language of social psychology, actors attribute their behaviour
to the situations they are in. Further, these scholars advise that, to
understand how people come to define certain behaviour in ways that are
different from the general stream of conception of social attitudes, we
must look at the "lay conception" held by the perceiver rather than
search in the personality of the perceived for stable dispositions
corresponding to verbal tags attached to a person. The interest is in
seeking explanations and interpretations and an attempt must be made to
understand how the actors try to simplify their experiences to the point
at which they can appear interpretable and explicable.

To a large extent this is in accord with ethnographic methodology which
espouses the use of an actor's explanation of his own situation. But the
mixing of the straight and the deviant, especially in this group of ho-
moshana, is not explained but taken as the norm, which is more in keeping
with the phenomenologist thesis that statements about attitudes need have
no implications for actual behaviour. The phenomenologist thesis does
not carry an outsider far who is anxious to understand the shebeen
behaviour setting: maybe we should accept situations as they are
presented and not search for hidden meanings.
Eiser (1980) overcomes the problem of trying to understand dissonance by pointing out that behaviour which appears not to be in accord with attitude is based on the belief that incongruity or novelty produces arousal which is the precursor of changes in attitudes or acting in a certain way. The incongruities of the shebeen behaviour setting could, therefore, be viewed as precursors for "situational deviancy" in shebeens. Added to this are the novelties of certain activities in the shebeen as the remark from one patron on page 174 indicates.

6.4 Batho ba Baholo

This group identifies with particular occupations, class and family positions. They denigrate theft and verbalise on the values of the middle and upper classes and believe in working for one's living. In keeping with the description, they comprise the most senior patrons in the shebeen. They are senior in age as they are between thirty and sixty years old. They may also be senior in occupying a high position at their place of work or in the community. The combination of these characteristics makes them a group of batho ba baholo. Most of them are from the educated upper-middle and middle classes and have mixed marital status. They play conventional roles in the straight world. Women from this group are also of mature age, often with no marital ties. Like bo moshana most members are educationally equipped to work at white collar jobs and most are employed in the middle and upper cadres of government, para-statal and professional jobs. They reside in respectable residential areas in their own houses or employer-provided accommodation.

Although most of them are acquainted with members of the underworld, they are not habitual deviants. They all drink but they do not use drugs.
They are always well heeled and well dressed. If they wear a blanket, it would be one of the expensive, difficult to obtain, exclusive to the House of Fraser type. Their speech patterns are conventional, using both the official languages – Sesotho and English.

6.4.1 Perspectives and Identities

Batho ba baholo view themselves as responsible and mature people, deserving respect and deference. One patron often repeats how "everybody respects me in this place and I will do everything to retain that respect. I have grown up sons for whom I have to set an example". They identify with particular occupational groups, class and family position. They denigrate law-breaking and verbalize the importance of upholding the values and laws of the country. As social participants in the wider conventional world, they are involved in many civic and service activities and align themselves with the establishment.

They consider themselves the mirror of Basotho culture and explain that their patronising of a shebeen reflects their pride in that tradition. As one patron commented during a group interview:–

"Look here my dear, you come to the shebeen because you want to experience the fullness of being a mosotho. The atmosphere here is traditional and you feel comfortable in it if you are a mosotho and not a 'black European'". (0021:24:92:11/1)

To its members the shebeen world is not an 'off beat' establishment. They desire the pleasures offered there because the activities are in tune with the patrons and their being Basotho. One other patron claimed that he could not see how a traditional institution like a shebeen could be defined in 'foreign legal terms'.

Their conventional roles and identities receive other patrons' support.
and are not seen as being in contradiction with patronising a shebeen. Sometimes their behaviour greatly affected the behaviour of other groups in the shebeen and where there could have been a gross infraction, a patron may restrain himself to avoid displeasing batho ba baholo. Sometimes they intervene in in-group conflicts, an act which would not have been tolerated had it come from any other group member. Batho ba baholo appear to be mixing successfully in the worlds of both middle and upper class residences and slum leisure and pleasure.

They are regular members of the shebeen, keeping to what they describe as "responsible" leisure times like official lunch breaks and after work hours, with only occasional infringements of these hours. They gain initial entrance only in the company of another regular motho e moholo as they occupy the inner circle space of the shebeen, the room which also serves as bo Mamosali's office, cellar and home. Commenting on their territory, one patron pointed out that:

"You can't allow these irresponsible drunkards and riff-raff in here, they would cause chaos. These tsotsi's have no sense of responsibility; they have no heads". (0022:24:95:11/1)

6.4.2 Perspectives and Identities

They are proud to present a progressive, educated mosotho still upholding traditional values which give Basotho respect. The following comment was made by one patron when we were discussing views of the community to shebeens:

"These people who condemn shebeens have lost their sense of values. My dear, most of them would like to come here and relax and enjoy themselves but, because they want to pretend to be westernised, they dare not. Sweetie, I know how those people sitting outside feel something these people who condemn us would never know". (0021:24:93:11/1)

As respectable members of the society they feel that their presence in the shebeen improves the standing of the establishment in the community...
and also acts as a control on the other patrons' behaviour. It is as if their presence is there to lift the shebeen actors onto a high social plateau.

Morabaraba seems to be the only activity in the shebeen which acts as a catalyst in mixing the groups. Batho ba baholo actively mix with other patrons at the moraba-raba game. Here they use what they term man's language and uninhibited, indelicate interjections as the game progresses. They are observers only at other activities like dancing, singing and poetry singing.

They view the shebeen as 'their place' where they spend large blocks of their leisure time engaging in conversation and social drinking with comrades - male acquaintances and women friends - in an atmosphere that is conducive to such interaction.

What batho ba baholo do, with whom

This group's activities are limited because they occupy an area that is already overcrowded with the shebeen paraphernalia. Also they are conscious of their position and are at pains that their behaviour should be in keeping with their "conventional role". Old people do not romp with children, hence they do not join in the dancing. They might nod in an indication of their appreciation of the song. They engage in long conversations among themselves talking about politics, the world economic situation or any topic which may attract their fancy. They cover a wide spectrum of topics from the profoundly serious to unserious gossiping and jokes about sex. They buy each other a drink or share a bottle or sekala, recounting and interchanging stories. They play card games but they never play the dice.

Social encounters occur among them. Guests may be invited to join the group. The invitation is transmitted through Mamosali. The invited
guest may be a new patron of motho e moholo standing, someone they only
know casually but want to make welcome. In the process one patron
pointed out that:—

"This is what it means to be a mosotho: offering hospitality to a
guest. you would never see such an offer being made at the Holiday
Inn". (0021:24:100:11/1)

Among the patrons and management, Batho-ba baholo enjoy the highest
esteem in the shebeen. They receive attentive and preferential
treatment over their food and drink. Often Mamosali will set liquor
aside for them if there is a possibility that she may run out of liquor.
When everybody else has been dismissed because Mamosali has run out of
liquor, this group often continues drinking. If that reserve runs out,
Mamosali will try to buy liquor for batho ba Baholo from her other
colleagues. She may send one of her helpers or children with a message:—

"Could you tell 'Majane' that I have visitors: could she please lend me
six likala of hops". (06:21:95:51)

Batho ba baholo treat bo Mamosali and other patrons with familiarity. In
return they receive respect and deference. This is the only group that
bo mamosali might join for a game of cards or, if she drinks alcohol
beverages, for a drink.

They act as unofficial overseers of the shebeen and are granted wide
latitudes of behaviour throughout the setting. They can repose on
Mamosali's bed if such a need arises. As overseers, they assume a low
profile and present an unobtrusive milieu. In an informal way, they act
as the guardians of the shebeen's ground rules. If at any time they give
a report of a strongly unacceptable individual or behaviour to Mamosali,
she takes appropriate action. A member of this group might ask

Mamosali:—

"Have you seen that man who fought with Teba yesterday? He has just
walked into room A2". Or, "Can you go and check what is happening in
Reports are made in the form of polite questions, compelling Mamosali to take action. If a stranger inadvertently joins the group, he is asked:—"Do we know each other father?"

In other words, "Who are you and what do you want?" The formal attitude often forces the stranger to take his leave. He might take his drink to neutral territory like the space outside. Only when the weather is inclement is territorial infringement permitted.

Patrons who know the shebeen, its activities and social order well are the only people who know about the guardian role of batho ba baholo. Most shebeens have such a person or persons, sometimes they are law enforcement officers. They are what Simmel describes as esoteric members of the shebeen.8

Like most patrons in the shebeen, batho ba baholo engage in transactions in commodities of questionable origin. Away from home they feel comfortable about such transactions as they feel secure in the shebeen. This behaviour is rationalised by pointing out "how expensive the goods would otherwise be if bought straight from the shop". This follows Jones and Nisbett's (1971) explanation of actors' behaviour where actors tend to attribute their actions to situational requirements and respond to circumstantial factors. This in a way explains the gross situational inconsistencies of behaviour where generally law abiding citizens act in an inconsistent manner in a certain situation. In this way, shebeen actors do not view themselves as deviating from the norm either by patronising the shebeen or transacting in stolen property.

Batho ba baholo are prestigious, exclusive members of the shebeen, who use it as a microscomic reflection of a traditional straight world setting. They desire to play in a setting beyond the reach of their
everyday life. At the same time they have vested interest in reconstructing and maintaining an envisioned replica of a respectable place upholding Basotho values. In Simmel's terms they are playing society. They have a special role as guardians of the shebeen and aid in constructing, supporting, protecting and maintaining the shebeen setting.

6.5 Other Patrons

In the introduction it was pointed out that shebeens cater for a broad spectrum of people. Without exception all groups of people are represented amongst the shebeen actors. The degree of representation differs in different categories of shebeens, hence we find that number of certain types of shebeen actors are so small that they do not form actual groups but are a heterogeneous collection with as many characters as there are members.

In this heterogeneous collection there are two 'groups'. The first is comprised of types of actors whose numbers though very small have definite characteristics and self-perspectives and form part of the shebeen universe. These are liepamekoti, male patrons who form the messenger cadre of the shebeen, the boyfriends of bo Mamosali. Then there are the pedlars who come to the shebeen not just to drink and socialise but to sell their goods. These are honestly procured goods, like home-made brooms, ingeniously made mugs, candle holders and many other cheap but essential goods. The second group has as many diverse characteristics and perspectives as there are individuals. Most of them are regular patrons who seem not to want to be drawn into any of the circles of the shebeen, and often remain peripheral to the shebeen's activities. They drink in groups of two to six, occupying the fringe space of the Area 3. These are very small numbers for the shebeen setting. The small groups are scattered about the edge of the major
groups. In spite of their apparent marginality they still feel they are part of the establishment.

Their ages vary greatly. They come from lower-middle to middle class and most are married. There are no women in these groups. They dress conservatively and their speech is conventional, though sometimes it is mixed with Setsotsi depending on the individual and the company. They are hard social drinkers.

6.5.1. Perspectives and Identities

They take their identities ostensibly from the upperworld and its conventional institutions. They always talk about their children and wives and are active in social and civic organisations. However, some of them have come down the social ladder, they were formerly batho ba batholo. This fact, combined with occasional engagement in deviant activities, gives them an ambivalent self-concept and they are not sure of themselves.

They maintain that certain aspects of the underworld and its services are necessary to make life bearable, and thus rationalise their collusion in these transactions by arguing that:

"Everybody knows that shebeens exist and that they exist so that people can in them. Also everybody knows that a lot of things happen in the shebeen other than drinking. It is a seven day wonder. People should not make an issue of coming to the shebeen as long as that shebeen is respectable and not like safareng (a skid row shebeen)" (1070:101:2:1/5).

6.5.2. What do they do with whom?

As most of them appear reluctant to be drawn into the activities of the shebeen, they tend to interact amongst themselves and hardly join in the frolics of the shebeen, except in the game of morabaraba or when they
have imbibed sufficient quantities to reduce their reticence. Only then might they join in the singing, especially popular hymns and other popular hits.

6.6 Peggy Pel Air Spot

Patrons of this shebeen form more homogeneous groups than one finds at Shebeen United Nations. In most cases they come from the middle and upper classes. If they are from the underworld they are successful businessmen in that line and the shebeen gives them a passport to the ranks of the professional and successful. Actors in this shebeen belong to a fraternity of drinkers. They are gregarious and sociable and sharing liquor in a group is significant to each one of them. There are very few women in this group. Although patrons may enjoy drinking in the company of women, they definitely do not approve of drinking wives, and would not take their wives to the shebeen. Sometimes a husband may ask a wife to accompany him but such an invitation is very rare. Their main objection is that women spoil the relaxed atmosphere by nagging or restricting the amount of liquor they drink. Above all, since the shebeen is khotla to them, they cannot talk freely when women are around. They dislike drunken women intensely.

They drink to help them face the facts of life. Within the precincts of the shebeen patrons find a camaraderie, a place to forget their frustrations, unwind and take a fresh look at life. The actors are co-architects of the shebeen, which fulfills a social need and provies them with enjoyment.

Like Shebeen United Nations, varied transactions are entered into, some of them illegal. The same explanations or rationalisations are given as those given by patrons in other shebeens.
As already pointed out, the discussions range from the profound to the ridiculous.

Summary

From the foregoing, shebeens cater for a wide spectrum of actors and, consequently, have varied meanings, activities and functions for different audiences. In considering the long tradition in beer brewing and beer drinking among the Basotho, the shebeen in contemporary urban life seems to be a link with the past, having continuity with the traditional khotla in which all men, regardless of their status, were welcome. The shebeens serve as central places in which the 'haves' and 'have nots' who share cultures and circumstances join together to face their burdens. Some talk about them, some ignore them and some attempt to drown them.

Though the shebeen is used as a social centre especially for men, where they can relax from pressures of everyday life and frolic anonymously, among 'interesting' people, it can also be appropriated as a convenience bar or for more serious pursuits such as surreptitious discussion of past, present and future political situations and transactions of stolen property. Criminals can socialise non-deviantly in a socially acceptable setting and, at the same time opt for business transactions. They do not besmirch the scene, but facilitate less obvious important shebeen functions.

Each group of actors, whether they occupy a high or a low status, appear to be a necessary cog in the shebeen universe and each seem to perform for the shebeen a specific task, the totality of which forms a complete shebeen picture. This applies equally to the straight and the deviant, without either experiencing dissonance. The actors resort to certain interpersonal attributions to describe their behaviour, which
does more than merely reiterate the behaviour data on which these attributions are made. For them, these interpersonal attributions evaluate the behaviour in question and offer an interpretation of it in terms of hypotheses concerning the presumed effect of personal and situational factors. In this way patron actors come to terms with actions which otherwise would be difficult to accommodate, and provide an understanding of social behaviour in shebeens.
Footnotes

1. **Lifela** means hymns or songs. Moletsane (1981) defines *lifela* as referring to a point in a song sung by the leading soloist during initiation or ceremonial graduation. It is sung as poetry.

*Litsameanaha* is a compound noun based on *ho tsamaea* (to travel) and *naha* (country). It therefore describes someone who has travelled extensively and has, as a consequence, gained wide life experiences. In this case it refers to migrant workers travelling from Lesotho to the Republic of South Africa.

*Liparola-thota*. Likewise, this concept is derived from *ho-parola* to cut across and *thota* plateau or wide flat land.

2. The Basotho are sometimes referred to as 'blanket wearers'. A certain type of blanket constitutes a traditional Basotho costume. Using a diminutive case in this instance, of *kobo to kobo'nyana'* indicates a poor person or a person of low social status. His blanket is so small that it hardly covers him adequately. Other terms used to describe this group of actors are *nthata* (the blanket lovers) or *kobo li mahetlena*, literally meaning a blanket that covers only the shoulders (proper translation). Of limited means.

3. Sugared water refers to soft drink.

4. Drinking African liquor is generally associated with backwardness, whilst European liquor is associated with sophisticated palates. We note ambivalences which are inherent in the shebeen situation. An educated Mosotho may drink Sesotho liquor but when he does so it is not because he is backward, but because he is showing pride in his tradition.

5. These actors become adjuncts to mainstream deviation. They do not initiate and plan their "jobs". Their duty is carrying out the
instructions of the leaders, hence they are only "segmental" deviants.

6. Smoking among women in the Basotho society is not acceptable behaviour. Women who consider themselves 'modern' and enlightened flaunt their cigarettes, much to the annoyance and disgust of the ultra-conservatives.

7. Explanation of this term given in Chapter 5, rhetoric and space properties.

8. Simmel argues that in spite of what might appear to be levelling of status in secret societies, there are always distinctions between esoteric and exoteric members. (Simmel, G. "The Sociology of George Simmel", edited and translated by Kurt H. Wolff, p.374-76.)

9. In explaining incongruities of actors' behaviour, Stroms (1973) points out that because the actor can assess covariations between his own behaviour and features of the external situation, he often makes a situational inference rather than an internal dispositional inference.

The social world is differentiated into configurations of time, space and objects. To understand each configuration it is necessary to know the standing pattern of behaviour associated with a setting, as the behaviour patterns define the nature of activities that can take place within that setting as a matter of course (Cavan 1966). These standing behaviour patterns are perceived as both routine expectation and as fitting and proper for the time and place. In chapter 5 a description of the shebeen world was given which emphasised space, time and object properties of the shebeen. Further, in chapters 6 and 9, a profile of shebeen actors is given. The aim in this chapter is to establish the standing behaviour patterns obtaining in the shebeen which are perceived by actors as both routine expectation and as fitting and proper for the time and place. The discussion in this chapter pursues the sociological questions posed earlier about what goes on in the shebeen, where in the setting and the consequences of such acts.

