

ARCHIVING THE CULTURAL LEGAYC OF MBIRA DZAVADZIMU IN THE CONTEXT OF KURIVA GUYA AND
DANDARO PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on archiving cultural legacy of Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu* in the context of *kurova guva* and *dandaro* practices. The study is informed by archive theory which provides insights on how to collect and archive tangible materials. Alongside the archive theory, the study also employs Shelemay's theory which discusses how traditions undergo change as they are transmitted from the past to the present and the role of ethnomusicologists in preserving legacies that are affected by the change. This theory assists in discussing the changes that have taken place in Shona *kurova guva* practices and how they have led to a decline in the sacred use of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

In order to collect empirical data about *kurova guva* and *mbira dzaVadzimu*, an ethnographic paradigm is employed in which participants are selected using purposive sampling technique from a population of all culture bearers, *mbira* maker and players, pastors and archivists in Gweru urban and Hwedza District. Face to face interviews, field notes, participant observation method and video recordings are used to solicit data about *mbira dzaVadzimu* and *kurova guva* ceremony. In this study I argue that while *mbira dzaVadzimu* has gained popularity within and outside Zimbabwe, the migration of *mbira* players from rural to urban together with the change in perceptions about *mapira* ceremonies like *kurova guva* by the Shona have subsequently led to the decline in the sacred use of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in the Shona cosmology. In order to preserve the legacy an applied action research is embraced to collect and archive tangible materials. The materials which include *mbira dzaVadzimu*, traditional drums, and hand shakers, traditional objects, still photographs, videos and transcribed *mbira* songs are preserved in an archive at Midlands State University.

The study employs yet another type of archiving system in which intangible heritage of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*, which include *mbira* pieces, skills of playing and making the instrument and indigenous knowledge about *mbira dzaVadzimu* are preserved in living people through *mbira* performances in *matandaro* ceremonies and workshops conducted during *mbira* conferences, symposium and formal teaching of *mbira* to

students in schools as a way of transmitting the legacy to the young. The study recommends that government and non-governmental organizations should assist in funding the preservation of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. Annual *mbira* conferences, symposia and workshops should be organized to create an opportunity for the young to interact with culture bearers and scholars. Institutionalization of material culture through archiving should involve the owners of the materials by constantly allowing them to visit the archive and to explain the use of the materials to people who visit the archive.

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GLOSSARY OF SHONA TERMS

<i>Chiga-</i>	A sign shown by the deceased as way of expressing his/her sentiment about something.
<i>Chivanhu-</i>	Shona religion that is based on the philosophy that the dead continue to interact with the living.
<i>Dandaro-</i>	A contemporary mbira show commonly practiced in towns.
<i>Deze-</i>	A resonator used to amplify the sound of <i>mbira</i> .
<i>Dziva-</i>	A pool of water.
<i>Gata-</i>	A ritual meant to establish the cause of the death of someone.
<i>Hosho-</i>	Hand shaker played to accompany <i>mbira</i> and other traditional songs.
<i>Hwahwa/doro/ngoto-</i>	Traditional brew usually served during rituals or social gatherings
<i>Kubvumira-</i>	To respond to the lead singer
<i>Kupira-</i>	Traditional prayer meant to communicate with the ancestral spirits
<i>Kudetemba-</i>	Poetic utterances usually accompanied by <i>mbira</i> music.
<i>Kurova guva-</i>	A ritual meant to escort the spirit of the deceased to the village
<i>Kushaura-</i>	To play or sing the lead line of a song or piece.
<i>Makombwe-</i>	Territorial spirits responsible for rain making.
<i>Mambakwedza-</i>	Early hours of the day
<i>Mashavi-</i>	These are alien spirits that house a spirit medium
<i>Mbira-</i>	A traditional instrument characterized by metal keys mounted on a wooden `soundboard and is played by plucking the keys to produce polyphonic sound.
<i>Mahonyera-</i>	Yodelling singing style done by men.
<i>Mukwerera-</i>	A Shona ritual meant to ask for rain form God
<i>Mbavarira-</i>	Song of death usually sung during <i>kurova guva</i> .
<i>Mhondoro-</i>	A spiritual lion that symbolizes the territorial ancestors
<i>Mukombe-</i>	A gourd container used to draw water or traditional brew from a clay pot.
<i>Mwari-</i>	The Shona word for God.

<i>Ngoma-</i>	Traditional drum or music performed using instruments to accompany singing.
<i>Nyaradzo-</i>	A Christian ceremony held to comfort the deceased's family members.
<i>Nyikadzimu-</i>	A Shona word for the spiritual world.
<i>Shangara-</i>	A traditional dance style of the Karanga people of Mberengwa in Midlands Province of Zimbabwe.
<i>Unhu-</i>	What is expected of a person by the society.
<i>Vadzimu-</i>	Ancestral spirits who are believed to be the originators of the Shona genealogy
<i>Vakuwasha-</i>	Son-in-law
<i>Varoora-</i>	Daughter-in-law

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The Shona speaking people of Zimbabwe who comprise five major dialects which are the Zezuru, the Karanga, the Korekore, the Manyika and the Ndau are generally spiritual in nature. They believe that God (*Mwari*) is the greatest ancestor (*Mudzimu mukuru*), who is the owner of the universe (*Nyadenga*), is the first to exist (*Mutangakugara*), has the greatest power (*Samasimba*) and is the King (*Ishe*). The Shona also have a belief that when a married person dies, he or she will join other ancestral spirits (*vadzimu*) who dwell in the spiritual world (*nyikadzimu*). The ancestral spirits are considered to have power to look after the living as well as acting as mediators between the Shona and *Mwari*. Whenever the Shona want to worship *Mwari* they conduct all-night ceremonies (*mapira*). Examples of these ceremonies are: rain making ceremonies (*mukwerera*), thanks giving ceremony (*matendo*), remembrance ceremony (*doro renyota*) and escorting the spirit (*kurova guva*). The success of these ceremonies is dependent on traditional songs (*ngoma*)¹ which are accompanied by traditional instruments (*zviridzwa*). The most efficacious traditional instrument performed during these ceremonies is *mbira dzaVadzimu* also referred to as *nhare*, *mbira huru* or simply *mbira*².

The majority of the Shona people have always been conducting these sacred rituals and ceremonies in which *mbira dzaVadzimu* played a pivotal role since time immemorial. One of the commonest sacred rituals conducted by the Shona in which *mbira dzaVadzimu* is highly efficacious is the ceremony of bringing back the spirit of the deceased from the grave to the home (*kurova guva*). The ritual is a follow up of the belief held by the Shona that when an elderly person dies his or her spirit remains unclean until a ritual is held to cleanse the spirit a year after burial. The reason for conducting the ritual is to invite the spirit of the deceased back into the village to be among its people. The other reason is to create a conduit for the spirit of the deceased to enter the spiritual world and be together with other ancestral spirits.

¹ The Shona people use the word *ngoma* to refer to both songs and traditional drums played to accompany the songs.

² In this study the word *mbira* is going to be used to stand for the term *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

Mbira dzaVadzimu is a Shona traditional musical instrument that has been inherited by the Shona. From time immemorial *mbira dzaVadzimu* has been used by the Shona for both sacred and secular purposes. As such, the instrument, its music and traditional objects associated with it have become part of the cultural legacy of the Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

As a Shona by origin and *mbira* player by inheritance, I grew up in Chikomba³ rural areas where I attended various sacred ceremonies where *mbira* was performed to evoke various spirits like family spirits (*midzimu*), clan spirits (*makombwe*) and alien spirits (*mashavi*) in spirit mediums. I also participated in several sacred ceremonies as an *mbira* player from the age of twelve. I have always seen *mbira dzaVadzimu* being performed during *kurova guva* ceremonies with *mbira* players taking turns to play the whole night.

From these experiences it can be noted that in the Shona religion *mbira dzaVadzimu* performs a very crucial role of enabling communication between the ancestral spirits and the Shona during rituals, hence its other name “*nhare*”⁴. The music of *mbira dzaVadzimu* has the power to project its sound into the spiritual world *nyikadzimu*, and in so doing drawing the ancestral spirits closer to the living. The role of *mbira dzaVadzimu* is articulated by Sheasby Matiure who notes “As they [the Shona] engage in ancestral worship, the main function of *mbira* is to mediate between the spirit–world and living beings” (2008:3). For the mediation to take place the *mbira* music must transform the whole *bira* ceremony into a spiritual framework which is guided by virtual time. It is during this virtual time that the living overlap into the spiritual essence and the ancestral spirits embody the living. Ultimately, the two entities, the living and spiritual worlds momentarily coexist allowing the living to communicate directly with the dead. The same cosmological philosophy was echoed by Blacking when he explained the role of Venda music by arguing that “...there are absolutely no “restrictions of actual time” and that participants voluntarily are immersed in the “Timeless Now of the Divine Spirit” in which there is loss of "self in being" (1973:51).