The data in this section were obtained through participant observation and interviews with key informants. Encounters and various activity patterns in the subsettings of the shebeen are examined in terms of characteristics found to be prevalent and recurring in the literature on sociability and play. Some of these characteristics are freedom in initiating and terminating interactions, equality of status which make actors accessible for encounters, stepping out of the real world into the play world where their behaviour is consequential only for the here and now, expecting out-of-ordinary occurrences, an atmosphere of secrecy, and anticipation by the actors that their play groups will endure over time.
(Huizinga 1980). As the shebeen has definite different subsettings, variation in sociability and play in the shebeen are identified. In addition, the various activities in the shebeen standing behaviour patterns were explored.

Unlike activities in most public drinking places, those in the shebeen range from the unserious to serious manipulations by actors to improve their social status either by associating with people who are perceived as batho ba baholo or by engaging in financial transactions. The success of these transactional manipulations depends on the perceived appropriateness of such acts in a given setting. These too were examined in an endeavour to find out what goes on in the shebeen and the consequences thereof.

7.1 Conversation in the Three Subsettings

Of the three subsettings identified in the Shebeen United Nations, the yard or open space covers the largest area. Because of its openness and size, patrons who are acquainted and those who are not acquainted tend to mix more freely. Actors tend to engage each other in conversation more readily and often accept sociability overtures with less fuss than in Room A2 or A1 where admission is restricted. Remarks from patrons seem to designate the yard as an appropriate place for sociability and play. One patron pointed out that:

"You see in this place, you see here you can talk to a lot of people and share a joke with them, unlike you 'progressive people' who will talk only with someone you know or you believe shares the same position as you. Here we do not discriminate; after all you come here to talk and forget the problems of the outside world. We drink and talk here; we do not stand on ceremony here. I am free to walk about. If I go to that moraba-raba stone, I will find someone not only to play with but to talk to. Talk freely child of Motaung". (0016:50:25:15/2)

Units in which conversation is taking place are not closed to others who may wish to join in. Thus a newcomer can butt into a conversation and
start a completely new topic. The interrupted group may take up the new topic or the group may tell off a newcomer and continue with their original discussion. Butting into a conversation is not uncommon in the shebeen as most people perceive the shebeen as the one place in which they can pour out their troubles, share the latest news, talk about a hundred and one issues without fear of sanction. Therefore a number of patrons come to the shebeen anxious to tell their "stories". They have to vie with each other to get a slot in the conversation. Various ways have been developed in which one can butt into a conversation in a way that is regarded as fitting and, in the same manner, ways have been developed in accepting such interruptions or sanctioning them. Therefore, if someone is itching to say something and feels that the conversation topic in progress is taking too long, he/she may break it up by remarking that:

"Your news is taking too long as usual, yet you are not even telling us anything important. Listen here man, by God's truth yesterday something happened which is unbelievable". (0090:121:12:1/6)

Then he launches into his own conversation. The group decides on the topics it considers to be interesting or important. The new topic may be dismissed with the remark that, "You get away, you have come to bore us; let the politicians eat each other".

Engaging other actors in conversation is not restricted to this subsetting in the shebeen. Patrons in other subsettings reported that they come to the shebeen because the shebeen atmosphere facilitates and encourages free discussion. One patron pointed out that other public drinking places in the countryside do not have this quality. The patronage is so heterogeneous that the conversation tends to be on 'trivial subject matter' and 'snatchy'. But the conversation in restricted areas has structured properties with minimum outside interruptions. Actors are more frequently committed to one another than
actors in the open space area. The conversation also tends to be lengthier and more detailed in nature. Encounters in these subsettings tend to be group oriented. These two subsettings comprise the most serious of the shebeens unserious subsettings. The degree of seriousness is fostered by a number of factors observed in these settings; these are the physical and ecological properties such as group homogeneity, the sharing of in-depth biographical knowledge, the secrecy and closure characteristics of the settings.

In all the subsettings of the shebeen there is an expectancy of playtime behaviour which sometimes accounts for superficial, playtime interaction. This is further enhanced by the fact that the actors consider shebeen patronising as stepping out of the real world into a less restricting world. Serious and unserious conversation is possible because the inhibiting factors of the real world are absent. Yet they find the shebeen world less artificial than the outside world. As one actor commented:

"You see my dear, the Spot is the real Sesotho life. It provides you with an opportunity to be a real Mosotho and be yourself. You know what I mean when I say being a Mosotho. You see we are already engaged in conversation with you; we have welcomed you". (0021:24:89:11/1)

The shebeen is manipulated to create a world that is experienced as being the true reflection of the Sesotho world; that of being friendly, welcoming and concerned about other people.

Conversation in the shebeen can be terminated at will with little formality by any member. A patron may just stand up and announce that he is leaving to join some other activity in the setting like, "I am going to play moraba-raba" or, "That poet amuses me; I want to go and listen to him". Excuses are not always necessary or the only way to withdraw from conversational encounters; an actor can remark that, "I can see you have
no news" meaning that the conversation in progress is trivial.

Social encounters in the shebeen are as problematic as they are indeterminate. Because of this, shebeen actors have to develop an acute sense of what is situationally appropriate. In response to a question from the researcher on the nature of shebeen encounters, one patron responded that :-

"What you can do and say in a shebeen depends on a number of situations and factors. If you are with close friends, it is a different matter; you can get into all kinds of interactions. But if you are with people you do not know, you engage in unserious and non-controversial topics. You also have an opportunity to talk to a lot of people, some of whom you could not approach outside the setting. Here it is not the same atmosphere as when you are at home or at work. There you know what to say to whom and when. Here, because we are so free, we are likely to go overboard". (0088:124:2:5/6)

7.2 Acquaintances Among Actors and Status Levelling Effect

Because the shebeen is patronised by actors from a wide spectrum, relationships among them vary. Some are acquainted, some only slightly, and yet others are close friends. Some are not likely to become associates outside the shebeen setting. Actors of unequal social status, whose lifestyles are poles apart outside the shebeen universe, are open to encounters from one another in the setting.

The differences in familiarity here and in the outside world is the degree to which one actor can probe into another actor's confidential and personal preserves. The intruding actor can receive a severe sanctioning from either the actor whose personal preserves are being encroached upon or from the whole group if it feels the intruder has gone beyond the accepted boundaries of familiarity. He may be told :-

"Get away, your familiarity has gone beyond control. You have gone inside my pocket", meaning that one is over-familiar. (0088:124:4:5/6)

The divergent use and membership of the setting promote a degree of
status levelling and openness to sociability. According to Simmel (1967) the sociability game is played as if all actors are equal. Therefore, external attributes such as wealth, personal and social position and personal characteristics of the actors are temporarily suspended. Not only is the status levelling apparent within the shebeen subsettings but the whole shebeen universe promotes status levelling. Thus in Peggy Bel Air Spot there are not only top professional patrons but also top underworld personalities and successful businessmen who may not necessarily be as highly educated as the professional patrons. The differences that exist among these actors in the outside world are partially and temporarily suspended, thus allowing for unstrained interaction between a magistrate and a criminal, between women and men and many other contrasting people. Not only is the status levelling process apparent among patron actors but also between them and staff actors.

Actors have different visiting patterns and status; some are regular clients, others occasional guests or neutral actors such as the 'marginals'. Because of this diversity of patron backgrounds, it is not easy for one group to dominate activities in the shebeen, especially as the aim is to be an "ordinary Mosotho" among "ordinary Basotho". Being a Mosotho in this context means having the character that pertains to Sesotho culture and personality, setting the Basotho apart from other nationalities.

Another factor that makes status levelling possible is the fact that a patron's social viability is not dependent on interaction with any one exclusionary group. There are many activities and groups available for the individual's utilization and needs. Some of these activities require no formal ritual entry like the moraba-raba game or some of the traditional activities. In fact, a patron can initiate his/her own
social activity in competition with what might be going on and he is likely to attract an audience. One patron boastfully remarked that:

"If I want I can sing you such an oral poem that would silence everyone of these amateurs for good. God's truth, women would cry". (0023:30:6:24/1)

The shebeen setting appears to offer some patrons an opportunity to do things that enhance their self regard. They can compete with the educated, the rich and the powerful without fear of ridicule.

One of the characteristics elicited by Huizinga (1980) in his study of playtime culture is the feature of secrecy. This not only promotes sociability but also aids status levelling because actors often assume that the screening procedures have excluded undesirables and brought together respectable actors with similar recreational interests. The characteristics discussed earlier of Shebeen United Nations and its exclusive setting, for example Room A1 at Peggy Bel Air Spot, an exclusive shebeen allowing sanctioned actors only, promotes secrecy. The belief that all actors are equal reduces inhibition and suspicion.

Even in the apparently open shebeen subsettings, shebeen patrons still cherish a sense of secrecy about their presence in the shebeen, since some actors declared that they would not like their spouse or partners or families to know that they patronise shebeens, emphasising the semi-secretiveness of the behaviour setting. In an essay about his impressions of shebeens, an eleven year old child pointed out that a patron going to the shebeen often does not say precisely where he is going; he/she will vaguely tell his/her spouse that "he is just going out he is coming". The fact that the wider society believes that only the "dregs of society" patronise shebeens, that no "decent" person would go to the shebeen, adds to the secretiveness of the shebeen. Those who might have had doubts about their visit are immediately relieved to find
that actors are not confined to the lower status group and also experience a sense of comradeship. At the shebeen, actors are members of an establishment where their outside biographies and different personality traits are levelled. As Simmel has noted, the depersonalisation of members of a secret society promotes equality and freedom among members (Simmel 1967:p.373-75). The same phenomenon was observed by Roebuck and Frese (1976) in their study of the American after-hours club.

The secretiveness of the shebeen atmosphere protects actors' behaviour and tends to dissociate their action from consequences of the outside world. Goffman describes this as "drama-turgical loyalty" (Goffman 1982), indicating that what happens in the shebeen will not be divulged to the outside world. This security in drama-turgical loyalty was demonstrated by the fact that actors who ordinarily are law abiding could comfortably engage in deviant acts and explain their behaviour in a way that reveals no non-acceptability. The drama-turgical loyalty is therefore further aided by attributional explanations which are ways in which people process information to arrive at a judgment about their behaviour (Antaki and Brewin 1982). A patron in the shebeen maintained that:

"We are free here: if I do anything, nobody asks any question or raises an eyebrow. Whatever I do is right for the setting. There is no back whispering about action; instead I might be envied for taking such a bold and risky action. Anyway my dear, we really do not do anything bad here; we are just relaxing, enjoying ourselves and trying to find ways of making life easy". (0055:80:43:1/4)

Although it appears as if there is open interaction in the shebeen, there are ways of barring interruption, even a subsetting like Area 3. Groups which do not wish to have contact with other actors have certain ways of showing that they do not wish to be disturbed. They may arrange themselves in a close circle and only briefly acknowledge greetings.
Picture 1 shows a group that does not wish to be disturbed, while 2 shows an open setting, allowing for interruption and entry into the group.

Figure 7.1
Group not wishing intruders

Figure 7.2
Group open to interruptions and free entry
Should an intruder be too obtuse to ignore the signals, he is immediately asked to excuse himself from the group.

7.3 Problems Inherent in Shebeen Encounters

On page 226 I briefly touched on shebeen encounters and their indeterminate characteristic which renders them problematic. I wish to further elaborate on the problematic aspects of shebeen encounters. Although it appears that patrons are easily available to be engaged in encounters, these are problematic because, although most actors want to get involved in starting, sustaining and ending encounters, they are also anxious to achieve this without incurring moral loss and to maintain respectability (Ball 1970). The problem is how to achieve the desired degree of social and personal proximity and at the same time retain respectability. For a Mosotho adult to be driven away like a recalcitrant child is a disgrace very difficult to cope with. Common courtesy protects a person against such shame, by tolerating his/her presence even when it is not wanted. However, in the shebeen, actors do not necessarily subscribe to such expectations, adding further to the problem of maintaining respectability or worthiness. To maintain his respectability, an actor has to present an acceptable front to others and at the same time make readings on others to accomplish his/her interests at hand. Persistent inability to present an acceptable front creates problems for the actor because he will be shunned. As some of the main reasons for coming to the shebeen are sociability and play, to be shunned means that the actor cannot accomplish his/her interest at hand.

Furthermore, the diverse activities and groups available for patrons' needs require actors who are seeking encounters to vary their presentation of self. Some of the activities or groups require no formal or ritual entry like the moraba-raba or the dancing and singing. But
some necessitate formal or ritual procedures like joining a group of dice players or marihuana smokers. That one can successfully achieve such a diversified presentation of self is not always guaranteed. Moreover, the actors come from different backgrounds and may not necessarily share the same stock of values or knowledge, apart from the fact that having to appear 'worthy' to a sequence of different kinds of people is doubly difficult to achieve in a state of insobriety. Thus sociability and respectability are problematic in the shebeen setting.

7.4 Patterns in initiating Encounters

In describing the shebeen universe an illustration was given of one way to open an encounter. A patron offered everybody a drink and then proceeded to engage one of the group members in a transaction. Although buying drinks for one another is a common practice, it is not always used as a ritual or procedure to engage other people in encounters. The ritual forms aimed at engaging one in conversation usually involve remarks or questions about the weather, some local event that has made news headlines, or comment about ongoing activities in the shebeen. If the patron who is being addressed responds with more than a brief grunt or mumble, this is a cue for the initiator to pursue the conversation and is an indication of the beginning of an encounter.

Patrons were observed to move closer to those people with whom they wanted to engage in conversation. A patron would make a general remark which might draw a response from any of the actors. Roebuck and Frese (1976) described public drinking house encounter patterns as generally consisting of "remarks - counter remarks, interchange - silence - remark - counter remark and so on" (Roebuck and Frese 1976:p.104). A prolonged silence is treated as an end to conversation. Actors have to work to promote and maintain an encounter. The problem with shebeen encounters
is that actors cannot often tell whether the initiator's sole interest is in just talking or is a manoeuvre to pave the way to 'cadge' a drink.

Some patrons encourage conversation among unknown members by exchanging remarks as a way of engaging newcomers in social interaction. This usually happens in closed settings like room A1 of Shebeen United Nations or in Peggy Bel Air Spot.

Unusual incidents sometimes become the focal precursors to group encounters. For example, a fight between two patrons tends to cause suspension of any other activity in the shebeen and directs attention to the two combatants. The patrons would follow these two as they are being shooed out of the shebeen into the streets, giving advice or encouragement or trying to end the fight. When the fight is over, patrons may spend hours discussing its different facets: who started it, what was it all about, how they could have vanquished their opponents, what tactics drew admiration and so on. Often in such conversation anybody can be incorporated into the conversation whether he/she is an acquaintance or not. Another unusual incidence that tends to draw strangers into conversation is an occasional sermon from members of the independent churches. A minister can come to the shebeen and start preaching. Since the sermon is always rendered with fervour and a great deal of gesticulation, this activity often succeeds in drawing the attention of patrons.

Cavan (1966) and Roebuck and Frese (1976) noted that patrons can engage in conversation or interaction without exchange of names. However, in shebeens the custom of introducing oneself is observed. Even if the conversation has been going on for some time, one of the actors is likely to ask "By the way, who shall I say you are". Exchange of names indicates mutual trust and enables each actor to know how to act towards
the other.

Earlier in the chapter I discussed the problems of social encounters in shebeens, especially in maintaining respectability. The success of an encounter is not easy to determine. An Afro-European, obviously the worse for drink, joined a group sitting in one corner as he knew one of its members. Knowing one member of a group can be used to initiate social interaction. Without preamble, this patron remarked that "Mankepe has really excelled herself today; can I have a sip". The remark and the request were ignored and the sekala by-passed him. Although his remark was meant as a ritual move for entry into the group, ignoring him signified that he was being presumptuous and was not wanted in the group at that moment. He was told to "Go away, you have no respect and you are unacceptably over-familiar". Although the incident was discussed for a short time soon afterwards, it soon became past history and the next time this patron was embraced into the group.

On the other hand, Bani succeeded in his aim to enter into conversation; he joined a group of four men. After the preliminary greetings, he addressed a woman patron in the group, "Can you lend me your dress mother, these trousers are not correct for getting a job in this country. I have traversed the whole of Maseru looking for a job. The only people I find working are women". Lema in the group responded that "You have to be a woman to get a job in this country. Don't you know that this is a woman's government, Leaubua himself says so". The group took up the topic of employment, politics and women, discussing these issues with candour and fervour for quite a time. In this way, Bani was accorded worth and respect by receiving support for his overtures. Although the statement was a ritual act, the content of the statement touched on a serious issue for most of the unemployed shebeen actors who have nothing to do but sit in the shebeen. Some requests for encounters are blocked
by "cut offs", "put downs" and dismissal.

A patron does not have to join a group to achieve an encounter. Since spontaneity is the characteristic of most shebeen activities, an actor can initiate an activity which might attract other participants, say by starting to sing or dance. Those with their own musical instruments have a better chance of succeeding. The street vendors may also attract patrons not just to buy his/her wares but to engage them in other encounters such as drinking or playing together or in other forms of sociability.

7.4.1 Symbolic Supports of Encounters

Encounters in shebeens, as in any behaviour setting, vary in their duration and are often kept going by supportive props which facilitate continuation of the activity. For example, verbal exchange and rituals may be utilised to ensure continuation of conversation. Since actors in the shebeen co-operate with one another in accepting the definition of the setting, symbolic and ritual processes work in such a way as to extend and designate actor A's involvement with and connect him to actor B. The symbolic and ritual supports may involve exchange of small items such as matches, cigarettes, zolo or a gift of drink. These items are defined by Roebuck and Frese (1976) as supportive ritual offerings.

Furthermore, encounters are nurtured by asking questions about the passing scene in the shebeen, questions which are not considered threatening. It was also observed that anything that might be used as a conversation opener was utilized, for example, comments on office girls passing through the shebeen on their way to and from work. A well dressed girl of fair complexion passed by on her way into town and Tumo exclaimed :-
"There passes a European. She reminds me of days gone by when I would not have let such a bird pass without paying some attention to me. In those days a suit set well on this tall figure". (0031:42:2:4/2)

Looking at Tumo then was enough to reduce everybody to fits of laughter. For sure, he was still tall and slender but his clothes showed no traces of ever having been of a better quality than cheap Indian store fare. Other issues that tend to be used as conversation props are the drought, relations with South Africa, bo Mamosali, the unemployment situation and other shebeen actors.

A recipient of an encounter must accept and acknowledge conversational offerings. By so doing, he/she signifies that a relationship exists between giver and receiver. According to Goffman, the supportive interchanges are interpersonal rituals, the important aspect of those being the indication of a relationship rather than the form of content. (Goffman 1971).

7.4.1(i) Nature of Talk

The nature of talk in shebeens varies according to the content. From the sociability perspective the talk in shebeens becomes its own purpose, a ritual of interaction. According to Simmel "the topic is merely the indispensable medium through which the lively exchange of speech itself unfolds its attractions" (Simmel 1967:p.52). The conversation in shebeens may be amusing, witty, interesting or important. However, to a large extent shebeen conversation content is not often its raison d'être. As the patrons point out, they come to the shebeen for sociability and the objectives are the here and now enjoyment.

The triviality and transitoriness of shebeen talk can be illustrated by this conversation. A man called Teli joins a group of four women to whom the researcher had been talking. Teli mumbles something to Maria:-

Maria: (exclaims) He! women listen to this man.
Teli: Don't shout.

Maria: To whom are you attracted in this group?

Teli: Do not ridicule me please.

Maria: Helang! Ladies, can you hear what I am hearing?

Others: What?

Maria: When these men get drunk they always see every woman as being beautiful, or is it the skop donnor? (66:101:25:1/5)

Teli left the group without feeling offended by the ridicule and rejection. The unseriousness of the setting accounts for the acceptance of rejection. Conversation in the shebeen is on topics in which the majority of the group members are interested and can participate. Thus, even in upper category shebeens, conversation has to be appropriate to the background experiences of the audience (Roebuck and Frese 1976). Garfinkel (1967) defines background expectancies as those sets of taken-for-granted ideas and properties of common understanding in everyday life which permit the interactants to interpret the conversational gifts in the first place. This characteristic of conversation in the shebeen is important because it provides a common denominator to a group of actors who otherwise would find it difficult to interact.

7.4.2 Cross-Sex Encounters

There are several features of the shebeen setting which tend to promote non-commercial, transient sexually oriented transactions. The ground rules operative in shebeens give equal status to male and female in guiding their behaviour. These rules together with the spatial and physical properties encourage cross-sex encounters. As one poet singer noted:—

"Here at Shebeen United Nations we see extraordinary occurrences. Men and women release themselves in each others presence, Surprise! Men and women share a drink, there is no standing on ceremony for each other". (107:57:11:20:2)
On the whole, women go to the shebeen unaccompanied. The exception was in Peggy Bel Air Spot and other upper category shebeens where women patrons went to the shebeen in the company of men friends.

The general expectation among actors is that women without escorts are open to encounters unless they signal their unavailability. As most patrons know each other, they know which women are available for encounters and which are not. Infringement of this ground rule may lead to unpleasant consequences for the actor who ignores a 'no poaching' norm. One patron tried to chat up a female patron, having ignored the signals and warnings that he was courting trouble. Within a short time the female patron's partner had the transgressor by the scruff of his neck and a fight ensued. After the fighting parties had been parted, the injured party was still unforgiving and proceeded to deliver an impressive list of invectives with the speed and fluency of a praise singer. Those listening were astonished by such invective.

Cross-sex social encounters appear to be present oriented. Often when some of the women patrons become the worse for drink, the "boys" pass them around calling them "cesspots". From the responses of the actors it would appear that whatever the outcome of cross-sex encounters, neither party assumes that they would be committed to any additional future courses of interaction. In most cases, neither party is concerned about any reputational problems incurred because what happens in the shebeen need not become public knowledge. Even in these encounters the secretiveness of the play setting shields actors from external sanctions.

The cross-sex interaction routine tends to resolve into coquetry similar to that described by Simmel in his 'coquetry play form' in which women alternate between giving illusive promises and illusive withdrawals but
stop short of what might be described as complete surrender, yet not depriving the man of all hope (Simmel 1967:p.50-54). Both male and female actors sweet talk each other for its own sake in a playful, amusing and sociable manner. The consequences might cause problems if one actor was playing 'for real' while the other was playing 'for fun'.

For example, Sono came and sat next to Dolly with his sekala. Dolly made room for him indicating that she had no objection to his sitting next to her. He then offered her a drink which she accepted. Sono, taking this acceptance as a cue to engage Dolly in conversation, proceeded to talk:—

Sono: You are so beautiful, what has been licking(3) you at night?
Dolly: Don't you know I frequent practitioners specialising in making women beautiful. I keep a water snake that licks me every so often.
Sono: Well! I see. How about coming to my place tonight?
Dolly: What is so interesting at your place?
Sono: You will see when you get there. It is a secret.
Dolly: I don't want my time to be wasted. Some of you drink so much that when you get home you are only ready to snore your sinus away.
Sono: You might be in for a surprise; just try and see. (He proceeded to fondle Dolly).
Dolly: Stop it! This man! You have no respect for people. (55:101:60:1/5)

Sono had read the cues differently; Dolly was only playing while, on the other hand, Sono was making a serious proposal.

7.5 Indicators of Social and Personal Relationships

Actors in the shebeen have biographical knowledge of patrons with whom
they are acquainted. The combination of biographies, symbolic objects, behaviour and expression, often act as indicators of social and personal relationships. These indicators help to sustain and facilitate interaction among the actors in the setting. Because Lesotho is such a small country it is not difficult to acquire knowledge about people. In most cases there is no hesitancy in asking direct questions about someone's name and place of abode. Apart from knowledge gained by asking direct questions, information about actors is acquired through listening to what other actors say, through poetry and by actors' appearances and conduct.

Several forms of behaviour help to designate who is together with whom and the degree of intimacy of that togetherness. If someone bought a plate of food, then called a friend to share that food, this shows the extent of togetherness. Since food is expensive and can only be bought in small quantities, actors tend to share it with the people they are closer to. Sometimes a patron may buy some steak and barbecue it at the shebeen. Since this can only be shared by a few people, only close friends will share in this rare treat. However, liquor sharing is a common phenomenon in the shebeen, since it is cheap and can be bought in quantities that can satisfy a large number of people. Standing drinks, though important, may not necessarily signify closeness of relationships. It can be offered as a form of courtesy.

Another pointer to the nature of relations in the shebeen is the conversational form, content and degree of openness. They indicate whether actors engaged in conversation are friends, fellow employees, partners or just acquaintances or playmates. For example, if a group sat in a loose circle engaged in general talk, one could define that group as being of ordinary acquaintances. Raucous laughter and uninhibited bawdy
Social relationships in the shebeen are dynamic. They begin, run their course and eventually end. Sometimes they are rejuvenated. Because the setting is unserious, today's acquaintances can become tomorrow's sexual playmate or visa versa. On the other hand, the serious facet of shebeen transactions and negotiations may result in acquaintances of today becoming partners in some 'job' or an employer.

7.6 Business Negotiations

It will be recalled that earlier in chapter 5 it was noted that some patrons seek goals other than sociability in the shebeen. These goals cover transactions in business deals, negotiations for jobs, finding out information about certain issues or discussing problems. These represent the serious facet of shebeens controlled by the regular patrons and the marginals. The latter appears to be much more involved in the serious aspects of the shebeen than the regular patron. For the regular patron sociability and play are the important activities.

Business negotiations are entered into with great seriousness but are not expected to be an everyday activity. The shebeen setting is such that both unserious and serious activities can be undertaken without causing any friction. The occurrence of these activities, often simultaneously, tends to give the shebeen an atmosphere of respectability, a character that is absent from other public drinking places.

The commodities available for purchase are as diverse as the patrons. They range from small inexpensive articles such as old newspapers to expensive sophisticated articles such as hi-fi systems and other modern household goods. Some commodities are legal and above board while others
are stolen. Whether stolen or not, all patrons take such transactions as normal and fitting to the setting and no stigma is attached to them. The same attribution theories account for the actors acceptance of such activities without experiencing any dissonance.

Some patrons who are self employed reported that, apart from sociability and play, they come to the shebeen to establish contacts for their businesses. One self employed mechanic:

"My wife complains about my drinking and my absence from home every night. But I try to explain to her that this is the only place where I can meet prospective customers. This is the only place where I have an opportunity of meeting people who might need my services. See here, I repair cars. Some of the patrons here have cars and often need somebody to look after them. I do a better job than the garage people and I am available at any time. You can only contact the garage during office hours. Also I have trucks for which I have got to get work. I have successfully secured cartage tenders from negotiations made here. By coming here I kill two birds with one stone, enjoy myself and do a great deal of business". (0041:61:90:1/3)

Such reports were common from a number of other shebeen actors whether in big or small businesses. They argued that the opportunities offered by the shebeen could not be equalled anywhere else. While business transactions occur in bars, they only happen by prior arrangement. On the other hand, in the shebeen actors get to know about business opportunities by listening to the conversation. Furthermore, outside the shebeen setting some actors would not have the opportunity of meeting prospective clients because they move in different circles.

In a similar manner, the shebeen offers business opportunities for those in the underworld and the commodities available from them are as varied as those available from the straight business actors. One patron pointed out:

"I cannot go to the offices and homes to inform people about what I have. To see the Lekala here in his office I would have to make an appointment and explain my business to his secretary. If it is at his house, the maid would still sanction me, a nonentity like me. Here we can talk as men and make gentlemen's agreements. We are all gentlemen here". (0042:61:93:1/3)
7.7 **Activities in Peggy Bel Air Spot**

The spatial properties of this shebeen make for a degree of conventional closure, thus screening out many interruptions and undesirable characters. Actors are much more committed to one another and most patrons come and remain together. This is further enhanced by the seating arrangements which allow involvement of all members in the shebeen in common topics.

Despite the seeming homogeneity of Peggy Bel Air Spot, the activities are as diverse as those found in Shebeen United Nations. Although Peggy Bel Air patrons tend to regard the shebeen more as their Club, they still engage in similar activities as those observed in Shebeen United Nations, an overt pattern of sociability and play and legal negotiations of jobs or business and a covert pattern of dealing in illegal goods and services.

These characteristics were also observed in Room A1 of Shebeen United Nations where admission patterns are as exclusive as those found in Peggy Bel Air Spot.

**Summary**

In trying to establish what happens in the shebeen, I found that activities were as diverse as the variability of actors. In this chapter I have examined activities mainly undertaken by patron actors. There are two standing patterns of behaviour; the overt pattern of behaviour mainly found in sociability, play and above-board negotiations and the covert pattern of behaviour related to dealing in illegal goods and services.

Since the patron actor claims he/she has no occupational interest in shebeen running, the paramount standing behaviour pattern for this actor
generate a social order and create a set of standing ground rules and rituals by their behaviour routines. The high mobility and diverse patronage caused problems of behaviour in shebeens.

There is an element of secrecy about the shebeen, apart from the fact that it is unlicensed and therefore illegal. Most actors indicated that they would prefer their patronage to remain secret.

Although transaction in illegal goods and services was an established standing behaviour pattern and was regarded as a matter of course, it was covert in nature. It took place under the guise of sociability and play, like the patron who bought drinks for everybody and then proceeded to engage one other patron in business negotiation. Behaviour within this pattern is serious and consequential for both the present and the future. It is also serious for those actors with serious interests and hidden agendas.

Shebeen actors can engage in serious and unserious behaviour patterns simultaneously or at different times. While sociability and play were regarded as separate from reality, for many shebeen actors they are related to and anchored in the real world. The unemployed migrant worker, whose family is in a village or outside Maseru, has nowhere to go and nothing to do but go to the shebeen. Patrons kept abreast of what is going on in the country. Job opportunities were discussed and information about them was disseminated.
Footnotes

1. Cavan (1966) describes standing patterns of behaviour as behaviour patterns which are stable, persistent and independent of the particular individuals involved which are seen by members as being congruent within the physical and temporal aspects of the community with which they are associated, that is as being congruent within the setting in which they are found. Cavan, S., Liquor Licensing: An Ethnography of Bar Behaviour. A Sociologist's Serious Observation of Unserious Behaviour Studying Face to Face Interaction of People in their Drinking Places: Aldine Publishing House.

Barker and Wright wrote that "behaviour comes not only in particular form but in extra-individual wave patterns that were as visible and invariant as the pools and rapids in Slough Creek West of Focon....persist year after year with their unique configuration of behaviour, despite constant changes in the persons involved. These persisting, extra-individual behaviour phenomena we called the standing behaviour patterns of Midwest", Barker R. and Wright H. Midwest and its Children: Evanston III Row, Peterdon p.7.

2. By 'European' here the patron did not necessarily mean a white person or a person of occidental origin. The term used is Lekhooa to describe someone with power, position and wealth. Since most Southern Africans hardly ever meet a poor European in the region, to most people all Europeans are rich and powerful.

3. It is believed that there is a certain type of 'water snake' which one can get from powerful "doctors". If it licks someone all over
his/her body, it makes that person potentially rich or beautiful. A beautiful smooth complexion is associated with being licked by the snake at night. The possibilities of phallic association cannot be ruled out.
This chapter is a continuation of the discussion on establishing the kinds of activities that are taken for granted as a matter of course in the shebeen setting and the consequences of these activities. In the preceding chapter I described social behaviour and how sociability is facilitated in this setting. In this chapter I intend to examine further the sociological question of what goes on in the shebeen setting. The focus here will be on latitudes of behaviour, language used, especially insults, and the ground rules. I surmise that an understanding of the kinds of behaviour acceptable in a shebeen and the ground rules governing their occurrence, acceptability and sanctioning would help determine standing behaviour patterns that are recurring and are taken as a matter of course in this setting.

In Chapter 7 I described social behaviour observed in the shebeen and how sociability is facilitated either by the structural arrangement in the shebeen or the expectations of the actors. However, it was observed that actors' unserious expectations at the shebeen not only promote sociability but also facilitate a wider variety of behaviour than would be expected in a serious setting. Further it was noted that a wider variety of expressive behaviour was usually tolerated in the shebeen than in other settings. There is a great deal of execration, joking, singing, sexual flirtation, heterosexual familiarity, joking relationships, fighting, gambling and illegal dealings. But such behaviour is strictly governed by ground rules.

It was further noted that shebeen actors are not just interested in saying things that make sense to other actors but also seek to talk in a
way that shows others their skills in verbal performance. Much emphasis was placed on utterances relating to sexual flirtations, joking relationships, 'bad' language and jokes. Hence the undertaking to examine not just the meaning of utterances but the rules that govern them in the shebeens.

To discover the rules that govern utterances and use of speech in a shebeen, I recorded what the actors said to each other, noting whenever possible such features as the tone of the voice, gestures, setting, who was being addressed, responses and other features of verbal interaction. These samples were examined for recurrent patterns and major speech events in the shebeen were identified. Hymes (1972) defines a speech event as referring to activities that are directly governed by rules of speaking.

8.1 Joking Relationships

Anthropologists writing about joking relationships have shown that these relationships centre around insults made in jest, direct reference to sexual behaviour, comments about anatomical features with sexual meanings and related topics, which would normally be taboo conversation, especially between men and women, in the wider community.

Joking behaviour appears to occur in the presence of an audience who listen, observe and vicariously enjoy the display. In figure 1 two men are kissing and the onlookers are enjoying the display. Generally, men do not hug or kiss each other unless they are family members meeting for the first time after a long separation. The couple did not appear to have offended the onlookers which would have been the usual reaction in serious behaviour. The event was the result of a remark by Tello to Meso that "Meso's cheek is as smooth as a tomato, let me kiss it" and
he proceeded to kiss Meso. Meso preferred his cheek as a response to the unserious comment. The public nature of joking relationships in the shebeen is intentionally utilized to create an atmosphere for the actors.

Figure 6.1
Tello hugging and kissing Meso.

The shebeen requires an atmosphere of relaxed congeniality, an atmosphere conducive to relaxation, drinking and talking. Furthermore, Radcliffe-Brown maintains that joking relationships can be explained by the contribution they make to social equilibrium in a given setting, especially in the ways they function to reduce and prevent tension and conflict at crucial points in the social structure (Radcliffe-Brown 1965). After an exchange of hard words between a patron and Mamosali, the patron suggestively touched Mamosali:—

Mamosali — What are you doing?
Patron — I am trying to make amends (literal translation —
Not everyone in the shebeen is free to engage in this kind of joking which occurs between bo Mamosali and patrons. In this particular instance the patron in question was jokingly referred to as "the partner of the Mamosali". In the shebeen setting he had assumed the name of father of Thabiso (Ndlat'a Thabiso) as the Mamosali was known as Mathabiso (ma-mother; thus mother of Thabiso). If any other patron actor had taken such liberties he would have been met with a strong reprimand from both Mamosali and the patron actors. Once partners initiate joking behaviour they become obligated to carry on with it until the joke runs its course. These jokes are often not lengthy, thus partners in such encounters can maintain the activities at an unserious level.