³ Chikomba, which was once called Chivhu is located to the south of Harare the capital city of Zimbabwe.

⁴ The word *nhare* is a Shona word for a messenger. It is also used to refer to a telephone. For the Shona the function of *mbira dzaVadzimu* which is to connect the living and the spiritual world is likened to a telephone.

Virtual time can be taken to be the intersection point where the spiritual and the living worlds share a common cosmology. It is during this virtual space that the sick are healed and social problems solved.

Currently I have noticed that members of the society who have joined Christian churches are no longer following *kurova guva* practices. The church has changed some of the Shona people's perceptions about the whole idea of following African Traditional Religious practices (*chivanhu*). My observations are affirmed by Maxwell when he says "Christian exorcism and demonization have provided a new means of contesting the authority of patriarchal ancestor religion" (1995:310). These churches discourage any practices associated with African Traditional Religion as well as the playing of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. In addition Jones asserts that "Demonization of *mbira* music in Zimbabwe dates from the mid-1800s with the arrival of Christian missionaries, who discouraged the music associated with traditional religion and the 'pagan' practices of spirit possession" (2008:133). The missionaries taught their followers to shun any activity associated with traditional religion. The negative attitude of the church towards *kurova guva* and *mbira dzaVadzimu* is noted by Gundani who underscores that "with the advent of Christianity in the 1890s, churches discouraged *kurova guva* practices and playing of *mbira dzaVadzimu* as the ritual and the *mbira* instruments were perceived as evil and heathen" (1994:127).

Before the advent of Christian Churches the Shona people's life was highly informed by rituals which kept them linked with their ancestors. It was only after the coming of Christianity as well as the adoption of western life styles that some of them started to abandon some of their traditional practices and beliefs. Many Shona people were forced to believe that following African traditional religion was evil and being a Christian was holy. As a result a number of them became Christians and started to look down upon their own religion. Banana cites Joshua Nkomo, a politician who was instrumental in liberating Zimbabwe as saying:

It is a pity that some of the virtues of African life and culture, molded and developed before the coming of the missionaries, were ignored, treated with contempt and sometimes totally dismissed and brushed aside as repugnant and savage by some zealous missionaries who were captives of their religious and cultural prejudice (1991:1)

Nkomo's views are concerned with how the western culture was superimposed on the African culture and how African people were made to look down upon their own identity. The same took place within the Shona society where some of the Shona people were made to shun their culture and adopt the western modernity.

I have also realized that many *mbira* players have migrated to towns and overseas countries where they are performing *mbira* for commercial purposes. The migration of people to go and live in towns led to a weakening of the extended family system. Usually the Shona families lived in their villages and their social ties were enhanced by the nature of their families which were extended. Families would occasionally come together to conduct rituals and perform music. Migration to urban areas has made it difficult for members of the same family to meet and conduct rituals. Family solidarity has weakened resulting in a fragmented and disconnected social system characterized by individualism with families almost becoming nucleus in nature. In some way this has led to the decline of traditional practices that involve *mbira* music. The changes in perception about *kurova guva* and migration of *mbira* players from rural to urban areas have resulted in the decline of the sacred use of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. However, the move has resulted in the evolution of *mbira* shows (*matandaro* singular *dandaro*) in night clubs and beer halls in towns where *mbira* is performed for entertainment and commercial purposes. These *matandaro* shows have taken center stage in the music industry of Zimbabwe and they are slowly taking over the position of traditional *mapira* ceremonies commonly practised in rural areas. This study has taken advantage of these *matandaro* ceremonies by using them as a modern way of preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

1.2 Research Problem

Sacred rituals and *mbira* music have always been fundamental in instilling the spirit of unity and *unhu/ubuntu* among the Shona people. Furthermore, sacred rituals like *kurova guva* do not only serve the purpose of enhancing the relationship between the living and the ancestral spirits, but also to create a space for *mbira* music performance.

When a music culture and the rituals associated with it decline, the identity and social system of the people who own that music culture is likely to become weak. Their self identity and

traditional values commensurate with *unhu/ubuntu* are lost in the process. The aforementioned events affecting the Shona religious life, which are as a result of the advent of Christianity and rural to urban migration and the disintegration of the extended family system have culminated in a paradigm shift in the Shona people's perception about religion. In this study it is argued that while *mbira dzaVadzimu* has gained popularity nationally and internationally, over the past decades, the cosmological changes in perceptions about *kurova guva* by some of the Shona people of Zimbabwe have led to the decline in the sacred efficacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*, hence the need for the preservation of the cultural of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

1.3 Goals and Rationale of Study

The main goal of this study was to preserve the cultural legacy of the Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu* by archiving its tangible and intangible material culture in the context of *kurova guva* and *dandaro*. The key questions central to this study were:

- What role does *mbira dzaVadzimu* play in the Shona cosmology?
- What factors have led to the decline of *kurova guva* ceremony and *mbira dzaVadzimu*?
- What has caused the evolution of *mbira* shows in urban areas?
- How best can the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* be preserved?

The broader issues explored in this study embrace matters surrounding Shona cosmological values versus the current entertainment context of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in Zimbabwe. Thus the broader questions investigated in this study were:

- How have cosmological changes led to re-contextualization of Shona cultural practices and evolution of secular *mbira* performances (*matandaro*)?
- How best can previously sacred musical instruments and traditional objects that are part of cultural legacies be preserved?

The study contributes significantly to scholarship in *mbira dzaVadzimu* especially its function in ritual ceremonies and also its current position in the modern Shona societies. The collections of traditional objects, still photos, films, and musical instruments that depict the context of *kurova guva* and *dandaro* form a sound indigenous knowledge base which will be accessible for

scholarly studies. Currently we do not have music archives in Zimbabwe and this study will establish the first music archive situated at a university in Zimbabwe. The concept of preserving intangible heritage through performance and collaboration during annual symposia, shows and workshops adopted in this study will revive the love of *mbira* in people and also creates room for the young to learn issues concerning *mbira* from experienced *mbira* players. Both primary and secondary schools in Gweru urban and other parts of Zimbabwe will be motivated to form their own *mbira* ensembles which will provide entertainment during school events. After encouraging schools to introduce *mbira* in their curriculum, *mbira* makers will have an opportunity to sell their *mbiras* to such schools and earn a living. So the study will also assist in job creation for *mbira* makers and teachers.

1.4 Theoretical Orientation

Theories of social change are fundamental to the studies of change in a culture. Different cultures of the world are in the process of developing to greater heights. In the process they adopt some cultural traits from other developed cultures through the process diffusionism. In the process some changes in the hosting cultures like music, beliefs and practices are experienced. The changes in culture are better explained by Akiwowo's "nascent theory" of sociation which states that as societies develop, they undergo some changes (1983:14). Akiwowo's theory is supported by Shelemay (1996:189) who suggests that traditions undergo change as they are transmitted from the past to the present. Both Akiwowo (1983) and Shelemay (1996) agree that culture is dynamic and changes with time and space. Similarly the dynamic nature of culture led to some changes in Shona religious beliefs, ritual practices and the efficacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. When *mbira dzaVadzimu* was transmitted from the forefathers to the current generation, some changes took place in the music, materials used to make the instrument, the function of the music and the context in which the *mbira* is performed.

Preservation of the tangible and intangible elements of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* was greatly informed by "archive theory" together with the theory of applied action paradigm. The archive theory provides suggestions on how heritage which is in danger of extinction is preserved for future reference. The theory of applied action stresses the practical application of theoretical knowledge in solving social problems. This theory is believed to have been founded by Kurt Lewin in 1946 although the foundations can be credited to John Dewey's works of 1910

(Maksimovic 2010). The theory is supported by Avorgbedor (1992) who calls for applied ethnomusicology intervention in solving the cultural changes caused by modern forces like rural to urban migration. The theory is believed to have been developed at the same time with the pedagogical action, creation and development of schools. Emphasis is on experience and cyclic system in which planning followed by implementation, followed by evaluation and back to planning again becomes the common phenomenon. This theory assisted the study in informing the methodology approaches employed. The same author suggests that the theory calls for action research based on previous barriers and sources which can serve us in finding an answer.

The theory of social change, archive theory and the theory of applied action paradigm acted as the lenses through which this study was envisioned. The social theory assisted in explaining what led to the changes in the Shona ontology of life as well as the changes that impacted both positively and negatively on the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The archive theory assisted in providing insights on how to preserve *mbira dzaVadzimu* using two types of archiving systems which are an archive of tangible material culture and a “living archive”⁵ of intangible elements of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The last theory of applied action research informed the practical methodological approaches enshrined in this study.