Sometimes the work itself provides opportunity for jokes with a sexual innuendo using the double meaning of common words. For example, Mamosali tried to explain to one patron that she had run out of liquor:

Example (a)

Patron - (Grumbles and whines about this situation)

(idiom)
Mamosali - Do you want to eat me with your teeth (to be very angry or upset with someone).

Patron - I will not eat you with my teeth, mine has no teeth. If I eat you, you would never let me go, people would hear your coital screams.

Example (b)

Tello took the sekala from Leta and finding it empty exclaimed:

Tello - Hei you man! How come you have finished the beer in the sekala.

Leta - Eat me then man. You gamble as if there was a lot of beer in there, eat me.
Tello - Eat you? I am not gay. (88:122:10:1/6)

Although sexual references, insults and horseplay are common in the joking relationships, men have more latitude in what they say and do than women, who in most cases are expected to display a modicum of finesse in the use of such language. As can be noted from the two examples, the male patrons took liberties in imputing a double meaning to a very common word. Other actors enjoyed this verbal exchange and the last exchange provided an opening on anecdotes about gay behaviour in the mines.

Another aspect of joking relationships is that they are restricted to a particular setting marked by a temporary suspension of the restraints that usually govern interaction (Spradley 1975). The hurling of insults is accepted as a normal activity provided it is done light-heartedly and without excessive vulgarity. Should a sense of decorum in insult hurling be discarded and direct reference to the private parts of the body be made, the encounter assumes a different meaning.

8.2 Swearing

Abusive language, unlike insults, is not uncommon in joking relationships which are uttered in jest. In the incident involving Tello and Leta, aggression is apparent. Berdie (1947) noted a peculiar type of aggressive behaviour among the Black Americans associated with exchange of insults in a game known as "playing the dozens". Like "playing the dozens", vulgar insults in the shebeen provide a fine example of a formalised expression of aggression.

The game starts off with one individual making an insulting statement about the private parts of the other person's mother. The initiator would use any excuse as provocation to insult someone. Such excuses are not difficult to come by in a shebeen. Mishaps are bound to happen in a
setting where there is close, frequent face-to-face contacts among the actors in a crowded, co-mingling, fluid behaviour setting. Added to this the intoxicated condition of many actors increases the possibility of such mishaps. Stepping on someone's foot, spilling liquor on another person, bumping into someone or taking someone's seat all happen daily in a shebeen and are often regarded as slight affronts but for someone spoiling for a fight they provide sufficient reasons to take umbrage.

The person being insulted may respond either with a mild reprimand about the allusion to his mother's private parts or with a more vulgar allusion to the private parts of the initiator's mother. To insult a person's mother is considered a serious affront. The exchange of insults then continues, each letting loose his broadside and banging away until they run out of ammunition. The responses are often a shot for a shot and the insults get progressively nastier and more pornographic. Eventually, one of the participants reaches a threshold and takes a swing at his opponent using whatever weapon is at his disposal; his fists, stick, knife or stones. Sometimes this exchange does not reach this climax because other actors intervene and cut short the combat. If one of the combatants is determined to rouse the other to fighting pitch, he is not likely to heed such advice. The opponent may even invite his partner to move out of the shebeen boundaries so that they have the freedom to carry on their verbal and physical fight.

In its mild form such an activity serves as entertainment in the absence of anything better to do. However, as the vulgarity intensifies and becomes unacceptable, even for the shebeen setting, it is often sanctioned. Hence the invitation to move out of shebeen boundaries. Unrestrained tongues are common in the shebeen, since most actors in the disadvantaged groups are unemployed, frustrated people who it appears
find release in this verbal warfare. Graves (1936) quoting Tristram
Shandy's father, wrote:-

"I seldom curse or swear at all.....but if I fall into it by surprise I
generally retain so much presence of mind....as to make it answer my
purpose; that is, I swear on till I find myself easy". However, "a wise
and just man would endeavour to proportion the vent given to these
humours not only to the degree of them stirring within himself but to
the size and ill-intent of the offence upon which they are to fall".

In the same manner, the swearing in the shebeen, normal and common as it
may be, is controlled and sanctioned by the ground rules of the shebeen.
A patron can actually be banned from the shebeen if he does not observe
these ground rules governing expletives. The actors use the swearing in
Graves' sense as a means of releasing tensions.

8.3 Latitudes of Behaviour

Wide latitudes of behaviour were observed in the shebeen ranging from
minor unsanctioned improprieties to major violations which often received
severe sanctioning.

8.3.1 Unsanctioned Improprieties

As I have already pointed out, in a crowded setting like the shebeen
with its fluid behaviour, there is bound to be a high incidence of
infractions. A variety of untoward acts frequently occur without
sanctions. Some of these improprieties may or may not be approved by
other actors in the shebeen.

It was observed that a number of acts were allowed to go on and were
often taken for granted as long as the actors did not seriously interfere
with the activities and enjoyment of other shebeen members. Patrons
embrace and hug in public, they are less decorous in the way they sit or
when they go to the toilet; some become so drunk that they lose motor
control, fall off their seats and sleep where they have fallen. Others
play clowning tricks or just fool around.

Commenting on this behaviour, Mamosali remarked that:—

"You know what drunken people are like: they just can't control themselves. But then, since most people who are here are not too sober, there is a tendency to let certain things happen without much sanctioning. Too much untoward behaviour is accepted here. They claim they have come here to enjoy themselves, to be happy and to relax. As long as they do not do bad things, there is no problem". 905:99:40:30/4)

The shebeen encourages actors to engage with impunity in a wide range of exuberant, expressive behaviour. They talk and laugh loudly without restraint; quarrel, argue and exchange profane but endearing greetings. The following exchange was recorded at the shebeen:—

Patron (a) — Hei you devil! Where do you come from? (or where have you been?) I have been waiting for you for ages.

Patron (b) — I am from seeing your my boy (meaning he is from seeing his mistress).

Patron (a) — One day they will bite you if you are not careful.

(Bite — transmission of venereal disease).

(77:78:10:31/3)

Neither did the Patron (a) take offence at patron (b)'s claims that his mistress was patron (a)'s mother, and this was very unusual among the Basotho because a man is most seriously insulted through his mother and such an insult is not easily forgiveable. Graves (1936) points out that when an insult is too close to the reality of the insulted person's way of life, the offended party tends to take the insult more seriously than an insult that fails to wound his susceptibility. It is quite likely that patron (a)'s female relatives could have liaisons with other men because of the economic situation in the country and the high incidence of absent spouses who might be working in the Republic of South Africa. In this encounter this profane response was taken as a game. Likewise, patron (b) was not upset at being warned about the possibilities of
contracting venereal disease nor did he take offence at the insinuation that his girl friend might have venereal disease. Yet it is quite possible that the lady in question could have the affliction. According to Graves, "Any swearing that fails to wound the susceptibility of the person sworn at, or of the witness to the oath, is mere fiddle-faddle" (Ibid. p.14). I noted a great deal of such profanity. Hardly a sentence was uttered without a swear word but, as long as these encounters posed no unacceptable behavioural consequences, they went unsanctioned. However, should any activity threaten the setting with unacceptable behavioural consequences which might attract the attention of the police, earn the condemnation of the community or portray the shebeen or Mamosali in an unfavourable light, it will be subject to remedial measures.

8.3.2 Remedial Measures of Interactional Offences and Major Violations

In the case of interactional and minor offences, the offender usually takes the initiative in remedying the impropriety especially with regard to offences like spilling beer on someone, stepping on someone's toes or shoving him. Traditional beer is opaque and has a great deal of starch. It tends to leave an unbecoming white stain on clothes and has a strong odour. Thus most people do not particularly like beer stains on their garments. The offended usually accepts the offender's account which is given with portrayals of regret and remorsefulness. In this way the contrite offender is given relief and at the same time the atmosphere of the setting is preserved. It is not unusual for other actors who have interest in the encounter to attempt to facilitate the remedial measures by helping the transgressor to explain his action which may have been interpreted negatively. One actor might explain that the offence "was not done on purpose - these plastic containers overflow when they are full".

Remedial measures are exchanged by words as well as by gestures.
Sometimes an offender failed to make good his offence. Under such circumstances, the offended either overlooked the slight if he feels it was inconsequential, or challenges the offender who may either offer an explanation or dismiss the matter as fussiness. In situations where an actor refused to offer or accept an account, verbal quarrels or even physical fights may follow. When the remedial measures between the two parties fail, patrons or management intervene to resolve the quarrel by 'calming down' the situation. They may appeal to the offender's sense of propriety, issue cease and desist orders or negotiate the actors' differences. If all this fails, sometimes patron actors resort to force, physically restraining belligerents or ejecting them from the premises.

Although illegal goods and services and other criminal activities are covertly permitted, if these activities are done openly and in such a way as to portray the shebeen as a clearing house for contraband goods, they are highly sanctioned. Such goods should not be flaunted about. The "mattress example" in chapter 6 under section 6.2.2 shows the kind of ground rule flaunting that is not accepted in shebeens. When the furniture shop owner came by the shebeen making enquiries, the shebeen actors felt quite offended that the shop owner could have suspected them of condoning such behaviour. Behaviour connected with criminal pursuits must be veiled in order to ensure that the straight front is maintained. If not, an activity of this type is sanctioned and thus overt and direct criminal behaviour is prevented.

It is apparent that a wider range of lax behaviour is tolerated in the shebeen than in more serious settings or in licensed public drinking places. Certain vocabularies characterised situated actions in the shebeen. The vocabularies do not only provide accounts for activities
in the shebeen but also provide for speech events. Reference to smooth
to horseplay between two male actors; swearing led to an
echange of profanities or to serious fighting.

Since most actors claim that they come to the shebeen to relax, talk and
socialize, the rhetoric used is geared towards the attainment of these
goals. At the same time shebeen actors are anxious to portray the
shebeen as a respectable playtime setting. Any utterances that might
discredit the establishment are sanctioned. Therefore, distinctive
situated actions were found together with their ideal-typical
vocabularies of motives (Taylor 1979).

8.4 Guidelines to Behaviour

Interactional guidelines governing behaviour in the shebeen appear to be
constructed by the actors themselves. These guidelines give directions
to the actors about what they might expect of others and what might be
expected of them. From the "New and Old Ten Commandments" on page 258
and Figure 6.2 found displayed in one of the shebeens it is evident that
the rhetoric in the shebeen is aimed at promoting respectability in an
'illegal' playtime setting.

Figure 6.2

OUR DAILY PRAYER

Our brewers who art in hotels
Hallowed be thy beer
Thy castle come
Thy beer be drunken
As is done in shebeens
Give us our daily booze
Forgive us for drinking tea
Sparletta and Mahleu
Deliver us from the nearest bottle stores
Take us to the shebeens
To booze and booze
Forever and forever boozing
"Amen"
At face value Figure 6.1 and the "New and Old Ten Commandments" (Chapter 7) may be considered as blasphemous, a serious diminution of the dignity of the Almighty, and taking His Name in vain. It was of interest to note that hymns are among the popular songs in shebeens, especially those with a vibrant beat. Had I been examining popular religious opinions, perhaps I could have looked at these two documents in the light of religious breaches. For our purpose these documents provide a different meaning. They reveal to us the attitudes of shebeen actors to their shebeen. To them it is a respectable place, deserving the same rules as those governing other institutions in the community. Traditionally beer is associated with both the sacred and secular activities in the community. Perhaps this could be an adaptation of these traditional beliefs. One of my former students doing a survey on church attendance asked a gentleman where he 'churched' (u Kereka Kae - Where do you go to church?). His response was that he 'churches' at the shebeen (Makhalanyane, 1981).

For most shebeen actors buying liquor from the bottle store does not offer the same atmosphere of sociability and relaxation as that experienced in the shebeen. Therefore they ask to be delivered from the bottle stores so that they can go to the shebeen where they can get their daily sekala. Furthermore, the Commandments stipulate the kind of behaviour expected in the shebeen. The fines are weighted against the seriousness of each omission or commission. It would appear that shebeen actors expect proper behaviour while having a good time. Evoking sacred passages along with other presentational strategies tells the actor that he is a worthy patron in a respectable place and should behave accordingly. Thus proper behaviour is facilitated by this rhetoric. It was found that these 'posters' were available in a number of upper category shebeens. The general format was retained, although the wording differed according to the dictates of the actors.
Summary

As already observed, the shebeen setting facilitates and permits a wider latitude of behaviour than that found in other settings in society. Nowhere is open flirting permitted or so much obscene language and dubious transactions allowed: even unrestrained expressions of anger and aggression are more prevalent than in a therapeutic setting. Such behaviour is promoted by the characteristics of the shebeen setting which are those of unseriousness, semi-secretiveness, protectiveness and a code of proper conduct decided upon by the actors and enforced by sanctioning procedures.

The shebeen seems to serve a number of purposes. For some it is a playtime unserious setting, while for others it is a clearing house for nefarious transactions without fear of sanction. Others use it as a camouflage for more serious activities.

Actors in the shebeen seem to have a stake in maintaining and protecting their setting. Furthermore, they tend to lend one another support in an endeavour to maintain a certain front and atmosphere in the shebeen: they engage in remedial endeavours, sanction one another and camouflage deviant purposes. Thus the scene is made possible because of the cooperation of the actors. As Mamosali pointed out:

'If people who drink here cannot maintain a sense of humanity and dignity, it would be difficult to maintain order in this place. Some people who come here are irresponsible and may spoil things for us unless order is maintained'. (05:99:41:30/4)

Woodard pointed out that dalliance and irresponsible enjoyment may well be common in settings where the importance of continuing interaction is based on sociability (Woodard 1944). What takes place in a shebeen is allowable insofar as no-one present feels the reputation of the shebeen

260
might be jeopardised. What is generally viewed as latitude of behaviour may, in fact, be normal demeanor. Because what takes place in the shebeen is localised in time and space, patrons do not anticipate being held accountable for their conduct at some later time or in some other setting.

FOOTNOTES

1. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown defines a joking relationship as a relation between two people in which one is by custom permitted and in some instances required to tease or to make fun of the other who, in turn, is expected not to take offence. It is a peculiar combination of
friendliness and antagonism. The behaviour is such that in any other social context it would express and rouse hostility. The relationship is one of permitted disrespect. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*, New York: The Free Press 1965.

2. In this instance the verb *to eat* was played upon and assumed a different meaning from the common one. The patron twisted the verb *to eat* to mean intimate relations. "Mine has no teeth" referred to his penis.

3. Sanction is used as Roebuck and Frese (1976) used it - to designate a reward or punishment used by actors to encourage or discourage the repetition of a particular behaviour in a given setting (p.126).

4. Account is used in a sociological sense as an explanation, excuse, justification or claim of mitigating circumstances. Excuses and justifications are socially approved vocabularies which neutralises an act and its consequences. As Scott (1965) asserts that honouring of accounts represents the restoration of equilibrium.

5. These commandments were picked from Peggy Bel Air Spot; other shebeens with literate patrons have their own versions of these commandments and prayers and other documents specifying the kind of behaviour expected of patrons. It was not possible to establish the origin of these documents.
CHAPTER 9

WOMEN IN THE SHEBEEN BUSINESS

In this chapter I will be examining in depth and detail the most important actor in the shebeen, the shebeen proprietor. Most studies of public drinking places present the patrons as the important actors in the establishment (Macrory, 1955, Gottlieb, 1957 and Cavan, 1966). For the shebeen the most important actor is the proprietor or Mamosali or Shebeen queen or Shebeen king, as they are known in South Africa. It is Mamosali who decide whether there is going to be a shebeen or not. This contrasts with licensed public drinking places whose presence in any locality is not within the jurisdiction of the publican. The character and personality of Mamosali determines the character, type and atmosphere of the shebeen. She is the kingpin and nerve centre of the establishment. One patron, when asked why he chose to patronise a certain shebeen, replied that, apart from the company of friends and the liquor, the most important determining factor was Masello, the proprietor, and her selection and management of the shebeen.

One of the panel members interviewed confirmed the importance of Mamosali in influencing the type of shebeen she runs. He showed me an impressive array of very sinister looking weapons which one Mamosali confiscated from patrons coming into her shebeen. Her policy was that no patron would be allowed into the shebeen with an object that could cause serious injuries if there should be any fighting, a not uncommon occurrence in these settings. As soon as they entered the shebeen, all patrons were asked to surrender any weapons they had on them; should a patron refuse to do so, the proprietor forcibly dispossessed the resister of any instrument likely to cause serious injury. The panel member gave a very graphic description of how this was achieved:
"A patron entering the shebeen would be politely asked if he had any instrument that might harm people, a knife, a piece of wire, the familiar walking stick or anything. Some patrons obliged and handed over whatever they have for safe keeping. These are handed back when patrons leave the shebeen. Should a patron resist, in no time he finds himself on the floor with a well endowed lady atop. The proprietor's helper goes through his pockets and removes anything that might be deemed dangerous. Such patrons never get their possessions back. Instead this lady takes such weapons to the police or other influential person as evidence that she is helping to reduce incidences of assault and crime in an area that is plagued by serious assaults.

As recognition for community service, the lady used to receive a token sum of money but this has been stopped. She too stopped taking the booty to the police." (030:39:40:30/1)

This shows an interesting relationship between the law enforcement establishment and the shebeen; a proprietor who is running an unlicensed establishment receives a reward for maintaining order in her place, but no comment is made or action taken against her for providing an establishment that could increase deviancy in an area that is already fertile for such growth. This appears to be another strategy by the shebeen proprietors to present their establishments as law abiding and respectable places.

Like the markets of West Africa, one cannot imagine a shebeen without bo Mamosali even now that male shebeeners are beginning to encroach on this territory. Shebeen actors still classify themselves into two groups, the patrons and bo Mamosali. The proprietors are perceived by patrons in accordance with legitimate occupational categories. The women working in the shebeen utilize the shebeen as a serious work setting. They are visible in the shebeen not only as performing functional tasks but also as generating and sustaining an important part of the shebeen rhetoric. The nature of the shebeen transactions and interactions are shaped by her personality.
Transactional activity is described as patterned transference of both material (money or liquor or other goods) and immaterial values such as status and power. In examining *bo Mamosali*, the purpose is to establish what controls and management of meaning and cognitive framework are utilized by *bo Mamosali* to direct and organise transactional activities in the shebeen. It is hoped that this will provide an understanding of why this institution is beset by so many contradictions. Further elucidation of the values and ideologies which direct these transactions and exchanges in the shebeen setting, and govern the principles of choice and allocation of resources as selected by the actors, would provide us with the emic realities of these women in their capacity to identify and manipulate resources at their disposal.

Entrepreneurial activities are constantly described as exchange transactions *par excellence* since they are formal and political means of creating and manipulating support, wealth and power. In the shebeen, *bo Mamosali*'s activities provide a conceptual framework within which meanings may be managed in order to negotiate and articulate the realities of their status relations.

It is being argued here that shebeens present a mode of constructing and expressing the state of relations between the actors involved. Therefore there are phenomenological dimensions to the process of role transactions between and within factions. According to Barth(1966), in order to understand how a particular unit of production or social form is generated, it is important to focus on the transactions that are subject to the rule of strategies put forward in decision making. However, in order to understand these statements, it is necessary to introduce the local views on (a) the business opportunities for Basotho women and (b) the position of women and opportunities for change.
Business Opportunities for Women

In a country where the nature of labour migration results in women having to take more than their fair share of responsibilities, it is not surprising to find that women engage in an economic venture that in most countries is the man's domain, the brewing and selling of liquor. What makes the situation of shebeen keepers unique is the fact that, unlike their contemporaries in West Africa (the Market Mamas), Basotho women have no history of entrepreneurship and nowhere in Southern Africa is there a parallel to the West African market women. The Basotho women appear to have ingeniously cultivated this undertaking and succeeded in making it a popular and tenacious establishment.

There is considerable evidence to show that under conditions of serious underemployment and where only a small number of the active male labour force can be absorbed into the formal wage sector, competition between men and women intensifies, resulting in the exclusion of a large section of women from the formal sector.

Thus the women are forced to enter the highly competitive world of small scale enterprise producing petty commodities. Most of these small enterprises are clustered at the lower end of the labour market and are often predominantly carried out by women. Not only do we observe sex segregation on the basis of gender hierarchy, but we also notice a preponderance of women in those occupations which are an extension into the external market of domestic labour and skills. That is, women are clustered into jobs which structurally resemble their taken-for-granted family role. Hence, the Basotho women's choice of liquor brewing as a
means of improving their lot is a rational decision in an attempt to achieve wealth and power. This manipulation of their circumstances shows considered weighing of options.

9.1 Conceptual Tools

From the early 1970s, many social scientists, especially those in urban social anthropology, have been preoccupied with trying to understand the proliferation and tenacity of small-scale production. Prior to this period this phenomenon received scanty attention from scholars of urban issues or economics. The burgeoning small-scale production was as large as life and could not be ignored indefinitely. So pervasive are these entrepreneurial activities that one gets the impression that one can purchase almost anything from the street or without actually going too far from one's doorstep. Shebeens in Lesotho have not been an exception in this mushrooming process. Because of its multidimensional character, many theoretical tools have been recommended in the analysis of the problem. As discussed in Chapter 2, the dispute about the usefulness of concepts like informal sector, non-formal sector, small-scale enterprise or petty commodity (Moser, 1978) has not been resolved to date. However, all are agreed that for a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon, the analysis must consider broadly how people are involved in the economic process, what kind of pressures induce people to work, what types of work they are made to do, under what conditions and what alternatives exist.

Such an approach is very pertinent for our understanding of bo Mamosali. Life is much too complex to limit oneself to a microscopic field; the recommended approach would answer some of the questions that policy makers tend to ignore in dealing with issues relating to women
who enter the shebeen business. To most of them, shebeens and liquor are indices of social pathology and a cause of the lowering of moral standards, and for those women who undertake shebeenning, it is a sign of deviance and neglect of their wifely duties for the pleasures of this world, as if working for up to seventeen hours a day is pleasure.

It is not in the scope of this dissertation to discuss the disputes about preferred concepts and I will not adhere strictly to any of them. I will use the concept "small-scale production sector" not because it is less controversial but simply for convenience. All said and done, the different concepts end up with the same characteristics: considerable freedom of entry, scarcity of monopolies in the sector, strong competition, indigenous ownership and non-institutionalised price setting. In many cases the operations are illegal in terms of the dominant social function, reliant on indigenous resources, labour intensive and adapted technology. Lastly, skills used in this undertaking are largely acquired outside the formal education system.

These characteristics provide us with a framework in which a profile of the shebeen proprietor or Mamosali can be developed. The ecological distribution of shebeens in Lekoeishining provides evidence that shebeens are rampant. This situation makes it necessary to find out what type of person undertakes such an economically risky business.

9.2 Linkage of Woman's Position to Husband's Earnings

There is a tendency in the literature on women and their position in the community to assume that Basotho women believe that the vehicle for change and improvement of their lot lies in the husband's income and position (Muller, 1977). A woman's strategies therefore revolve around waiting in the village for her husband's remittance and turning away
from the public sphere. Women who have chosen to enter the shebeen business do not bear out this assertion; on the contrary, they have shown that their strategies are not limited only to the control of the immediate family but that they can cope with wider situations requiring business acumen and ability to manage large groups of not very sober people.

The linking of a woman's position to that of her husband also tends to account for downgrading those activities which are predominantly undertaken by women. Hence, shebeens are perceived as incapable of providing opportunities for upward mobility for manual workers. However, other entrepreneurial activities are often acclaimed for providing a person with otherwise limited skills with an opportunity for upward mobility (Koo, 1975). The limitation of social scientists in examining opportunities for upward mobility or change is that their attention is directed to the entrepreneur's position, and the analysis does not often include the positions of the entrepreneur's children. The study of shebeens has shown that, while the shebeen proprietors themselves may not necessarily go up the social ladder, they are very anxious to see that their children have better opportunities, so that they (the children) do not find themselves having to brew liquor to make a living. Therefore, instead of working towards gaining a higher status personally, most shebeen proprietors work towards the improvement of the position of their children. A miner's child does not often find him- or herself better off than his or her parents but a shebeen proprietor's child often ends up being better off that his parents. As one Mamosali pointed out:

269
"I don't want my child to run a shebeen like me. I know that most of the highly placed people in this country are what they are as a result of their mothers receiving money from liquor selling and using it to educate him/her out of poverty. I am working towards that goal. I don't want my daughter to brew or sell liquor to make ends meet." (06:121:80:1/6)

9.3 Position of Basotho Women

The major source of concern emerging from the historical patterns outline in Chapter 4 is the position of women and also the quality of life of this group which remains in Lesotho while their menfolk and a few women seek greener pastures in South Africa.

In any given cultural situation there tends to be a clustering of roles by sex and age. Roles are those activities in which the individual participates in order to fulfil the expectations of the community of which he/she is a member. Many of the roles are ascribed rather than achieved, and La Fontaine (1974) points out that the traditional stereotype of the proper occupation for a woman varies little from one society to another. However, in contemporary situations, the status of the woman appears to be further affected by the rules of residence as well as kinship. This is further influenced by 'culture contact situations' where a person may acquire certain other roles and status which either enhance or lower his/her position in the community. In the culture contact situation we may find situations where the contact between different cultures results either in a reconstruction or survival of old cultures or the emergence of new ones. Although a dominant culture tends to produce new institutions in the contact situation which might clash with the existing patterns, some of the old patterns survive because they fulfil a certain need. The role of women shebeen proprietors could be equated to the female role as provider of food, in
this case serving liquor, to a mainly male patronage. The culture contact might have changed the place of drinking and the manner of getting the liquor but a great many residual characteristics have remained to produce a shebeen. These characteristics consist of certain patterns of drinking, standing behaviour patterns, and the grounds norms and, of course, the women acting as servers.

Lesotho is no different from other patrilineal societies whose ethos is based on patrilocal practices. To be sure, these have been radically transformed, but they have not been completely abandoned and it is because of their tenacity that it is important to discuss the issue briefly in order to put the position of shebeen proprietors into perspective. A comprehensive and fascinating account of how women become assets to their families and to their in-laws through different phases of their growing up has been given by Phoofolo (1981), also Malahleha (1984).

In patrilineal societies men are usually regarded as household heads whose wives and children are under their care. At marriage a woman normally moves to her husband's parents' home. From then on her place is with her in-law's family. She is expected to be subordinate to her husband if he is present, but takes all managerial responsibilities if he is absent as a migrant worker, or if he has deserted her or is incapacitated.

Marital status is an important variable in determining the degree of autonomy, economic options and jural status for the majority of women (Gay, 1982). A woman goes through three processes: firstly, as an unmarried daughter in her father's house; secondly, as a daughter-in-law in her husband's parents' house and, thirdly, as a wife in her husband's house. Through all the three phases, she is expected to defer
to the male members of the house. As already mentioned, although she is expected to be subordinate to her husband when he is present, she takes all managerial responsibilities for the family in his absence. Often women wield tremendous influence in the building up of the family fortunes and in the education of the children.

A widowed woman often remains in the home of her husband and attains full status as household head but the position of her late husband greatly determines her access to land and livestock, which in turn affects her means of livelihood. However, if a woman is divorced or separated, or is a mature spinster or unmarried mother, she is in an anomalous position. She does not fully belong in her natal home where men's wives are expected to replace men's sisters. At the same time, she cannot stay with the man to whom she was once married nor can she go and live with the man who impregnated her. The mature spinster is a superfluous member of the family. When a woman finds herself in such a position, she may become an independent household head and try to find means of supporting herself and her family. Otherwise, the alternative is not always a comfortable one - to remain a subordinate member in her natal home. Many women prefer the urban areas with their few restrictions and their opportunities, even though the latter are limited. Most women in the shebeen business come from this group of women. The woman's right to live in her natal home depends also upon her relationship to some male member of the family.

According to Sesotho custom, women cannot inherit land although widows may retain the use of their late husband's fields. Therefore women cannot hope to enter peasant farming under their own status. One of the few ways in which a woman can acquire property is by earning money through the shebeen business with which she can buy herself a house or a plot on which to build a house.
It has long been established that towns tend to attract those people who have little to lose in the country. If this attraction applies to certain categories of men, especially the landless, or drought-stricken small farmers, or men with unhappy or deviant personalities (Mayer and Mayer, 1979), then women with even fewer opportunities, whose disabilities in the rural social system are more pervasive and general, are much more vulnerable to this pull. Thus widows, unmarried mothers and unmarried women suffer a much more deprived status permanently if they remain in their homes. By brewing and selling liquor these women can gain their own economic and social footing in their own right and not by virtue of their relationship to men. The following are case histories of some of the women who work at Shebeen United Nations.

Widowed Women

Maselina was born in 1946 and married in 1965 but her husband died in 1978. She has nine children. Being daughter-in-law number four she has no access to land. She has only had seven years of schooling. Opportunities for providing for nine children would have been non-existent if she had stayed with her husband's family. After the husband's death she worked as a maid for M25. But she could not bring up nine children on M25. She started brewing in 1982. There is not much money in brewing but at least she can manage to feed her children and pay for their school fees. (01:20:90:5/1)

Female Household

Kotikoti was born of reasonably well-off parents in the rural area around Maseru. Her home was close to a Roman Catholic Mission and one of the nuns took an interest in her and tried to interest her in church work but Kotikoti became pregnant out of wedlock at the age of twenty-four. As soon as the child was born she came into Maseru. She worked
as an office cleaner for M18 a month. She then started brewing after work and at week-ends. She experimented with different brews until someone gave her a secret recipe for *skop donner*. This proved very popular. She resigned her job and went into full-time brewing.

She has four children. The eldest is at secretarial college and is about to be married to a civil servant. The next two are still at school whilst the fourth child is too young to go to school.

Since she went into full-time brewing, she has been able to meet many of her family commitments. Although she only has a temporary shelter on her site at the shebeen, her children appear well-fed and well-clothed. She owns Shebeen United Nations. She herself is definitely not clad in rags. (05:32:85:20/1)

**Deserted Wives**

Masello is about 55 years old. She is a large lady. She has been in Maseru for about fifteen years, having come down from Semonkong. Before coming to Maseru, she used to brew beer to supplement her migrant husband's wages of about M30 a month. She had five children, and two of her daughters had illegitimate children. Her husband used to come home once a year for about three months. During those three months life was hell, as he drank most of the time. Although she brewed beer for him, about four gallons and the rest for selling, her husband used to demand even the beer she brewed to make ends meet. During those three months he would dissipate all his savings and the money that she had been making by brewing.

There came a time when she could not take it any more and she came to Maseru. She felt she was too old to work as a maid for some young
upstart. She had her family with her and this was definitely a disad

advantage when it came to obtaining a domestic service job.

Since she had been brewing liquor back home, she decided she could continue in this familiar trade and also look after her family. She then joined Shebeen United Nations. Her youngest son is at high school and associates with children from all walks of life without feeling inferior. (06:141:80:1/7)

For these three women cited above, shebeen-running offered better prospects for them and their families than being in someone's employ whether that employment was with a family or in the formal sector. The first two women had been in employment that was not any higher in status or salary than shebeen running. Even though their salaries were assured at the end of every month, they were so inadequate that they did not ensure security. Shebeen running offered a better income, albeit more risky. Apart from the levels of earning, an important factor was that these women were single parents and would have had to find someone to look after their children, had they been at work during the day. Their salaries would have been too small to meet this cost.

9.4 Identities and Self-Perspectives

Bo Mamosali describe themselves as ordinary, respectable women eking out a living from liquor brewing and selling. They legitimate the 'illegality' of the shebeen in terms of providing a 'wanted' respectable and convenient service which is in keeping with traditional values. The latter feature makes the shebeen even more important than the conventional bar. Bo Mamosali argue that if the shebeens were illegal, they would be catering for the deviants only, and not the broad spectrum of patrons for which shebeens are well known. Though they are aware
that some of the patron actors attracted to the shebeens are criminals and that patrons may utilize the setting for 'criminal' transactions, bo Mamosali still claim they operate establishments similar to any public drinking place, where people come for a variety of reasons. They disclaim any connection with hidden agendas going on in the shebeens.

One Mamosali explained that:

"The shebeen is a work place for me. It is my children's 'papa and vegetables' (idiomatically 'their bread and butter'). Shebeens are much better than the Casino or the Hilton where there are so many young girls running after 'Europeans', getting money by selling their bodies. People lose pay packets gambling at the Casino. Look where would all the ordinary people go if there were no shebeens. Here high people can meet low people and enjoy each other's company." (05:32:70:20/1)

To illustrate further the legitimate characteristics of the shebeen, a Mamosali pointed out that:

"She works hard with her own hands. She does not steal the liquor or the ingredients; she buys them with her own money. With shebeen money she had educated her four children so that they do not turn to stealing but can work for themselves." (06:14:18:8/7)

Bo Mamosali identify with many conventional institutions. During the study I noticed them taking turns so as to attend mass regularly. They also paid their church dues. But the prominent role identity seems to be that of a successful shebeen owner. This role gives her status, as it affords her an opportunity to mix with the beau monde. It also gives her independence to organise her affairs.

"The important thing is that I provide services for people of 'standing'. Your husbands (placing the researcher in the married elite class) come and drink here at Lekoeishining, they see nothing bad in that. We sit here and talk and laugh, it is nice." (06:14:16:0:7/7)

Their views towards the law are ambivalent. The police are all right if they concentrate their efforts on law breakers like robbers and murderers and leave "hard-working people like me alone". They see the police's duty as that of keeping law and order in the streets, and to
"see to it that people engaged in 'certain illegal dealings and services' do not get away with it". Shebeens do not come under this category.

**Bo Mamosali** view themselves as charming hosts who work hard to provide a wanted service, operating playtime configurations which they have designed. It is a leisure time setting, catering for a pot pourri of patrons from both the underworld and the upper world. What goes on in the shebeen and what it stands for mirrors the proprietor, making her the most important actor in the setting. It is not unusual to hear some **Mamosali** described in glowing terms and with fondness.

They expect the patrons to behave in a manner that would enhance the position of the shebeen in the community. They do concede that it is not always easy for patrons to present this comportment. Under the influence of liquor, behaviour is very unpredictable.

In Peggy Bel Air Spot we noted that the need to present the shebeen as a respectable place is also demonstrated by the type of drinks provided and the cleanliness of the place. The ideology of a shebeen being an honourable leisure time setting is greatly influenced by the comportment of the **Mamosali**. Thus, shebeens in the fourth category are not at pains to portray themselves as anything better than skid row type public drinking places.

9.5 **Why Women Opt for Shebeen Running**

Unlike most African women, Basotho women have been fortunate in having unrestricted access to education, an opportunity that goes as far back as the introduction of Western type education in the country. As women do not have to look after livestock or go to the mines, this often gives them an opportunity to stay longer in school than boys, if their parents
can afford to pay. There is no free education system in the country. Women have a higher literacy rate than men. In spite of this unusual advantage, Basotho women do not seem to enter employment in numbers commensurate with their literacy attainment. It appears that the aspirations of most women, at whatever level of education, remain limited to traditional female jobs such as nursing, secretarial, teaching, domestic service, cleaning and working as tea ladies. Thus, women, by virtue of being female, appear not to qualify for certain positions, confirming an assertion made earlier about clustering of roles by sex and age. The formal educational system does not appear to be performing any better than home socialisation settings in developing assertive leadership skills in women and girls. They tend to be encouraged to study traditional domestic arts and commercial subjects which do not appear to be relevant for contemporary employment opportunities or do not confer high social status.