1.5 Review of Literature

1.5.1 The Shona Religion and Church

Religion is a practice that is characterized by certain agreed principles, symbols, ways of venerating God, beliefs and universal ways of thinking and looking at things. The term religion is well defined by Bourdillon when he says:

Firstly, religion involves beliefs which are systematically worked out. Normally these beliefs involve gods, or a High God, and spirit...religion involves way of thinking, way of understanding the world and life therein. Secondly religion involves symbols, and particular symbolic actions. Ritual is the most important part of religion (1990:6).

⁵ In this study the term “Living archive” will be used to refer to an archiving system which involves the preservation of intangible elements of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in the memories of people during *mbira* conferences, symposia, workshops and performances.

In addition Wallace defines religion as “belief and ritual concerned with supernatural beings, powers, and forces” (1966: 5). Most ethnic groups the world over have some form of religion with supernatural beings, powers and forces. It is from this religion that the people who follow it draw their philosophy of life. Adherents draw beliefs, myths, texts and statements about ethics and morality from their religion (Kottak 2005:210). Likewise the Shona people of Zimbabwe have a religion called *chivanhu*. The word *chivanhu* is derived from the term *vanhu* which means people and it is the bases of the philosophy of *Unhu/Ubuntu*. The philosophy puts the person (*munhu*) at the forefront and everyone is perceived as of equal importance in the society.

The Shona religion is drawn from their belief in God the creator (*Mwari Musikavanhu*), whom they venerate through their ancestral spirits (*mudzimu*, plural *midzimu*) (Zvarevashe 1997:44). They also believe in life after death and that the spirit of the deceased does not perish but continues to exist in the spiritual world as an ancestral spirit. Berliner has this to say about the same belief, “It is a basic tenet of traditional Shona religion that after people die, their spirits continue to affect the lives of their progeny and the world of the living is a function of the workings of the spirit world” (1993:186). The ancestors are believed to be owners of the religion, the land, forests and waters. Every member wishes to live in the same manner their ancestors used to live. The respect and honour bestowed upon the ancestors by the Shona is so great that they listen obediently whatever the ancestors say.

The history of the Christian church in Zimbabwe dates back to the 17th century when the missionaries came to Africa to spread Christianity. Different denominations arrived in the land between the Limpopo and Zambezi rivers now called Zimbabwe in different periods of time. One of the earliest churches to come is the Anglican Church which was established in Mashonaland in 17th Century following the occupation of this area by the Europeans. Many more churches continued to be established in Zimbabwe. The churches, through preaching and evangelism changed some of the Shona people’s perception about their religion. They began to shun anything that was associated with Shona religion like conducting traditional ritual and performing traditional instruments like *mbira dzaVadzimu* for sacred purposes as previously indicated. Berliner says that “as a result of the hostile, anti-traditionalist pressure that followed European invasion of Zimbabwe, *mbira* music suffered a decline in popularity in certain parts of

the country” (1993:240). Furthermore Dutiro adds that “in the colonial times, the Rhodesian⁶ missionaries taught that *nhare mbira* was evil, hence the performance of *mbira* music suffered a setback” (2007:77). In addition Maxwell maintains that "Rural Pentecostalism had a totalizing effect on its adherents. Members of Pentecostal gatherings were encouraged to erect firm boundaries between themselves and the world by abstaining from traditional rituals and practices" (1995:312). The sentiments given by Berliner, Dutiro and Maxwell clearly indicate that the church contributed to the change of the perceptions of the Shona towards their own traditional practices.

1.5.2 The sacred efficacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*

Mbira dzaVadzimu has been with the Shona since the time immemorial. The secular and sacred efficacy of this instrument attracted the attention of a good number of researchers. Some of these researchers are Andrew Tracey (1963, 1972), Hugh Tracey (1932), Paul Berliner (1993), Perminus Matiure (2011), and Thomas Turino (2000). These authors reveal that *mbira dzaVadzimu* has the power to evoke spirits in spirit mediums. They also discuss quite extensively on the tuning systems, the modes and *mbira* singing styles. However, the role of *mbira dzaVadzimu* is not only to evoke spirits in spirit mediums but also to maintain solidarity and stability among the Shona. In other words *mbira dzaVadzimu* has always enshrined Shona identity and hegemony. The importance of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in the Shona cosmology was observed by Kaemmer (1996) who considers the instrument as providing a conceptual basis for the Shona just like the piano does for the westerners. It has also been used as a weapon to fight against famine and evil. The legends have it that the instrument used to have the power to make God (*Mwari*) listen to the plight of the people and respond accordingly. History has it that one of the 1880s great chiefs named Tsuro, who was possessed by the spirit of Chaminuka, had the power to control wild animals, to make rain, and to foretell future events. The chief’s power was generated from the *mbira* instrument as evidenced by the following story about the Ndebele who were sent by Lobengula to kill Tsuro:

The old chief (Tsuro) sat on a rock, calmly playing on his *mbira*. His assailants tried to stab him with their spears, but could not even wound him. Some of them had rifles and fired at him, but the

⁶Rhodesia is the colonial name for Zimbabwe until its independence on 18th April 1980.

bullets fell around him like hailstones, without touching him (<http://chirandu.blogspot.com/2007/06/chaminuka.html>).

From the story it can be noted that the power of the instrument created a spiritual realm which then protected Tsuru. It is also confirmed that he could play his *mbira* until he became invisible. From the explanation given above it can be noted that *mbira* is an instrument that has been ascribed to some supernatural powers which are drawn from its connectedness with the ancestral spirits who are the owners of the instrument. In line with Tsuru's legend, Caroline Makara, a student at College of Music in Harare expressed that:

Mbira inobatsira spiritually, because inoita kuti pfungwa nevadzimu vedu namwari wedu tive tiri pamwechete...Simba rembira hariperi nekuti kana ichirira yakafanana nepfuti. Painorova inotosiya yapaza. Inogona kuparadza nyika yese iyi nguva diki diki. Inogona kuumba nyika nguva diki diki. Inogona kuti vanhu vanga vasinga wirirane vabatanidzwe nembira. Inogona kurwisanisa vanhu. Saka ipfuti.

Mbira helps spiritually because it makes the brain, the ancestors and our God to be together...The power of *mbira* is unlimited because when it plays it is like a gun. When it strikes it destroys. It can destroy the whole country in no time. It can also build it in a short period of time. It can unite enemies. It can also make people fight. So it is a gun (Interview 24 August 2012).

It is important to note that the bond that exists between *mbira dzaVadzimu* and the ancestral spirits has always been very strong. The relationship is made strong because the instrument has been with the Shona for a long time and has also has been used for socialization and evoking spirits in spirit mediums.

Most African societies use music for secular functions as well as to create a spiritual framework (*gokoro*)⁷ in which the living can interact with the spiritual world. The theory of *gokoro* was propounded by Maraire (1990) when he indicates that the Shona institutions called *mapira* are conducted to facilitate a spiritual framework which allows the spirits of the dead to coexist with the living.

Mbira dzaVadzimu enshrines the Shona epistemology (*chivanhu*) which places the ancestral spirits at the center. *Mbira dzaVadzimu* is the core of rituals like *kurova guva* and directs the

⁷ *Gokoro* is a Shona word which means a place with salty water usually visited by animals like cattle. In this context the power of salty water to attract the cattle is similar to that of *mbira* when it attracts the spirits during a possession ceremony

whole ritual in a certain direction meant to achieve a common socio-spiritual goal. Jones supports this dimension when she indicates that the role of *mbira dzaVadzimu* during a sacred ceremony is “to provide a link between the world of the living and the world of the ancestral spirits” (1992:110). Although a lot has been written about *mbira*, especially by the various authors mentioned above, very little has been written about the shift of *mbira dzaVadzimu* from its sacred use in rural societies to secular use in cities and also its decline in the Shona rural societies, hence this study.

1.5.3 Applied Ethnomusicology

Applied ethnomusicology is a field of study drawn from ethnomusicology. While ethnomusicology deals the cards, applied ethnomusicology plays them. Keil (1982) refers to applied ethnomusicology as an field whose parameters go beyond academic application. Harrison, Mackinlay and Pettan provide a more detailed definition of applied ethnomusicology as “the approach guided by principle of social responsibility, which extends the usual academic goal of broadening and developing knowledge and understanding toward solving concrete problems and towards working both inside and beyond typical academic contexts” (2010:1). Applied research is central to the field of applied ethnomusicology and attempts to point out practical applications of the scholarly studies (Dirksen 2012).