Given the inadequate educational and vocational training of women and the competitiveness of unskilled employment, women are at a structural disadvantage. The combination of all these factors leave most insufficiently skilled women with few options: "marriage, domestic service, prostitution and small-scale production". This statement was made by one of the shebeen proprietors. Other researchers in the area have noted similar observations (Mayer and Mayer, 1971, Nelson, 1979 and Remy, 1975). One Mamosali gave the following explanation:

"I am too old to run after 'Europeans'(1) (meaning prostitution, Europeans are presumed to be the ones with money). I am not sufficiently educated to get a job with the government or a private organisation. I don't want to be chased by the police in the street selling apples(2). I don't want to work for people like you (meaning the researcher). The only skills I have are those of brewing and I have seen families who survive on liquor selling. People will always want liquor while if I sell apples I cannot be sure that people will always want them or that I will even get the apples from the Boers to sell." (05:32:87:20/1)
The position and status of women in urban areas is ambiguous and ambivalent. Women complain that, because they have moved into towns, they are all presumed to be 'prostitutes' and 'loose'. Yet, at the same time, if the woman proves herself capable of supporting her family, she is greatly admired. The ambiguities and ambivalences of her position do not diminish her pragmatism and the evidence that a woman is willing to enter a risky economic venture like brewing shows her readiness to 'chance her arm' and her ability to hold her own, and, above all, her militancy under unpromising circumstances. Thus, far from being a down-trodden, spiritless creature, "vendues comme le chevre" (Binet, 1959, p.747), the Mosotho woman shows determination and self-confidence.

Liquor brewing and selling is viewed as a lucrative trade. The takings might not appear to be exciting for the economist but for Mamosali what she makes from this trade far exceeds what she might get from most other income-providing activities open to someone in her circumstances. The accounting capabilities of most Mamosali are inadequate and therefore attempts to establish how much they made were not easy, especially as they were reluctant to disclose how much they made. They kept saying "it is difficult to say because as soon as the money comes in, I have to buy more stuff and meet family commitments on a day-to-day basis". Although it is difficult to determine profitability, to judge from the proprietors' material possessions, their profitability is high. This inference should be made with caution because of the stratification of the shebeen universe. Those in the upper categories are likely to be better off than those in the lower categories of shebeen. The majority of proprietors are at the middle and lower end of the scale, but even they appear better off than their counterparts in related economic activities. Therefore, they still feel that running a shebeen "is better than selling fruit or vegetables in the street".
The shebeen proprietors complained of bad debts due to the credit system. Although sometimes they may get a debt paid off, often if a patron disappears without paying, it is difficult to get the money and Mamosali has to make it up somehow. If a patron has been given permission to have an account, his name is written on a page in an exercise book. Whenever he asks for a drink on credit, he is given this book and he fills in the information on the service provided and the amount owed and signs for it on the appropriate page. Often he memorises the page.

**CREDIT PAGE SPECIMEN**

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Mr Leta August 1983

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The responsibility of ensuring that correct information is filled in lies with both the patron and the proprietor but sometimes, when the patron has had a lot to drink, he may become less vigilant and lazy. He would then request Mamosali to fill in the tedious information and he would simply add his signature. A 20c might be filled in as a 30c. Since only small amounts are involved and the pattern of buying is adhered to, the patron does not often detect such occasional changes. I was told about patrons who sometimes find themselves running up large accounts. These stories were related by patrons who often assured me that such outrageous swindling did not occur in their shebeen. Both
actors are aware of the possibilities of paying for services not given. The patron's attitude is that of an indulgent shrug. As one of them commented:

"I don't really know if I have ever paid for liquor or food I have not eaten. The possibilities are there but it is difficult to tell. We know such incidents have happened in other places, where they get you drunk purposely so that they can rob you, but here, no, I don't know. Anyway these are minor hazards which do not necessarily impoverish one as long as she does not claim I drank a whole drum alone."

Putting it idiomatically, he concludes by saying "he who eats a man does not finish him" (0070:130:6:15/6).

On the other hand, Mamosali's response is guarded. The issue came up when she was asked how she overcomes the problem of debt defaulters.

"Hei! Mother, it is difficult. God's person, we lose a lot because we trust these people. Sometimes you send someone to chase them, even become abusive to him when you meet him in the street. But often you give up chasing the defaulter. (Smiling slyly, she continues) You too know, mother, when a woman is in difficulty, there are strategems she can employ." (01:141:50:1/7)

The economic reasons are often cited as influencing entry into the shebeen business. While these may be paramount, other factors also come into play, such as how to arrange for one's family while one is working, the weighing of the risks involved in these non-formal ventures, such as being arrested, perishability of goods and the undignified position of being a street vendor.

9.6 Status of Bo Mamosali in relation to their Occupation

Society imposes roles on the basis of anatomical and physiological differences among people to justify different treatment of men and women in various aspects of life. We therefore find that the gender difference is often invoked to justify discriminatory status and role accord. The gender does not just become the social classification of a
person as either female or male, but extends further than mere biological disparity. Although an individual has no choice in his or her sex, society has the freedom to choose the social consequences (O'Donovan, 1979). It is these ideological aspects of the women's position which have occupied scholars concerned with explaining why women are unable to acquire the status based on the relations of production, despite their being central to the mode of production. Thus Meillassoux remarked that 'despite the dominant place which they (women) occupy in agricultural as well as domestic labour, women are not granted the status of producers' (cited in Kimble, 1983, p.19).

In relation to shebeens, the position becomes complex. Shebeens are often accorded low status; this is probably due to the general public view that shebeen patrons are the "dregs of society". Yet the shebeen proprietors are often held in high regard by the patrons (Schmidt, 1980). Bo Mamosali may enjoy considerable prestige and influence (Longmore, 1965). It is due to this high status award that bo Mamosali are able to point to their ability to "hobnob with the elite", an opportunity they could not easily have in the conventional setting. We find that the position of shebeens and shebeen owners is fraught with conflict. Shebeen running is an acceptable means of earning a living and enabling the owners to be viewed with admiration for their bravery but the image of the shebeen establishment does not improve. Coupled with the low status of shebeens is the belief that women in urban areas are spoilt, flighty, immoral and devoid of proper feminine deportment (La Fontaine, 1974). From the foregoing it would be advisable to avoid rating occupational status with social status, as an individual occupying a low status job might enjoy much social esteem.

Bo Mamosali are still bound by rules of feminine modesty and restrained behaviour yet they sometimes have to cope with unruly drunks, to ensure
that they are not cheated out of their takings and listen to abusive language. Often they organise their social networks in such a way that they get the least tarnish and maintain a certain standing in the establishment.

"Yes, I do have to take most of the responsibilities to ensure that I maintain a certain standard of order in the place but I keep a certain distance - the other patrons are the ones who keep others in line. I am the mother figure and I intervene if things cannot be otherwise resolved." (06:141:70:1/7)

Often if a situation develops in a shebeen which eventually requires intervention by the proprietor, the culprit feels suitably chided and disesteemed. To be reduced to the status of a child requiring maternal reprimand is a position not easily acceptable to a Mosotho man. Such incidents elevate the position of Mamosali.

Traditionally there is a social distancing of the sexes, yet in shebeens a different social mixing exists. Bo Mamosali talk and laugh with men, they gossip, joke and enjoy being praised for their resourcefulness. It would seem that a new relationship is developed without the negative value judgements that accompany overfamiliarity between the different sexes. Bo Mamosali are seen to be free of traditional stereotyping of feminine helplessness and to have shown initiative in being able to support themselves.

Whilst Bo Mamosali seem not to differ from their counterparts in the small scale sector, their relationship with the patrons and the ability to command patrons' respect causes major differences in the status of women in other small scale sectors. Literature concerned with women in these activities often argues that the continuation of the traditional role of African women in food production is responsible for the continued subordination of women (Beneria, 1979). Yet the position of bo Mamosali is regarded as high and important in the community. Most
women who enter shebeen running are mature people of matronly stature with strong personalities and a great deal of managerial ability. Often they are not encumbered with husbands.

Summary

From the foregoing we come to the conclusion that certain structural and cultural factors affect the status and role of women. Basically, women’s main occupations were marriage and agricultural activities. In the absence of traditional agricultural occupation and marriage, the generally considered proper career for women, they are forced to move into activities that can fill this vacuum. However, their choice of new occupation is still influenced by certain structural and cultural factors, such as whether it is in keeping with what are perceived to be feminine economic roles. The presence of young families and the absence of technical skills influence the extent to which a woman can fulfil the roles of mother and wage-earner.

Notwithstanding the above, it appears that women can keep their economic footing in their own right and not by virtue of their relationships with men. By joining the shebeen business, the women are afforded an opportunity not governed by patriarchal attachments. Freed from male shackles, they develop relationships that improve not only their economic status but also their social standing.

Women in Lesotho live under a variety of conditions which, if put on an ordinal scale, range from submission to self-assurance. The roles and the dispositions are determined by a number of factors, including the ability of a woman to fulfil the expected roles fully as well as those she has been able to carve out for herself. The fact that bo Mamosali have been sufficiently enterprising to compete with men in wage earning
activities has reduced the long-standing male domination in wage spheres and as agents of proletarianisation. As they enter the wage labour market, they appear to be striving for control of their labour, leaving the land and moving out of a subordinate position. In the shebeen setting, they are more than equal to their patrons.
Footnotes

1. The term 'Europeans' is a translation of the word makhooa. In this particular case it does not strictly mean Europeans but is used to describe any potential client who might be willing to pay for sex or other services. Even the migrant miner comes under this category. Paying for sex is an alien act to most Basotho, therefore the act of paying for sex is associated with Europeans who are believed to have introduced the habit.

2. By 'selling apples' the respondent was referring to the whole street vendor activity. Police tend to harass street vendors much more than shebeen runners.
CHAPTER 10
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SHEBEEN AND ITS WIDER ENVIRONMENT

The presentation and analysis of data has this far been confined mainly to shebeen core actors - the patrons and bo Mamosali. Also activities that have been discussed are those which occur within the shebeen setting. Thus, so far the discussion has been at a micro level. Gay (1980), in her study of Basotho women's options, noted that the shebeen provides much wider reciprocal exchange networks than is apparent on a cursory assessment. Often the general conclusion is that shebeens are there to sell liquor and that they play no other role beyond that of providing liquor to those who just want to drink. It is evident that alcohol consumption is only a small part of a number of the functional roles of the shebeen. The shebeen appears to have a potential to generate networks that go beyond the confines of its immediate geographic locality.

In discussing endeavours to establish relationships between micro and macro analyses, Pons (1980) points out that there are two major problems confronting the researcher. These are the choice of units for intensive study and the scale and the levels of the analysis. It is not easy to resolve these problems when one is studying a complex institution such as the shebeen. It has a complex history, as noted in Chapter 4, a complex legal position, economic and social arrangement. To help in the analysis of the relationships between these two levels, social anthropologists have utilized a network of reciprocal exchange approaches (Mayer, 1968; Wolfe, 1970 and Lomnitz, 1977). According to these social anthropologists, such networks cover a wide variety of relationships, social "kinship, information and economic exchange" (Lomnitz, 1977).
Many literary works on shebeens in southern Africa have shown the importance of the reciprocal exchange networks found in them; most of these are not just confined to economic transactions (Mzamane, 1983; Di Kobe, 1981 and Abrahams, 1954). In Chapter 4, we noted that as long ago as the last century and the beginning of this one people could get information about lost stock, planned raids and stolen property from canteens. Some of the chiefs viewed canteens as providing a social service. Over the years the hospitality that was often given to a traveller has slowly been eroded. Traditionally, a traveller was often sure of finding some family to give him food and a bed for the night. This has been changing over time and eventually the shebeens have taken over some of these services. Many others have evolved as the shebeens changed character.

The widespread use of the shebeen as a market place and the variety of its activities perforce produce a diversity of actor participants. The shebeen can therefore be viewed as an integral part of the slum areas, in this particular instance, based on reciprocal exchange networks. Hart (1973) was among the first social scientists to bring forward the possibility of the existence of a benign relationship between small scale economic activities and the rest of the wider economy. He saw within the informal sector a potential for a pattern of growth with an egalitarian distribution of income.

In Lekoeishining the basic principles and forms of organisation appear to be rooted in the traditional institutions of 'taken-for-granted' cooperation and kin support. These ties have not been weakened by the economic instability found among these disadvantaged groups. On the contrary, the social networks operating in shebeens in Lekoeishining appear to have been conditioned by imperatives of economic and social survival. The vitality of kinship and neighbourliness appear as a key
element in the shebeen culture. This vitality may be viewed as the mainspring of social innovation in the adaptive mechanism of these men and women, whose prospects in economic, social and political spheres are very limited, if they exist at all.

10.1 Network of Reciprocal Exchange in Shebeens

The root of the concept of network as "a collection of points, partially connected with each other" (Polister, 1980, p.71) has been incorporated into the concept of social networks as the links among groups of individuals. Social networks could be viewed as interconnected relationships, durable patterns of interaction, and interpersonal threads that comprise the social fabric. Lomnitz (1977) argues that the characteristics of social networks are the content of interactions, diversity of the network membership types, the reciprocity, the intensity of the relationship and the geographic proximity. Social networks cover a varied field of relationships between individuals. A variable that could be used to define a social field may be any aspect of social relationship, thus it could be social, political, economic, kinship or information exchange. However, Lomnitz (1977) warns about the possibility of diffusion if a particular field is centred around a given establishment. The shebeens exhibit some of this diffusion due to an overlap of the actors' expectations. One actor may come to the shebeen with more than one intention in mind. Also, an individual may, at specific times, be the centre of a network other than the one initially intended. As the term 'network' found a more general usage in anthropological literature, efforts to refine the concept have increased. According to Radcliffe-Brown, networks are the "set of social relations which exists in reality" (1968, p.190). However, the concept "social network" is an abstraction used to facilitate a compact
description of a set of more complex relationships between points or individuals in a space (Lomnitz, 1977). It is in this way that I intend to use the concept of social network. I propose to discuss the types of social networks in terms of reciprocal exchange of a variety of 'items' such as services, goods and information that is economically, politically and socially valuable.

Further elaborations on reciprocity as a form of exchange are offered by Polanyi (1957) and Dalton (1968), in which they define reciprocity as forms of exchange and service having three characteristic features: it develops as part of a social relation, the reciprocity of services and goods extends beyond a single transaction and it is not governed by the laws of supply and demand. Reciprocity may therefore be attained through sharing of the burden, like "taking turns" in looking after each other's business. Polanyi also argues that in this type of reciprocity a person would get more than in an ordinary market exchange situation supposedly based on purely individualistic and profit maximization rationale. Reciprocal exchange tends rather to be based on principles of generosity (Polanyi, 1957). The shebeen setting provides an example of the broader understanding of reciprocal exchange, consequently salvaging the concept from the reductionist approach of economic anthropology. Reciprocal exchange appears to be connected with the existence of social networks defined simultaneously by social and economic exchange relations. In such an impoverished environment as that pertaining in shebeen locales, one would have expected less reciprocal exchange on the assumption that there are not enough 'items' to spread around, but Evan Pritchards (1940, p90-91) points out that "it is scarcity and not sufficiency that makes people generous".

It was observed that in the reciprocal network there appeared to be more than just borrowing each other's articles. Members also behave
towards each other with more familiarity. In a way, reciprocity appears
to strengthen social solidarity in this environment.

During my fieldwork, I was told that one Mamosali was arrested for
possession of cannabis. It turned out that one of the actors had
asked Mamosali to keep a box safe for him. True to the form of
reciprocal exchanges, she obliged a neighbour without asking any
questions. When the police came and found the cannabis in her
shebeen, she bore the brunt of the consequences of being found in
possession of cannabis. She served a prison sentence without
disclosing the identity of the owner of the parcel.

(0001:32:60:20/1)

It is not in the scope of this dissertation to discuss the intricacies
of the case. The example has been chosen as an illustration of the
social solidarity character of reciprocal exchanges.

The reciprocal exchange patterns are different from the "once-and-for-
all" transactions often observed in commercial exchanges. The
reciprocal exchanges appear to exist in the context of a long term
social relationship promoted by the exigencies of living in a
disadvantaged area.

On many occasions I observed requests for favours among the shebeen
actors, whether it was a request to be given credit for any of the
commodities available within the shebeen environs, or a request to
babysit, take a child to the dispensary or even to oversee one's
business. These requests were not infrequent and were often taken
for granted. (recorded on many occasions throughout the fieldwork)

The underlying variables of social networks correspond to the
demonstrable importance of reciprocal exchange of meaningful 'items' in
the shebeen universe. These actually comprise the externalities of the
shebeen, extending beyond the popularly held assumptions that shebeens
provide liquor and 'vice' only.

It was further observed that the fabric of reciprocity networks is
closely linked to patterns of traditional systems such as family,
kinship, friendship and good neighbourliness. All jointly constitute
the social structure of the shebeen.

291
In the shebeen I got a picture of cooperative undertaking. Most shebeen actors claimed that the 'banding' together was not a deliberate undertaking on their part, 'it just happened'. Yet there appeared to be a great deal of group social network reciprocity based on kinship which varied from close to distant relations. However the nearness or distance of kin ties made no difference to the intensity of the exchange pattern. The social networks in the shebeen are more like those described by Lomnitz (1977) which are exocentric; that is, each participant exchanges goods and services with all other participants, therefore a Mamosali can ask any actor in the social network to 'man' her business whilst she attends to some other matter away from the shebeen setting. However, the exocentric networks do not exclude dyadic relations. The position is that exocentric networks have a high intensity of flow of reciprocal exchange 'so that by far the largest number of reciprocal transactions take place between members of such networks' (Lomnitz, 1977, p.133).

10.2 Diversity of Activities

It is the diversity of activities in the shebeen that promotes or facilitates the development of these social networks. It is almost impossible to categorise the activities generated by the shebeen. As one actor commented, they engage in "damn everything", tinsmiths selling household articles like grass brooms or earthenware containers, decorated walking sticks, ready-to-eat food, for example eggs, offal, cakes and fruits, and providing fuel. Travelling salesmen sell the more sophisticated articles, clothes, household items, electrical equipment. It can be a base for plumbers, and for other business transactions such as already shown in Chapter 5. It is a pool for casual labour and a
political arena. Even ministers of independent churches have realised the potential for converts. The list can go on and on.

The existence of such a wide range of competing additional business has not detracted from the importance of the shebeen. In a curious way these actors add to the attraction of the shebeen. Even people who would not generally patronise shebeens occasionally drop in to examine some of the goods available. One actor explained how a few visits to buy one or another article lead to his becoming a patron:

"You know what, my sister, I first came here because I wanted to have a look at the 'metal stand' for steaming bread. Can you imagine - just a metal stand! I was sent by my wife, mind you. This fellow did not have the size I wanted ready so he asked me to come the next day. I came back two days later only for him to inform me that he had sold it because I did not come back on the day we had agreed on. We started chatting, then he asked me to lend him 10c for a sekala. I gave him the money, telling him that it is a retainer for my steamer. Then father Teba saw me and asked me to see him before leaving. I went into room A1 where he offered me a drink. That was the beginning of my regular visits to this place...just a 'metal stand'. But I like this atmosphere of 'give me - I will give you'." (0062:91:10:19/4)

10.2.1 The Fuel Pedlar

He comes by first thing in the morning carrying a bundle of fuel (or in local terms 'firewood'). The bundle is comprised mainly of empty cardboard boxes, used wax cartons, discarded plastic containers, dried cowdung, a few twigs and plants and anything that could be burnt to provide the important fuel for liquor preparation and for cooking food.

Every morning and afternoon he comes by, calling out "Mamosali, here is fuel, are you not cooking today?" For his bundle, he might get money, a sekala or a plate of food. The fuel pedlars are well known throughout the shebeens as they often make their rounds, selling their wares. The important role of the fuel pedlar is that of saving Mamosali time which she might have had to spend getting fuel. On the other hand, the shebeen provides the fuel pedlar with a meal or some money. Generally
he might otherwise not have the opportunity to get that meal or money, however little. In winter, that fire not only cooks the beer and food but also provides warmth for many shebeen actors who sleep rough.

10.2.2 The Plumber

In the same yard as Shebeen United Nations is a plumber's shack. The symbiotic relationship between these two is obvious. The plumber hopes to gain clients who have come to the shebeen. This plumber also does soldering, thus while a patron is waiting for his primus stove to be repaired, it is highly likely that he will rest in the shebeen. We also note the easy familiarity between the plumber and one of the helpers in the shebeen as an illustration of the joking relationships between shebeen actors.

10.2.3 The Broom-maker

This lady comes in about the same time as the offices open. After the customary social preliminaries, she takes out her mat and spreads it well away from the milling crowds of Area 3 but still in a conspicuous place. Next to her she displays her finished brooms and proceeds to
make new ones. She may attract would-be buyers by chanting "I am selling brooms". She buys a sekala from which she sips at long intervals. She is one of the few shebeen patrons who drink alone yet are not sanctioned for so doing.

Although she has no group affiliations and tends to be aloof, sometimes the shebeen activities are too exciting to resist. She may join in the dancing or singing and asks someone to look after her brooms while she takes a break. Her interest in the shebeen is the scope it provides as a market place with potential customers for her wares. Her reasons for not street peddling or getting a stall at the market are that

"I meet interesting people here who help me forget my problems, even if I do not sell any brooms I can have a good laugh and good company." (0039:70:2:11/3)

It is not unusual for other actors to act as brokers or touts for these shebeen hawkers. They may tell their friends that they know where they can get brooms.

10.2.4 The Preacher

Sello had been coming to the shebeen for some time but confined his audience to a few men forming one of the many groups in Area 3. One day he came with another man who had an accordion. After a few popular hymns in which most of the shebeen actors joined, he rendered his sermon. Though his visits were not frequent, whenever he came he was accepted and often attracted large crowds of passers by and possible would-be patrons.

He came in full regalia, a blue flowing robe with a white cross and green, white and red ropes round his waist and head. His identity was
unmistakable. His coming to the shebeen was not perceived as untoward behaviour, or as censorious. Hymn singing in the shebeen is very common and popular.

10.3 Other Externalities

10.3.1 The Corner Shop

The local corner shop owner confirmed that a great deal of her takings were in goods associated with shebeen needs. These were malt, sugar, bread, yeast, paraffin and mealie-meal. Although shebeen associated items accounted for only 5% of the items sold in the shop, they accounted for 48% of her monthly takings. These figures were worked out over a period of two months. In calculating the first figure, I did not take account of the quantities bought by the retailer. We actually checked the number of items sold in the shop. Understandably there would be far smaller quantities of some items like toilet paper, writing materials, pens, pencils, paper, toothpaste, tinned foods and the like than mealie-meal, which is also a staple food, or sugar. A much more elaborate calculation and recording might have given more extensive information and a clearer picture. I tried comparing the takings of this corner shop with another corner shop located in a non-shebeen-ridden residential area. However, I could not use the figures obtained for comparison because the goods sold in the other shop catered for an economically more prosperous community with different requirements.

I could not find a corner shop that was located in the middle or upper class residential areas. The corner shop that was chosen as a control was located between these residential areas and the lower income areas and was in fact geared to a much more complex consumer group. People in middle and upper class residential areas use corner shops for
emergencies only, as they have cars to shop in town where prices are lower.

Although the numbers of corner shops visited in shebeen locales were not high (4 corner shops), and I could not be sure that the figures I was being given were accurate, their figures corroborated my initial findings. They all agreed that shebeens were good for their business.

10.3.2 The Off-Sales

There are ten liquor off-sales outlets in the shopping centre bordering Lekoeishingining, yet there are only two off-sale outlets in the main shopping centre of Maseru. Off-sale outlets managers in the area around Lekoeishingining admitted that shebeen owners were their best customers.

10.3.3 Livestock Owners

During my fieldwork, I noticed that the beer strainings were kept in a drum. Those people who kept chickens, ducks and cows reared their livestock on the beer strainings. The selling of beer strainings, apart from augmenting the shebeen owner's earnings, helped other members of the community in their economic endeavours, far removed from the shebeen universe.

Livestock rearing in Maseru is expensive as animals cannot be let loose around the town and there are no grazing pastures. Above all, urban dwellers have no agricultural land on which to grow maize or other animal fodder. The beer strainings substitute for animal feed which most poor urban dwellers cannot afford to buy. Livestock rearing is often used to augment wages in both urban and rural areas, while at the same time saving the family from expenditure on food such as milk, meat and eggs. Gay noted the same reciprocal phenomena in her study on survival strategies employed by rural women in Lesotho. In this way,
liquor brewing also helped other members of the community in income generating activities which are not solely confined to the shebeen environment or in any way linked to liquor brewing.

The beer strainings were not just available to anyone who needed them and could pay for them. When I asked for the beer strainings, I was informed that there was already a 'customer' for them. This clearly demonstrates adherence to reciprocal exchanges obtaining in social networks in the shebeens. On the other hand, strainings from the commercially run brewery were available on a first come, first served basis. These differences also show the social solidarity character of transactions in the personalised atmosphere of informal sectors.

10.4 Diffusion and Distribution of Earnings

Very few opportunities exist for the general public to access money resources in the country. Redistribution of earnings occurs only among those who have something to sell, for example business owners or people who can afford to employ household staff. The shebeen appears to be one of those establishments that facilitates the diffusion and distribution of earnings to a wider population.

Spiegel (1979) argues that the shebeen provides for the diffusion of migrant labour remittance, thereby extending the scope of the shebeen in terms of facilitating the spread of the country's main wage resource to a wider group than just the family. Studies carried out in Botswana showed that home brewing contributed P\(^{(1)}\) 2.2 million in direct income and supported an additional P 4.1 million in local value through ancillary activities such as grain production, malt making, firewood collection and grain milling (Haggleblade, 1982). These studies confirm that the shebeen is more than just a micro-economic unit. In addition to the
above, I observed other beneficial, economic, social and political offshoots of shebeen establishments.

At the end of the month, employers working out their budget and accounts often have shebeens on their lists. Most shebeen patrons admitted that they spend some of their earnings in the shebeen. They were reluctant, however, to disclose just how much they spent there. In some cases I was able to work out this amount roughly. Most of the information was obtained from bo Mamosali or through my own recording of these patrons whom I could keep under constant observation. The amounts varied according to the member's drinking patterns and his earnings. However, regardless of the level of earnings, most patrons tended to spend an appreciable proportion in the shebeen. Spending ranged from 10% to 90% of their earnings. In some of the upper class shebeens, some members' accounts were recorded to be between M 250 and M 300, a very large sum of money indeed. In the lower category shebeens, members worked for just enough money to buy them a drink. Thus, almost all their earnings went to the shebeen. As already pointed out, money is not spent on liquor only. People spend money on other commodities available in the shebeen.

10.4.1 Migrant labour remittance

Both Spiegel (1980) and Gay (1981) have shown how migrant labour remittances are diffused throughout the rural communities in Lesotho. The same diffusion occurs in urban areas, probably to a greater extent as most urban areas are receiving stations for returning migrant labourers. It is not unusual for returning migrant labourers to find that they have spent most or all of their money in shebeens or on prostitutes. Not only do they lose their money but they also find that they have been divested of all their possessions (Dhlangamandla, 1980).
It is public knowledge in Lesotho that some miners spend most of their hard earned wages long before they get home, often being forced to return to the mines without reaching home.

On their return from the Republic of South Africa most men head for the shebeens. Some use the shebeen as a boarding house while waiting for the processing of their deferred payments. This often happens if the returning worker has a relative or fellow villager who owns a shebeen or a certain shebeen may have been recommended by a fellow worker. In the shebeen these 'relatively' wealthy patrons spend quite freely in an attempt to gain status by creating an impression of wealth.

In the credit book the names of recently returned labour migrants feature prominently, showing high spending. This spending 'spree' is not often sustained for long. (phenomenon observed throughout period of fieldwork)

It is ironical that another unofficial name for Lekoeishing is 'Thibella' which translates into 'forestall' or 'blockade'. Playing on words, most labour migrants joke about the difficulties of going beyond Thibella. As one poet puts it:

Listen to me you wanderers
They told me about Thibella before leaving Welkom.
They told me it does not block you but locks you in
When I think of Maliroutso (probably his wife)
my heart bleeds
I was passing by the way my country men
Then I heard the murmurs of Tau ea Matsekha (130:125:2:3/6)

I have refrained from discussing the implication of such spending for the families. I am well aware of the suffering experienced by families as a result of money dissipated in shebeens. However, I have chosen to defer discussion of these related paradoxes. This is not because I think they are insignificant, indeed they are crucial to the quality of family life in Lesotho, but it is not in the scope of this thesis to discuss these dimensions.

10.4.2 Prestations along kinship networks

Apart from direct cash transactions or in addition to them, I also noted prestations along kinship networks which also facilitated
diffusion of earnings. These often follow normative channels 'idealised as traditional' and they take the form of gifts which can either be in cash or kind. Thus an eleven year old referring to what she had heard from the shebeen wrote:

"Mamosali, could you please give me a shilling sekala and give the change to your daughter."
Then proceeded to give Mamosali 50c. (3:1:9/6/83)

On the other hand, a young guest migrant takes pains to make it public that he has made a gift to the aged Mamosali. Bo Mamosali provide food for the many 'mentally ill' persons often found around the shebeens. People who appear to be very poor by comparison often receive gifts of money and so on even for insignificant or possibly unnecessary help they might have given. In transactional terms, these can be seen as strategies to ensure long term gains. To be seen to be kind-hearted brings public approbation and admiration.

Some of these "earnings" by the poor or disabled are often eventually spent in the general market. The 10c earned for bringing fuel might well be used for buying bread in the local store.

'Tribute' given to an influential member of site allocations, recruiting agencies, passport offices, the law enforcement agents and many others have similar long term importance. These tributes cannot be considered as bribes as in most cases they are very small, either a sekala or pint of beer, or just a praise poem. Moreover, the person making the gift may not necessarily be in immediate need of the services of these people.

10.5 Quality of Family Life of Bo Mamosali

Bo Mamosali appear to be doing better than other women in the same circumstances. This is shown by their ability to send their children to
school and to clothe and feed them satisfactorily. They have improved personal housing for their families which often is not within the business premises. Some have joined self-help low cost housing schemes.

I was surprised that apart from very basic alterations Mamosali did not appear keen to improve their business premises. When I asked about this neglect, the response I received was that

"If I improved my premises and made them look prosperous, I will attract the attention of the authorities who might hassle me about licences and tax. If that happens, I have to compete with businesses that have far better financial backing than I have. Also, remember I am not educated - how do I cope with a business like Mthembu's? Shall I tell you a secret? If I improve the premises I might lose some of my clients as they might feel out of place and the atmosphere might change. I am comfortable with my clients. There are other shebeens who cater for special people." (06:141:85:1/7)

The position of Officer Thulo demonstrates how reciprocal exchanges sometimes develop in shebeens, reciprocity which is not based purely on economic premises. Mamosali was glad to have Officer Thulo, not so much for his spending potential but because he symbolised officialdom. He legitimised her establishment and gave it status and protection. On the other hand, Officer Thulo was able to carry out his duties and consequently a 'permanent' and caring social relationship was forged.

It is these externalities that make the shebeen transcend the character of an ordinary public drinking place. The examples of the shebeens' social networks have not been exhausted. In some cases I observed that some male shebeen actors were not averse to baby-sitting. Any 'proud' Masotho man would not dream of baby minding, even his own child, but in shebeens the most unlikely undertakings were considered and perceived as normal.
Most recent studies agree that it is incorrect to view low-income urban populations as being ignorant of urban or national politics (Handleman, 1975). In Chapter 8 I cited an example of a singer from whose song it was obvious he was aware of the 1970 coup and its consequences. It has already been pointed out that the patrons themselves have often said that the shebeen provides an atmosphere where they can discuss a variety of issues with freedom. The nature of the discussion depends on the group, thus it could be actual interaction or poetry or song or an interaction during a *moraba-raba* game.

Most important is the fact that women in shebeens have access to politically important people among their patrons. This provides them with an opportunity to extract what benefits they can for themselves and for their neighbourhoods. In the shebeen *bo Mamosali* develop patronage relationships with influential leaders, an opportunity not available to most women in the social position of *bo Mamosali*. If there is to be a "pitso"/rally or neighbourhood meeting, *bo Mamosali* are often the ones to encourage and coax their patrons to attend the *pitso*. Issues from the meeting can then be discussed in depth at the shebeen. For the mass population the shebeen has become the main basis from which their grievances and deprivations are articulated.

**Summary**

The shebeen is a clear example of the existence of a complex set of structural relationships. The nature of this overall set of relations is largely determined by the nature of the economic, political and social relations in which the shebeen operates. As already pointed out, shebeens in Lesotho are commonly located in poor residential areas,
consequently most of the shebeen actors are disadvantaged people who are struggling to 'make out' in the urban environment.

The shebeen has turned out to be not only a public drinking place but a political, social and economic ganglion for networks of the general population and the urban poor in particular. Being in shebeen United Nations is like being in a market place where a variety of activities vie for an individual's attention, where a variety of commodities are available, where people meet for social encounters, or come to discuss politics or other burning public issues. The hungry come with the hope that they may receive unwanted leftovers. Other entrepreneurs come because they have realised the potential of a ready market.

Thus, beyond it being a sociability play time setting, the shebeen has developed other characteristics, creating jobs for the poor and providing mechanisms for sharing the limited resources of Lesotho.

Peggy Bel Air Spot also has these social networks. When comparative visits were made to the different shebeens in different categories, social networks were observed to differ in character and intensity. For a shebeen like Peggy Bel Air Spot, the reciprocal exchanges may be very intense because of its 'closed' character. While for the lower category shebeens which tend to have few patrons and often cater for a more transient client, certain social networks may not be strongly entrenched.

Without these social networks, disadvantaged groups would find it difficult to survive in urban areas. Furthermore, the low social groups would not perpetuate themselves nor would the non-economic, social relationships, which are the framework of the provision of social security, continue to function.
This chapter has tried to show the interaction between the shebeen and the wider social system. It is an attempt to place the shebeen in macro perspectives. I have shown how the shebeen relates to far more external units than people are aware of.

The shebeen bridges the social, economic and political gaps that would otherwise isolate the poor in Lekoeishing. The activities in the shebeens mean that bo Mamosali and the other shebeen actors have developed complex patterns of social interaction that are not confined to the shebeen setting alone. The basis of the shebeen activities is the internal and external flow of goods and services. The flow of goods and services between the shebeen and its neighbourhood is so significant as to cast McGee's model of relationship of flow of goods and services between the urban bazaar economy and urban firm economy into a superficial relationship.
Footnote

(1)  $P = \text{Pula, Botswana equivalent of } \mathbf{\£}2.$

(2)  Restricted access to page 307.
Please note that page 307 is confidential and has been removed.