The field of applied ethnomusicology originated from European ethnomusicology and folk music research both which employed applied research approach. Harrison, Mackinlay, Pettan (2012) and Dirksen (2012) concur that the field is a not new but can be traced as far back as in 1944 when Seeger called for paper presentation in “applied musicology”. However even before, aspects of applied ethnomusicology were employed in various anthropological studies. These included protection of national heritage, field research, transcription, analysis, archiving and documentation (Harrison, Mackinlay and Pettan 2012). The formation of study groups under the auspices of the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM) assisted in clearly defining and authenticating the field of applied ethnomusicology. To date the field has a several followers who write papers and also organize some symposia where paper presentations are made.

There are now clearly stated concerns for the field

The concerns of applied ethnomusicology as given by Harrison, Mackinlay, Pettan (2012) are:

- Collecting songs, musical instruments and any materials that are of interest to learners.
- Providing ensembles with musics and dances Writing musical arrangements and choreographies,
- Organizing festivals, symposia, conferences, concerts, shows and workshops.
- Establishing museums, music archives, exhibitions, apprenticeship programs
- Protecting intellectual property rights

Dirksen (2012) adds other concerns as;

- Artistic representation
- Law, politics and ethics
- Development and promotion of talent and organization
- Conflict resolution in societies
- Recontextualization and adaptation
- Reflexivity
- Objectification
- Preservation of heritage
- Tradition and ritual
- Authenticity of traditional institutions, genres and sacredness
- Performance practices
- Identity and solidarity
- Cosmopolitanism
- Power dynamics

1.5.4 The ritual of escorting the spirit

Kurova guva is one of the ceremonies commonly conducted by the Shona people of Zimbabwe as a rite of passage. Gennep 1990 contents that a rite of passage is a ceremony tailor-made to facilitate and mark a person's promotion from one stage to another. There are several such rites of passage and *kurova guva* is one such ritual. Turner refers to it as a liminal stage which is characterized by the state of being in between. In other words when the deceased has not been cleansed then he or she will be still in liminality.

As previously noted, *kurova guva* is conducted in order to perform two duties, that of escorting the spirit from the grave to the home and the other of creating a pathway for the spirit of the deceased to join the other ancestral spirits. Rutsate gives a clear description of *kurova guva* when he says:

Kurova guva literally means to “strike a grave” implying opening up the grave to allow the deceased to come out of it. *Kurova guva* is a ritual that is held at least one year after the deceased’s burial...the ceremony is meant for elderly people particularly husbands and wives who would have left siblings behind (2011:82).

From Rutsate’s description it can be noted that *kurova guva* is an important ritual that serves a purpose of initiating the spirit of the dead as an ancestor. Gelfand (1971, 1999), Gundani (1994) and Vambe (2009), among others have also given a detailed outline of *kurova guva* ceremony among the Shona. For them *kurova guva* is one of the rituals that have tried to resist the influence of the western ideologies. However the current situation is indicating that the ritual is slowly succumbing to the pressure of the Christian church. Vambe (2009) provides a brief outline of the function of songs in the Shona ritual of *kurova guva*. For him "In ritualistic contexts, songs energies not only carry the content of ritual-myths, but become mythopoetic narratives naming realities in very subtle and complex ways" (2009:112). It is true that music keeps participants energized during the ceremony in question. However, traditional brew (*hwahwa*) also adds energy to the participants which enables them to spend the whole night awake. Vambe identifies the song that is usually sung when going to and returning from the grave as "*Yave nyama yekugocha*". The text of the song is well analyzed but however, Vambe did not present the transcription of music of the song, a gap which this study covers. It is also important to note that some Shona cultures sing songs like *koromora svingo* and *tora uta hwako*.

On the other hand Gundani (1994) and Gelfand (1999) provide information which is quite valuable in that they outline the Shona's perceptions about funerary rituals. The authors also provide steps that lead to *kurova guva* ritual that is conducted in the early hours of the day after participants have spent the whole night performing and drinking. They all concur that the ceremony's main goal is to escort the spirit to the village. However, very little has been said about the decline of the practice and its subsequent bearing on the sustenance of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

1.5.5 Archiving system

Most of the African cultural practices that have many years of evolution are in danger of disappearing due to modernity. It is the duty of applied ethnomusicologists to rescue these cultural legacies by preserving them in archives. This is in line with Serageldin et al who suggest that “The preservation of cultural heritage is central to protecting a sense of who we are a meaningful reference in our culturally diverse world” (2000: xii). From this citation it can be realized that the identity of a people is embedded in their cultural heritage. This cultural heritage is always susceptible to the dynamism caused by exogenous forces that are politically, economically, socially or religiously motivated. One of the most effective ways of preserving the tangible and intangible materials of such declining legacies is to collect them and deposit in an archive.

Numerous scholars have written quite extensively about preserving cultural legacies which are on the verge of disappearing and also conceptualized the term archive. Concerning the importance of archives Hill and Davidson consider an archive to be “...a means of accessing the artifacts, thoughts and outputs of past researchers...” (2012:154). In other words the archive becomes a library of indigenous knowledge systems for scholarly studies. Seeger clearly describes archives and relates them to libraries when he says:

The idea of having archives for storing, processing, classifying, and cataloging ethnomusicological recordings has become basic in the field and has led to the development of a special area of knowledge and skills within ethnomusicology. Archives are in a sense, equivalent to libraries in other disciplines in so far as their importance in research is concerned (1986:262).

The aim of archives is to preserve materials in danger of disappearing as suggested by Seeger that “The objective of archives is to outlive their individual contributors” (1986:265). After an archivist has preserved some materials in the archive, the materials continue to exist even after the archivist has passed on. Pederson gives a concise outline of the reasons why we keep archives when he maintains that “The fundamental reason for keeping archives is that they serve as a memory...They are an essential resource to their creators and provide evidence of their important work over time to the wider community” (1988:6).

Allen et al mention that, “Archiving is presumably the accumulation of material in a convenient depot and making it available to interested scholars” (1954:84). In addition Derrida defines an archive as “...an accumulation and capitalization of memory in some exterior place” (1995:2). Ketelaar reiterates the importance of records in archiving by insisting that “Records are created... to support and manage work, to record why, when, where, in what capacity and by whom particular actions were carried out” (2000:327).

An archive can also be perceived as a building where collected materials are preserved as confirmed by Muller who says, “We conventionally think of archives as buildings...” (2002:409) and Pederson who also defines an archive as “building, part of the building, or storage area in which the archival materials are housed” (1988:3). In line with Muller (2000) and Pederson (1988), List adds that an archive is “a repository where data in the form of records or transcriptions is preserved and made accessible for study” (1969:222). In this study an archive was considered to be a collection of tangible traditional objects, musical instruments, videos, still pictures which are preserved for future scholarly studies. The archiving system embraces collection, documentation of the collected materials, indexing and cataloguing.

The afore-mentioned authors agree that the word ‘archive’ also refers to historical records that have been selected for permanent or long-term preservation on the grounds of their enduring cultural, historical and evidentiary value. Likewise the archive acts as a historical record of *mbira dzaVadzimu* and other related sacred musical instruments and objects that depict *kurova guva* context.

Preservation of the Shona cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* by archiving tangible materials is not adequate unless the process also involves the preservation of intangible heritage. The above view is supported by Shepherd when he argues, “Because the significance of music cannot and does not reside in the materiality of objects or the full objectivation of ideas, it must...reside in the total fluidity of the inner life, in that which is mental and quintessentially human” (1991:19). Shepherd’s argument brings forth the understanding that preserving tangible materials in archives excluding ideas and beliefs embedded in them is incomplete. Heritage can only be meaningful if presented holistically in its entirety embracing materials and their function. Furthermore the culture of people is enshrined in both the material culture possessed by the

people and the ideologies they hold about life. It is from this viewpoint that I decided to make use of two archiving systems for preserving tangible and intangible heritage. In this case intangible heritage embraced learned behavior, perceptions about *kurova guva*, *mbira* playing skills, *mbira* making skills, as well as knowledge about *kurova guva* and *dandaro* practices.

In this study still photographs, audio/video and written records will comprise intangible materials since they are conceived as part of intangible cultural heritage par excellence. Bradsher, in consolidating this approach says that "Archival materials like historical photographs, sound recordings, sculpture, paintings and motion pictures provide pictorial and aural representation of the past" (1988:115). In other words these modes of representing the past may be employed in juxtaposition with an archive of tangible materials. It is important to note that still photographs, sculpture and paintings have more power to trigger imagination than narratives. As symbols of intangible objects, they assist scholars in concretizing the mental images of objects that are otherwise abstract. Photographs together with films are visual images which can help those who visit the archive to employ Geertz's (1973) notion of "thick description"⁸ when describing musical practices of a society.

Any part of material culture deposited in an archive in audio-visual form goes a long way in preserving a culture of a society in its entirety. Furthermore, the use of such images encourages scholars who visit the archive to use all their senses when they draw knowledge from the materials displayed in the archive since images are part of hypertext. Banks (2007) argues that images are omnipresent in society and that they assist in the analysis of the music of a society. Consequently this study made use of these images for the same purpose of analyzing the cultural legacy of Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The images may also to some extent reveal some sociological insights that are not accessible by any other approaches (Banks 2007:4). Still and moving images add value to ethnographic reflections by a fieldworker. In fact they can do what writing cannot.

As previously alluded to, this study employs a unique archiving system referred to as "living archive". The system comprises a program of different kinds of academic, educational and cultural activism. Archiving the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* through collaboration

⁸ "Thick description" is a detailed way of describing things or events which was suggested by Geertz.

“living archive” encourages participants to interact and impart knowledge and skills concerning *mbira* to one another. As the participants interact and share experiences concerning the *mbira*, they become the oral archives of the knowledge and skills. This archiving system was unique to this study in that it considers conferences, symposia and performances as a ‘living archive’⁹ system. It is also a natural system that borrows from the oral traditional approach of preservation of cultural legacies of music through aural and oral transmission. The approach is supported by Otto when he says “African music is based on an aurally transmitted tradition which is vividly practised to this day” (1998:3). In light of the need to preserve cultural legacies, Serageldin et al have this to say about cultural identity and intangible heritage:

There are many ways in which a cultural identity is formed and maintained. Much of ...the process has to do with the intangible cultural heritage of a body of traditions and usage, rites, poetry, song and dance. A great deal of all this is passed on orally through generations. Consequently, its survival is always threatened (2000:4).

Serageldin et al support the need for preserving intangible cultural heritage which is under threat. In addition Allen, et al (1954), Bacon (2007) and Seeger (1986) have provided information about the process of collection, deposition and cataloguing materials in an archive.

To that end the above referred authors have articulated the importance of archiving tangible and intangible heritage. Currently there are several museums, archives and archeological centers in Zimbabwe where cultural heritage is preserved. The major ones are the Matonga Museum in Harare, Military Museum in Gweru, the National Museum and National Archives of Zimbabwe both in Harare. Most of the archival work was done by National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ), which was founded through an Act of Parliament in 1935. The archives operate under the mandate of National Archives of Zimbabwe Act of 1986. The archives comprise various sections, which include historical manuscripts, record centre, library, pictorial collections, audiovisual unit and oral tradition programs which are part of intangible heritage. However, although these centers contain a variety of traditional materials, there is very little concerning *mbira dzaVadzimu* and related traditional objects, hence the need for this study. The success of an archive depends on the archivist’s correct execution of his/her roles.

⁹ In this study the term ‘living archive’ is going to be used to refer to an archiving system in which skills, ideas, concepts and values are preserved through performance and collaboration.

1.5.6 The role of an archivist

Archives are manned by professionally trained archivists who Ketelaar defines as “...all those concerned with the control, care, custody, preservation and administration of archives” (2000:322). Their broad function is to be in charge of archives. List (1969:224) identifies five functions of archivists which are (i) collection, or supervision of the collected materials, (ii) accession of these materials, and preservation of the materials deposited, (iii) making the materials accessible for scholarly and other use, and (iv) utilization of the materials by the staff in research and publication. Archivists usually employ archival theories and applied action methodologies in their operation. Ketelaar provides a detailed description of how the archivist has shifted from “the inactive stage of the life of recording information to the front-end of the records continuum” (2000:328). Ketelaar further elucidates some of the archivist’s tasks which are “record keeping, ability to develop the information strategy, ability to understand the way people create and maintain records and archives, ability to understand the stage that precedes to archiving (collection and deposition system), have knowledge to register a collected object, record information about the object and file the information accordingly” (ibid).

Ketelaar (2000) and McKellar (2011) suggest that an archivist must have knowledge of the cultural history of the materials to be collected and its social role in the society. In addition an archivist should also have theoretical knowledge concerning archiving. As such, archivists should be reflexive of the cultural and social factors that affect materials associated with *mbira* and also the theories of archiving which inform actions to be made when collecting and depositing these materials in the archive.

Seeger (1986:270) takes archivists to be similar to music producers in that they engage in a number of techniques and strategies to come up with a meaningful music archive. Archives do not only preserve sound but they also preserve “interpretations of sounds” by both those who produce them and the people who did the recordings (ibid). The archivist must consider a number of things that encompass the resources, both human and material as well as making sure that the project has sufficient funding that makes it run smoothly. The involvement of the community is also encouraged as they are the immediate beneficiary of the project. If well

established an archive can be a reliable research center where students and community members can come and get information which can further be used to generate papers for publications.

1.5.7 Methods of collection

The archiving process starts by identifying a location for collecting tangible materials. Seeger asserts that “When the field researcher recognizes the importance of depositing his or her collection in an archive, the archiving process begins in the field, not in the archive” (1986:269). The field in this case is the geographical location in which materials to be deposited in the archive are collected. The collector who is sometimes referred to as the curator has to visit the field to collect objects to be preserved. Usually the curator is trained to collect both data and tangible objects. Curators carry with them the necessary equipment for data collection such as still and video cameras, notebooks and tape recorders. The curator also carries important documents like ethical clearance forms and collection forms. List (1979:229) gives a summary of Indiana University Folklore Institute Archives of Traditional Music suggestions to collectors of archival material. These include some general procedures that advise the collector on what to collect and how to collect it, the process of identifying items on the tape by giving it a number and also announcing the number at the beginning of the tape followed by type of material being collected. The procedures also include the place, date, time and name of collector, information for cataloguing purposes that is ethnic group, location, name of informant, age, sex, and function of item or instrument.

Collection of traditional objects and musical instruments employ the use of different documentations that vary from one archiving system to another. The use of a collection inventory form enables the curator to organize materials systematically. It also makes it easy for the deposition and cataloguing of the materials collected. Although the format of the forms may vary, the common categories to be recorded include the name of the object collected, the date of collection, quantity, description and depositor. List (1979:269) suggests that accession numbers representing the year, the month, and the day received be given to each material and that the curator must attempt to provide answers to the questions “who, what, where, when, by whom” for each item collected.

In addition the collector must provide information about collecting process. Once more Seeger (1986:269) emphasizes that information on “which recordings are which, where they were made, in which language, which” should be available for sound recording like songs and interviews. I benefited from suggestions given by Hill (2012) and Lists (1979) in the collection of materials in the archive. The next thing after collection is deposition.

A person who deposits their material in an archive is called a depositor. Deposition can be defined as the process of surrendering some material into the archive. When a depositor brings a material to the archive he has to surrender it to the archivist who will then get information concerning the material deposited and the depositor. In some cases the depositor may be the archivist himself. In this study I was directly involved in the collection, deposition and cataloguing of the collected materials. In order to arrange and keep clear records of received material the archivist’s next task is to catalogue the material. However, deposition and cataloguing may be done concurrently

1.5.8 About cataloguing

Cataloguing is a systematic method of arranging and grouping materials following particular criteria. Cataloguing makes it easy for identification and inventorying the materials in the archive. It helps the archival materials to be arranged in an orderly manner as indicated by Bacon when she says, “Archives are invested with a spirit, a form of ordering is imposed once material is brought together, and meaning and use value constructed through it” (2007:51). In addition Hill et al (2012:161) encourage the use of the archival theory in collection arrangement by making use of what they call a “series registration system” which was developed by the National Archives of Australia in the late 1970s. The archival theory is sometimes related to the term "appraisal"¹⁰. Duranti (1994: 330) gives a clear explanation on the relationship between the concept of appraisal and archival theory. However in this study the term archival theory is preferred. On the same note Redener outlines the historical development of the appraisal and archival theory and in the process identifies the common discourse that was associated with archival theory. These according to Duranti embrace terms like "idea of continuity (absence of interruptions), stability (absence of change), and endurance (absence of known term)”

¹⁰ The term appraisal refers to the initial interface between the archivist and collected materials.