Any reader wishing to see this please apply in writing to the Librarian.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING ASSESSMENT

Africa is often cited as a continent that is constantly undergoing changes and adaptation to new situations. This is more evident in urban situations which often grow so fast that both the administrative authorities and the general population are kept constantly on their toes in an effort to make the necessary adjustments (James 1980). According to Simmel the urban dweller faces pressures that promote his continued attempts to break out of interactional routines (Simmel 1965). Although Simmel was writing about the European urban community, the pressure on an African urbanite is more cogent. Thus the search for relaxing settings where the expected features of everyday life do not apply is pressing (Denzin 1973). In such settings people can divest daily routine cares, relax, try out new experiences and different selves. The shebeen provides such a setting for Basotho men and women in the rounds of everyday life. Yet the play-acting reflects and symbolizes in part the actor's more serious life situations. There is a serious facet of the shebeen. This fact is the one in which bo Mamosali endeavour to pull themselves out of the quagmire of the unemployed mass.

In an endeavour to understand the shebeen as an institution within the community, a series of questions was addressed utilizing a triangulated framework, comparing transactional analysis, microsocial behaviour setting, symbolic interactionism and decision making. Other theories have been used in specific presentations and analysis as conceptual tools. The questions set out in Chapter One were to find out what a shebeen is, how such an establishment is possible, who goes there and when; to do what, with whom, where in the setting. It was also considered necessary to generally examine what goes on in such settings and the consequence of such activities. The findings in relation to these matters will now be examined in summary fashion.
What is a Shebeen

The first undertaking was to find out what a shebeen is. The gaelic origin of the concept helped in providing a starting point. The shebeen has been found to be a popular, unserious, heterosexual, in-vogue behaviour setting, providing activities to people of varying degrees of respectability. It is an unlicensed public drinking place where alcoholic beverages are made and always sold to be consumed on premises at any time for as long as there is liquor available or there is money to buy the liquor or Mamosali wishes to keep open for business.

It is a place where people relax, socialise and play at times that are convenient to them. It is a setting where the straight and the criminal world intersect. It is peculiar in that it does not only facilitate deviant behaviour but it also provides scope for the deviant to act "normally" and for the straight to act in a deviant way. More precisely, this habitually deviant setting provides for 'situational' deviancy.

Because the shebeen is not governed by licensing regulations, the actors in the shebeen determine the kind of public drinking place their shebeen will be. It is a matter of whether it is going to be an exclusive 'club' or the kind of open place that is accessible to all and sundry.

Activities and services are provided within a 'respectable' dynamic and exciting space time configuration that provides several subsettings for a variety of actors with varying interests at hand. Actors in the shebeen have vested interests in presenting the establishment as respectable for both unserious and serious reasons. Through rhetoric they communicate this meaning and image.

The shebeen is a subsetting within a family house; its boundaries are not clearly demarcated from those of the larger setting. Thus the
drinking place is still in part coterminous with the physical area of the encompassing setting.

**How is a Shebeen Possible?**

The shebeen has been made possible by a combination of factors. In the first instance, the historical events and the legal situation nurtured the development of the shebeen. The historical events covered a broad spectrum of aspects such as economics, politics, social and religious aspects.

The contemporary shebeen flourishes in response to the often repeated advice "never to forget we are Basotho". A Mosotho is what he or she is because of the complex influences that have played for centuries on his/her institutions. Any culture that is foreign to him/her is adhered to as long as there is no reason to resist it. However, there are times when he or she finds that foreign influences and practices do not help him or her to derive pleasure from life. It is when the Basotho refer to their own way of reasoning, their moral and social code and their conception of life that they feel secure and satisfied.

From time to time conflict occurs between the foreign influences and the indigenous practices. It is these conflicts that make it necessary that institutions which can give expression to both traditional and modern elements shall exist. As Gluckman points out, "Social systems can interbreed with astonishing rapidity but they also show great capacity for absorbing intrusions" (Gluckman 1955:p.141). The shebeen is syncretistic in the sense that it carries over into present day patterns values and customs derived from the past. The process of syncretization provides the means to reconcile the divergent traditions one experiences.

Maseru like most urban areas attracts large numbers of people for whom
it cannot provide services or meet their needs. So we find large numbers of men and women who cannot be absorbed by the employment sector. Some of these men and women join the "do-it-yourself" sector, often described as the informal sector. For most women the most promising income generating activity is running a shebeen. On the other hand, for the majority of the unskilled or semi-skilled men who may not be so lucky in their search for work, the shebeen provides a sanctuary, recreation and sense of belonging. Shebeens are places where men and women are grappling with the social and economic realities of a changing urban rural, social structure in Lesotho. The sum total of their strategies make the shebeen possible.

Shebeen Actors

One of the aims of this study was to find out who goes to the shebeen, when, to do what, with whom and where. Historically the patterns of behaviour taken for granted in the shebeen have often been viewed not only as an antithesis of the general standard of propriety of polite society but also as destructive to the moral fibre of the actors in shebeens and ultimately to society at large, as the letter from the Aborigine Protection Society to the Colonial Secretary was to declare:--

"....the condition of that country is going from bad to worse and the people are gradually sinking into a state of demoralisation which, if not arrested, must inevitably result in total ruin" (BPP Vol.18, August 12, 1885:p.204).

In the same manner, people who patronised shebeens were believed to be of low moral and social class. The women who ran them were viewed as 'loose'.

Contrary to this belief, the shebeen attracts a wide variety of patrons and proprietors. It is a special kind of space-time configuration in terms of operating hours, rhetoric and divergent subsettings, goods and services provided. This special characteristic accounts for the
variability of patron type. The patron type range is wide and includes
the very conservative to the liberal criminals, the highly educated and
very rich to the poor illiterates. Thus the social background
characteristics, role identities and world views of the patrons differ
greatly. All patrons engage in similar activities in the shebeen, though
they differ in their reasons for attending the shebeen and in explaining
the incongruities in their behaviour in the setting. Patrons' choice of
a subsetting and activities therein depend upon their status and
interests at hand. A status hierarchy determines to a large extent
who engages in what behaviour with whom.

I found that some actors who are normally anchored in the straight world
occasionally engage in deviant behaviour in this deviant but safe place.
Many engage in transactions of illegal goods and services. Although
these shebeen patrons interact on an intimate level with the underground
personalities and participate in deviant activities from time to time,
most are not committed to careers oriented to underworld pursuits.
Deviance does not constitute a basic identity. We therefore find that
most shebeen actors alternate between two life styles.

For the underworld patrons the shebeen affords them a respectable place
to show off their monetary and occupational success. The shebeen is a
microcosmic reflection of the "straight world"; it validates a status
they do not have in the world outside the setting. Since they do not
have access to a respectable, middle-class sociability and play setting
in the conventional world, the shebeen provides this.

The status levelling ability of the shebeen also facilitates an unusual
mix of the high in social status with the low in the social hierarchy.
In an examination of the matrix of the patron actors, I found that each
actor contributed to the setting in different but complimentary ways by
what they symbolised and what they said and did. There was a high degree of synomorphy between actors' behaviour and the physical milieu. All types were articulated to the behaviour setting.

The shebeen is a serious work setting for bo Mamosali. Although the shebeen is accorded a low status, bo Mamosali enjoy considerable prestige and influence. Bo Mamosali are the most important actors in the shebeen; in many ways they determine the kind of establishment they will provide for their patrons. They produce, direct and orchestrate the scene and therefore the setting mirrors their definition of a respectable setting. This is made possible because both patrons and proprietors share similar definitions of the setting.

Activities in the Shebeen

Actors in the shebeen create their own social world where they engage in certain activities. They have two major standing behaviour patterns. These may happen concurrently or even sometimes intertwine. Sociability and play are the primary overt behaviours. There are certain characteristics in sociability and play behaviour; these are freedom, equality, stepping out of reality, order, a certain degree of semi-secrecy and space-time circumscription. These vary in degree from subsetting to subsetting. For example, social encounters are more free in area 3 than in room A1.

The second behaviour pattern is covert activity in transactions in illegal goods and services. When actors engage in these transactions their behaviour is masked within a sociability and play context or they are physically hidden from others. Thus the visible exchange of stolen goods is taboo. The physical milieu and the shebeen rhetoric makes it possible for the coexistence of these two behaviour patterns.
Actors in the shebeen enjoy wide latitudes of behaviour such as clowning, flirting, over-familiarity with members of the opposite sex, intoxication, use of excessively vulgar language and the like. They have a great deal of freedom to initiate and terminate encounters. Though the free and spontaneous character of behaviour in these settings tends to be problematic, each actor has to read the signs correctly to avoid overstepping his/her boundaries. In this permissive, multiple action setting, novel behaviour is expected and quite common. The expectancy that something unusual or out of the ordinary will happen is ever-present exacerbating the problematic nature of shebeen encounters. Both overt and covert activities are governed by ground rules which have been developed by the shebeen actors.

The shebeen also facilitates a number of activities which might appear as if they are peripheral to the shebeen core activities. Thus some actors come to the shebeen not with the primary intention of sociability and play or with a secondary goal of illegal transactions; they come for activities that are for personal gain. For example, there was the self-employed mechanic who came to the shebeen to establish contacts and clients for his business.

Consequences of the Goings-On in the Shebeen

To a large extent behaviour which takes place in the shebeen matters only for the present. Patrons talk and joke with a number of people they would not be associated with outside the setting. Furthermore, actors take part in all kinds of activities that are never discussed outside the shebeen or undertaken outside the shebeen. For example, married men take their girl friends to the shebeen without fear that the outside world will know about them. The other example is where a patron held out his blanket as a shield for a woman patron who was urinating.
On the other hand, some activities and behaviour are of consequence within, as well as beyond, the shebeen. Some patrons hear about and negotiate business deals, contracts and jobs at the shebeen. The results of these activities become manifest outside the shebeen setting. The politics discussed within the shebeen are of consequence in the actors' workaday life. These serious activities occur within the context of sociability and play.

**Conclusion**

People have often failed to understand the nature and function of shebeens. Even today they are still puzzled by the high patronage and increasing numbers of the shebeen. Their tenacity is unrivalled by any other institution in the community. The shebeens have become diversified and their function more complex. The social problems aggravated by the shebeen will continue to give the establishment a negative assessment but the shebeen's popularity does not appear to be on the decline.

Shebeens may fulfil an integrational function and also alleviate feelings of social alienation among the upper-class. The shebeen has a micro and a macro-societal function. In the economic field the trade generates many jobs and has sharpened the business acumen of many people.

Most studies in this area tend to focus on single sex identities. By contrast, this study examines the experiences of men and women in a setting where both sexes are regarded as "equals". We find men in a world that has been created by women. The findings are interesting because the role reversal in these settings appears to have turned upside down the values and practices of the wider society. The accounting process makes it possible for men to function in this atmosphere without experiencing any discomfiture. I discovered some implicit rules and
definitions that actors use to understand and organise their experiences. The shebeen provides a small window on the world of females and the male world. In personal characteristics, role identities and world views all actors seem well suited for their role in the shebeen.

To recapitulate and comment on the theme of re-negotiation of self, we find that this process occurs in three areas which will be discussed below. The first area that has been articulated is the search for relaxing settings where a person can divest daily routine cares, relax and try out new experiences and a different self. This process is directly linked to pressures experienced by the Basotho as they are being initiated into the intricacies of twentieth century living.

Two groups are involved in this self re-negotiation. One group is the working group whose members often have pressure to provide for other people's needs, or are engaged in competitive achievement or have to meet work expectations. In Sesotho such pressures are experienced by both those who have been in service for a long time or those who have just joined the work force. Young people often find themselves in positions which they are not yet ready to assume even if they have the academic qualifications. Academic qualification is the major criteria and maturity, experience and broad view on issues take an insignificant second place. The older members in the work force never get the opportunity to grow within their organizations and extend their knowledge or try new ideas; their time is taken up with trying to do the job. Therefore many years in work does not necessarily mean accomplished competence and reduced stress. For the unemployed, their self-esteem is very low chiefly because they cannot fulfil their expected roles as heads of households or adult members of the community. Life without a job is insecure and meaningless. They experience isolation and alienation in their daily lives. Both the working and the non-working have to present
to the world the kind of selves dictated by society.

The sociable setting of the shebeen makes it possible for people to be accepted for themselves and not for their roles and achievement. This is accomplished through the status levelling processes and in some cases the entrance procedures which give the impression that those who have been admitted are "alright", that is they share the same expectations which are well intentioned. Since the shebeen is expected to be fun and contrasts with the routine of everyday life, this means that priority is given to fantasy, novelty, frivolity and exploration of the dramatic and unfamiliar aspects rather than reiteration of the familiar. The avoidance of anything resembling a dull working atmosphere or a dull unexciting, unemployment state reinforces the opportunity offered by the setting to try a new self.

One may indeed speculate whether what is being 'tried out' is a new self or the 'real' self as against the one that is structured by the roles a person is expected to assume in the world outside the shebeen setting. In the shebeen the re-negotiated self is the one that a person is supposed to be comfortable with. The claim of most patrons is that they come to the shebeen because they want to be 'themselves' and want to be comfortable. Analysis is guided here by the intention to respect the 'meanings' in currency amongst members.

This desire to be 'oneself' brings us to the second area of self re-negotiation. I have pointed out that when a Mosotho finds that foreign practices do not help him/her derive pleasure from life then he/she refers to his or her own reasoning, moral and social order. Cultural contact brings an increasing adoption of western modes of life, especially in material things like food habits, dress, housing, furniture and so on. However, the fact that changes have taken place so rapidly in
material aspects does not necessarily mean that correspondingly deep alterations in Basotho beliefs, habits and thoughts have occurred. Outward manifestations of western culture are apt to be misleading. The shebeen has demonstrated that these can be easily sloughed off, given the opportunity.

The shebeen provides an ideology and a form of social organization designed to secure paramountcy for things described as Sesotho. The networks and activities make up the most important part of the shebeen milieu. Sociability, which provides for freedom and flexibility, facilitates this organization.

However, old traditions are never exactly reproduced in the new environment, thus new modes of thought and conduct are developed. In adapting to this new environment a person does not automatically use material resources at his or her disposal; what he/she has available is a result of accumulated knowledge and experience as well as directed efforts towards the satisfaction of his needs. Since the old Khotla could no longer be reproduced, the shebeen is the end product of this directed effort. Under the powerful influences of acculturation we observe a process of adjustment and substitution, where an old trait has been modified taking in new traits.

The word Bosotho often creates a feeling of fellowship and oneness without which sociability might not be wholly successful. Thus the individual's desire for "being part of a group" is expressed in the form of a desire for national distinctiveness and cultural autonomy.

The shebeen appears to be an enduring institution because it provides the solace and consolation in situations where conflict of cultures has occurred.
The third area of self, re-negotiation, is where the shebeen provides an opportunity for the deviant to act normally.

Like any work situation, the underground movement has a pyramidal structure. The successful underground persons believe that they belong to the upper and middle classes of the community. However, the general community does not always provide an open-armed welcome to these people. The shebeen accepts them because aspects of one's personality that are external to the shebeen are of no consequence. A person is accepted for what he is within the shebeen and not what he is outside the shebeen. In the shebeen he does not have to act deviantly but acts in a way that enhances the shebeen atmosphere. Thus he acts in a way that complements actions of other actors in the shebeen.

Furthermore, the shebeen demonstrates that social relations between men and women are not immutable and fixed. These new selves that are being tried out are not only confined to sociability and play but have wider implications for male/female relations. We find that women are not first managers of these shebeens but they also provide a 'matriarchal' figure for the men. She is consulted about their personal problems, and her opinion is often sought about any topic being discussed in the shebeen. As already indicated, these topics can sometimes be of a profound philosophical nature. She is not just a 'woman' but, like a mother, a woman who has wisdom.

The women too are re-negotiating their selves in undertaking shebeen activity. When women take up the responsibilities of organising their own lives, the structure of the patriarchal family and the maintenance of its basic values is affected. The women keep their own economic and social footing not by virtue of their relations to men but through their own efforts. The shebeen is important not just as an income generating
activity for women, but also as a setting that affords women an opportunity to re-negotiate their position. That indigenous commercial undertakings often form a basis for major industries cannot be disputed. South Africa is making big money out of activities that were traditionally women's prerogative. Mahleu (sour porridge), sorgham beer are now industrially produced. The contribution of women's activities to economics of the country is significant. It is unfortunate that women do not have the financial and technical know-how to advance their small beginnings.

Therefore the atmosphere in the shebeen constitutes a widening of opportunity, not only in terms of money to be earned but in terms of friendships to be made, 'civilized' tastes to be indulged, recreation to be enjoyed, nostalgia to be indulged in and re-negotiation of self.

Implication for Further Research

This study raises a number of interesting questions that deserve further exploration in future research. A paramount reason for further investigation in shebeens is that these places offer a researcher an opportunity to study the behaviour of a variety of people where there is an intersection of the straight and the underworld.

Another interesting area that has been revealed by this study is the need for research on social interaction between men and women in ordinary settings. This is derived from the belief that manhood and womanhood are defined in the process of social interaction. People learn the values and attitudes of their sexual identities not from philosophical statements but from interacting with members of the opposite sex in routine activities (Spradley, 1975).

It is apparent that a study of shebeens requires more than one professional orientation. The legal ramifications require further
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**Memo on Traffic of Liquor 1915**

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