(1994:331). The author confirms that “The foundation of this theory of archival collection arrangement is a hierarchy built by series, files and items” (ibid). For example Blacking visited several societies which include the Venda of South Africa and the Tonga along the Zambezi valley in order to collect information and material for depositing in his archive using an archiving model presented by Hill et al (2012:162) as shown below:

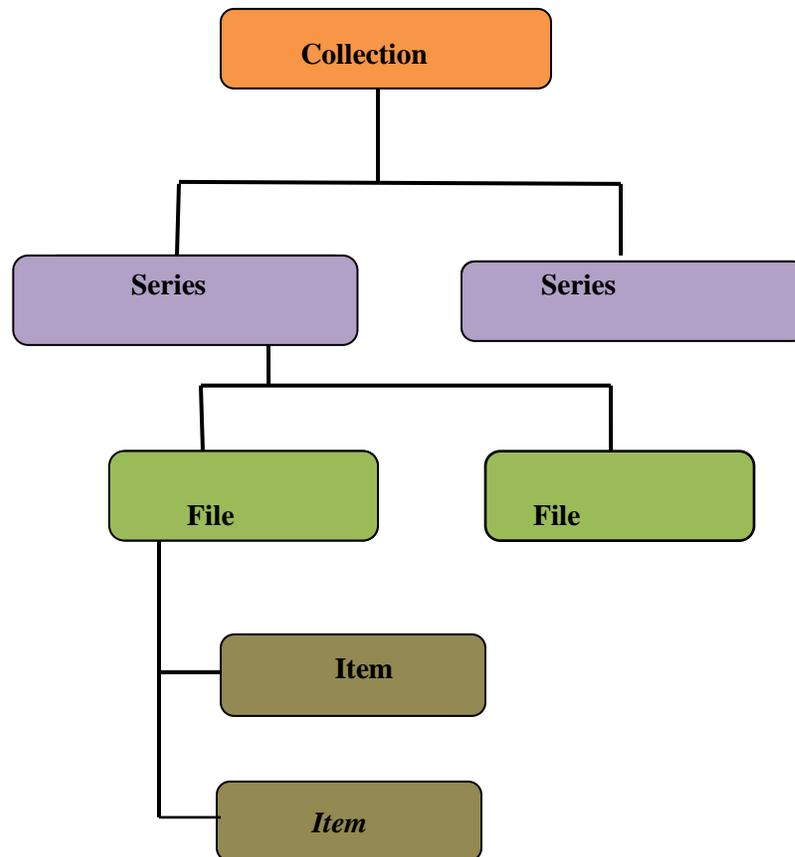


Figure 1.1 Hierarchy model of archival collections. Extracted from Hill et al (2012:162)

According to Hill’s model shown above cataloguing collected materials starts by creation of series. These series may follow a systematic filing system in which information concerning the collections is contained. They may follow a thematic system like the one used by Hill et al (2012:163) when cataloguing Blacking’s works which have 22 series titles. Part of it is shown below:

Series Number

Series title

SER0011	Photographic collection of John Blacking
SER0012	Film collection of John Blacking
SER0013	Sound recording collection
SER0014	Objects belonging to John Blacking
SER0015	Musical instruments collected by Blacking

Figure 1.2 Part of Blacking's series titles. Extracted from Hill et al (2012: 163)

According to the hierarchy in figure 1.1 above the next level includes the files. The series are then grouped according to subjects and these groupings automatically become files. The bottom level of the hierarchy comprises items. Each file has items inside which are the smallest discrete units of archival material (Ellis 1993:473). The items are individual documents about the collected items. They may be forms containing information concerning each collected material.

Films, particularly ethnographic films are yet another form of preserving seemingly dying cultural legacies of the world. Such a system is referred to by Edmondson (2000) as "Audiovisual archiving". Edmondson (2000) gives a very comprehensive historical perspective of the development of film archiving since the 1930s. Usually curators go into the field and take video clips of rituals or music performances. They then deposit the video clips in the archive where the archivists are going to edit them and catalogue them. However, raw footage can also be catalogued awaiting editing. Each film is given a serial number which can be used to identify the film from the main record. Cataloguing of films may follow the following structure used by the Archive of World Music at Harvard library:

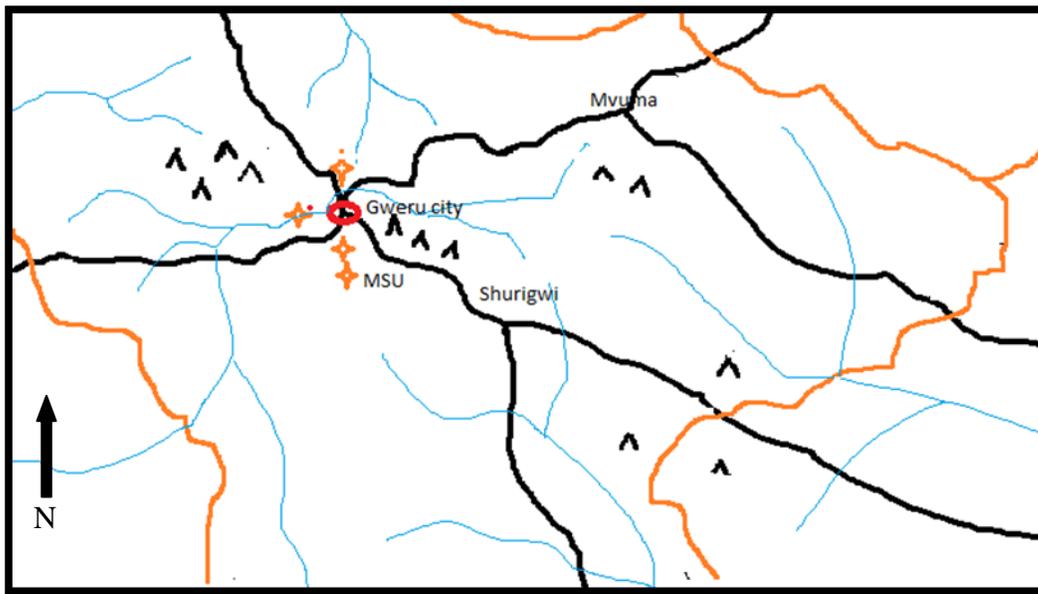
- Title:* (Under this we record the nature of recording)
- Published:* (The publisher of the video or the name of the one who filmed it)
- Film number:* (The serial number is entered)
- Description:* (Description of the video. The information should touch on the contents of the film and the activities involved. Also the knowledge system contained in the film can be discussed under this section)
- Credits:* (Acknowledgements of people who contributed in the collection and production of the film)
- Summary:* (A summary of the details of the film which includes the year it was taken, the people featured in the film, the type of instrument performed and any other important details like the props, traditional objects, songs and any other non-musical materials.)
- Technical information:* (Type of film and camera)

In this study I adopted this structure for cataloguing films deposited in the archive although this will not be electronically generated. I generated forms to fill information concerning each film as suggested by the Archive of World Music.

1.6 Research Design and Methodology

1.6.1 Research population and location

The locations for the study were Hwedza¹¹ District in Mashonaland East Province and Gweru urban in Midlands Province (Map 1.1 and Map 1.2) respectively. Gweru is the capital city of Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. It lies along Harare and Bulawayo road and 274 kilometers south-west of Harare and its altitude is 1 420 meters hence it sometimes experiences some extreme cold temperatures. Its surrounding areas are rich in platinum, gold, chrome and asbestos.



- Key:
- Rivers
 - Major roads
 - Province boundary
 - ^ Mountains

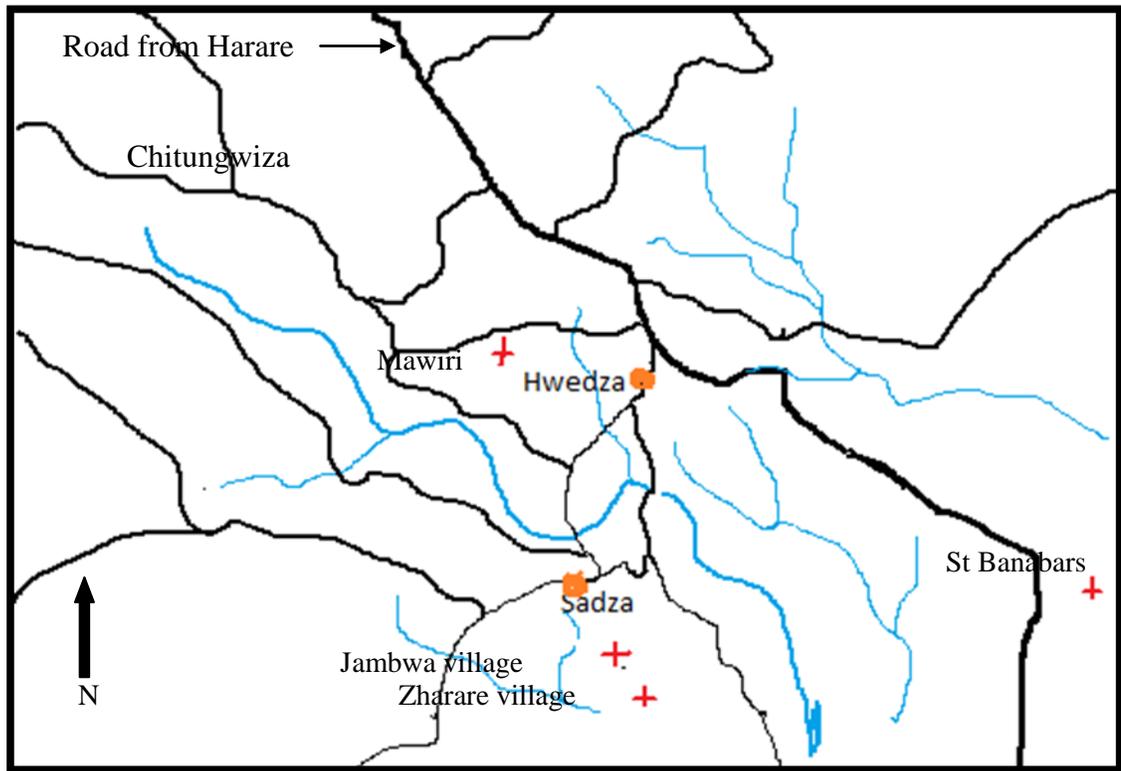
¹¹Hwedza and its neighboring districts, Chikomba, Chihota, Seke and Mhondoro are believed to be the heart of the *mbira dzaVadzimu* because of the ancient iron and copper mines found in the Hwedza and Gandamasungu mountains.

✦ Location of research participant

Map 1.1 Location of participants in Gweru Urban

The reason for choosing Gweru city is that it is occupied by different ethnic groups and that most of the dialects that are found in Zimbabwe are found in this city. However, the majority are the Shona and the Ndebele. Many Shona people especially the *Karanga* and *Zezeru* migrated to this city long ago when the city was still called "Gwelo" to work in big companies like Bata Shoe Company and in National Railways of Rhodesia which has since been changed to National Railways of Zimbabwe.

The other area of study is Hwedza District which is situated some 125 kilometers south of Harare. The district is occupied by people of different totems. However the commonest totem is that of the *Mbire* people. What makes Hwedza famous are the range of mountains namely Hwedza Mountains and Gandamasungu mountains. These mountains have mineral resources that were extracted by the *Hera* people in the 18th Century who gave the mountains the name Hwedza which means a place of wealth. It is believed that the *Mbire* people drove the *Hera* of *Mhofu yemukono* totem out of these mountains. The *Hera* people were believed to be *mbira* players who forged the keys from iron and copper extracted from the mountains. Some of the *Hera* people crossed the Save River to settle in Chikomba where I come from and the rest migrated to the north and settled in areas around Harare under the kingship of Chaminuka who had his headquarters at Dungwiza some few kilometers south of Harare. I selected Hwedza because it is one of the districts in Mashonaland East Province in which *mbira* is believed to have originated. In addition I conducted my Master's field research of 2009 in Hwedza Districts. Currently there are no mining activities taking place in this area. The main activity is farming of tobacco by large and medium scale farmers.



- Key:
- Rivers
 - Major roads
 - Province boundary
 - ✦ Location of research participant

Map 1.2 Location for participants in Hwedza area

Hwedza District lies between Chitungwiza and Chikomba Districts in Mashonaland East Province. The district is named after a range of mountains, Hwedza Mountains that run along Save River.

In order to collect data concerning the causes of the decline of *mbira dzaVadzimu*, and *kurova guva*, the emergence of *dandaro* practices as well as ways of preserving *mbira dzaVadzimu* through archiving, I identified a population comprising all organizations concerned with traditional music and dance, all spirit mediums, all *mbira dzaVadzimu* players and makers, all Christian church pastors, and all culture bearers in Hwedza Districts and in Gweru Urban. A sample of 3 pastors, 5 culture bearers, 1 association personnel, 5 *mbira* makers, 8 *mbira* players,

1 curator, 1 spirit medium and 2 *mbira* researchers were selected using purposive sampling technique employed together with the snowball technique. Snowball sampling technique was used when a participant referred me to other participants who then became part of the sample (Creswell 2008:155). The reasons for choosing these two techniques in identifying participants for this study is that the majority of the people living in these locations were the appropriate sources to provide reliable information needed for the study.

The data was presented and analyzed qualitatively. Video footage taken during field study was compiled and edited to form ethnographic films which are constantly made reference to throughout this thesis. Sequence shots were used to analyze the events that took place during the ceremony of escorting the spirit from the grave. Presentation of the data was augmented by illustrations in form of photographs so as to trigger the readers' imagination.

Mbira pieces performed during *kurova guva* were transcribed and discussed in this write-up. Some of them were preserved in the archive together with films of visual demonstrations. The *mbira* pieces and songs were transcribed in both pulse notation and staff notation. Pulse notation was borrowed from Berliner's notation which is a combination of the treble clef and pulse beats and dots. Berliner used this notation to transcribe *mbira* pieces in his monograph 'The Soul of Mbira'. The pulse notation adopted in this study includes black dot which represents the high notes *nhetete*, (x) represents the top left notes, and the open dot (o) represents the bottom left notes and the note between the high notes on the right and top left notes. Note that the first key on the top left notes from the right is represented by (o) because it belongs to the lower register.

Notation is one way of representing sound symbolically and is used to convert music from one medium to another. The use of notation to teach traditional music like *mbira* has its own limitations. Helm argues that "Notation sometimes creates a restrictive effect on our learning abilities. The symbols are clues as to what can be played and felt" (2001: xvii). However, in this study notation performed two roles, one of assisting learning of *mbira* and the other of preserving the pieces for future reference.

1.6.2 Research participants

My fieldwork started in January 2012 after conducting some pre-visits in November 2011. I entered the field as a curator as well as an applied ethnomusicologist. I was engaged in three major tasks, data collection through face to face interviews, collection of tangible materials, and participant observation on how some of these materials are used. The information that I collected was about *mbira dzaVadzimu*, *dandaro*, *kurova guva*, the church versus the Shona religion and archiving process. The materials that I collected were musical instruments performed during *kurova guva*, traditional objects and costumes. The participants that I interviewed were pastors, culture bearers, *mbira* makers and players, a member form Arts Council and an archivist. Below are tables of the profiles of some of the participants interviewed during the field study.

- **Church pastors**

I chose pastors as part of the research participants in order to get their views concerning the position of the church about death and related funerary rituals that follow like *kurova guva* as well as their perception about sacred music like *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

Name/Image	Brief biography
 <p data-bbox="181 1402 529 1497">Jealous Phinias. Photograph taken on 13th January 2012 by author</p>	<p data-bbox="570 1142 1417 1289">Jealous is 36 years old and is a well known prophet of the New Jerusarema Revival Apostolic Church (NJRAC). He was born in Mutoko area in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. I chose him as one of the participants because his is a young pastor who can represent the views of the young about traditional practices.</p>
 <p data-bbox="181 1866 548 1890">Reverend Rukarwa Photograph</p>	<p data-bbox="570 1512 1417 1688">Reverend Rukarwa is a Minister in charge at Chemhanza Methodist Mission in Hwedza. He is 38 years old and has been a pastor for the previous thirteen years. He has been working with the Shona since 2001 and has been involved in burying church members. He also has conducted several <i>nyaradzo</i> ceremonies and unveiling of the tomb stone (<i>dombo</i>) which are slowly replacing <i>kurova guva</i>.</p>

<p>taken on 25th January 2012 by author</p>	
 <p>Pastor Samuel Basera Image not available 13th January 2012</p>	<p>Pastor Basera is currently leading ZAOGA church at Hwedza Growth Point. He has been a pastor since 2000 and he is around 68 year old. He grew up in Murewa area east of Harare the capital of Zimbabwe. According to pastor Basera he became a pastor because he was called by God through dreams. Before becoming a pastor he used to follow traditional customs and used to attend <i>mapira</i> ceremonies where <i>mbira</i> was performed. Because of his experience both as a culture bearer and as a pastor his contributions to this study was quite significant.</p>

Table 1.1 Church Pastors

- **Culture bearers**

In this study the term culture bearer is used to refer to those elders who by virtue of their age and experience have accumulated a lot of indigenous knowledge about the Shona culture. These are the very people who are the custodians of indigenous knowledge system in the Shona society. They are the main research participants of this study. Some of them have also personally succumbed to the pressure of the church and rural urban migration and have abandoned the Shona religious practices like *kurova guva* and the music associated with it. The following are the elders interviewed in Hwedza and surrounding areas.

 <p>Amos Jambwa Photograph taken on 11th August 2012 by author.</p>	<p>Amos Jambwa is 76 years old and is of <i>Mhofu yemukono</i> totem He resides in Jambwa village south of Hwedza Centre. He is a culture bearer and is a very talented traditional drum player. He plays his drum called <i>Chemunhikwi</i>. He comes from a musical family.</p>
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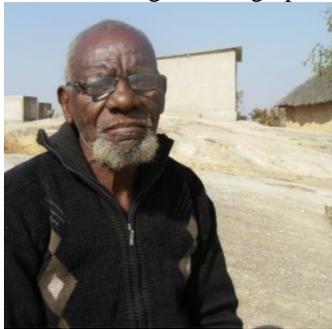
Lydia Jambwa Photograph taken on 11th August 2012 by author

Lydia Jambwa is the wife of Amos Jambwa and is a peasant farmer. She is about 68 years and has knowledge about traditional rituals and how to prepare traditional beer (*doro*). During my field study she explained steps followed when brewing traditional beer for *kurova guva* ceremony.



Masimba Photograph taken on 10th January 2012 by author.

Denford Masimba is around 76 years of age and is a *Musiyamwa* by totem. He is a tenant in Chemhanza Methodist Mission in Hwedza. Denford's father was one of early Shona people who were converted by the missionaries to become evangelists and were given land in the mission centers.



Lazarus Mutsago Photograph taken on 11th August 2012 by author.

Lazarus Mutsago is a clan spirit medium (*mhondoro*) who resides in Sadza area which is located to the south of Hwedza Center. He is 80 years old. As a culture bearer and spirit medium his contribution enlightened me on the influence of Christianity as well as how *kurova guva* ceremonies are conducted.

 <p>Muhwati Chinyanga Photograph taken on 10th January 2011 by author.</p>	<p>Muhwati is a peasant farmer who is very knowledgeable about the Zezuru tradition. He is <i>Mbire</i> by totem and belongs to the group of Shona who displaced the <i>Hera</i> people who lived around the Hwedza Mountains. Muhwati is around the age of 88 and thus his contributions have added a lot of value and authenticity to this study. He gave a very detailed explanation of the proceeding of <i>kurova guva</i> and the music associated with it.</p>
<p>Denford Mukaka refused to be photographed</p>	<p>Mukaka is 72 years old. He is a peasant farmer who was resettled in Rapako village. His totem is <i>Madyirapanze</i> of <i>Chaurura negona</i>. He is a traditionalist who still believes in African traditional religion. He was interviewed on the 23rd of January at his home in Rapako village in Hwedza District.</p>
<p>Evelyn Masona Photograph taken on 24th January 2012 by author</p> 	<p>Ambuya Masona is a grandmother who lives alone in Muremba village five kilometers from Hwedza Growth Point. She is a peasant farmer. Ambuya Masona cannot remember her age. What she remembers is that she was born during the time of <i>nhunduru</i>¹². She has abandoned African traditional religion and joined Apostolic Church of Paul Mwazha.</p>

Table 1.2 Culture bearers

- **Associations**

Soon after independence the government of Zimbabwe through its Ministry of Sport and Culture provided full support in reviving the Shona music heritage that had declined during the war of liberation. Several governmental and non-governmental organizations and associations were formed whose objective was to revive and preserve Zimbabwe's cultural heritage. I selected Arts Council Gweru where I interviewed Abigail Sivanda who is the Provincial Manager.

¹²Usually Shona people who are so old that they cannot remember their age make reference to national major events as a way of estimating their age. The *nhunduru* being referred to here by Ambuya Masona are gregarious black locusts which attacked crops.



Abigail Sivanda Photograph taken on 22nd January 2013 by author.

Abigail is the Provincial Arts Manager Midlands Province. She joined the organization in 2009. She coordinates events that promote the arts in Midlands Province. Her association also promotes the *mbira* by advising *mbira* players to apply for loans to form ensembles, organizing works shops and festivals for them and encouraging them to register as arts groups.

Table 1.3 Associations

Mbira players/makers

Mbira players (*vanagwenyambira*) are the best sources of data about tuning and playing *mbira dzaVadzimu*. They make and play the instrument more often. They know the pieces performed on the instrument, the arrangement of the keys, the playing technique and the function of the instrument. They are also capable of providing information about issues of continuity and change in *mbira dzaVadzimu*. Below are images of some of the *mbira* players and makers interviewed;



Philip Chimukuyu Photograph taken on 16th February 2012 by author.

Philip Chimukuyu is a young *mbira* player aged 21. He learned this instrument through apprentice method from a *mbira* maker who lived next to their house in Mutapa suburb in Gweru. The interview carried out with him provided data concerning the efficacy of *mbira* in the context of *dandaro*.



Almon Moyo Photograph taken on 16th February 2012 by author.

Almon is a *mbira* maker and player aged 29. He owns a *mbira* making workshop called Transitional Arts in Gweru. He makes both *mbira dzaVadzimu* and *nyunganyunga*. Almon is trained *mbira* maker who acquired *mbira* making skills from Kwanongoma College in Bulawayo. He is about 26 years old. His knowledge about *mbira* making helped this study in providing information concerning the *mbira dzaVadzimu* and its role in contemporary *dandaro* ceremonies.



Tichaedza Mauraya Photograph taken on 16th March 2012 by author.

Tichaedza is a *mbira* maker who specializes in *mbira dzaVadzimu* and *nyunganyunga*. He was born in Masvingo and is of the *Ngara* totem. He learned how to make *mbira* in Bulawayo in 2004 from his friend. In this study he demonstrated how to make *mbira dzaVadzimu* using the modern methods. Currently he lives at number 23 Northly Park in Gweru.



Abraham Zharare Photograph taken on 19th March 2012 by author

Abraham is a peasant farmer who lives in Chingwa village and is aged 55 years. He used to play *mbira* in *mapira* ceremonies including *kurova guva*. Abraham stopped playing *mbira* in 2011 after joining Guta Ravapositori Church. He is also no longer attending any sacred traditional ceremonies because his church does not allow its members to attend traditional ceremonies.



Kudzirai Chidzambwa Photograph taken on 19th March 2012 by author

Chidzambwa is one of the oldest *mbira* players who is around 77 years. Currently he is not playing *mbira* because of some misunderstandings within the family members. He is also a *mbira* maker but again he is no longer making *mbira* because some of his family members who have joined church are discouraging him and accusing him of evil deeds.



Cosmas Zambuko Photographed on 17th of August 2012 by the author

Cosmas Zambuko is peasant farmer who lives in Mawire Village in Hwedza. He is aged 78 years and is a culture bearer with vast knowledge about Shona tradition. He has been a *mbira* player for a long time and usually performs *mbira* during spirit possession ceremonies in and around Hwedza. Usually he is invited by chiefs to perform during their various ceremonies. Cosmas' knowledge and skills have assisted not only this research, but also my Masters Thesis on the relationship between *mbira* and spirit possession.



Mombo Masase. Photographed on 17th of August 2012 by the author

Masase is an *mbira* maker, player and teacher. He is 52 years old and he grew up in a *mbira* playing family. His father was an *mbira* player. He learned how to make and play *mbira* from his father. His excellent proficiency enabled him to be absorbed by the Zimbabwe College of Music in Harare where he teaches *mbira dzaVadzimu* and *njari*.



Tinashe Mandityira. Photographed on 17th of August 2012 by the author.

Tinashe is an *mbira* player and *mbira* teacher who is currently teaching at The Zimbabwe College of Music in Harare. He is about 36 years old. Tinashe became a *mbira* player because he was inspired by Sekuru Mashoko.¹³ He taught me songs like *chigamba*, *karimugomba* and *chakwi* when the author was studying for his Bachelor’s degree at the University of Zimbabwe.



Tendai Gamadze, Photographed on 7th of January 2012 by the author

Tendai is of the *Samaita* totem. He is about 58 years old. He grew up liking *mbira* and is the founder of Mbira Dzenharira group. I visited him on the 7th of January 2013 as a follow-up of our discussions during the 2012 Mbira symposium at Midlands State University. On this day our discussion centered mainly on the role of the Cultural center he established in Norton.

Table 1.4 Mbira players/makers

- **Archivists**

I managed to interview one archivist from the Military Museum in Gweru. He provided information concerning how collection and cataloguing of materials in the archive or museum.

¹³Simon Mashoko was a great *mbira* player. He was one of Berliner’s major participants and his picture is on the cover page of “The Soul of Mbira.”



Clever Gutu, Photographed on 13th of March 2012 at Military Museum in Gweru by the author.

Mr. Clever Gutu is an experienced curator who has been working for the Military Museum for the past ten years. He is around 31 years old. He has knowledge about collection and documentation of collected items. I conducted a face to face interview with him and was able to acquire data concerning collection method and cataloguing from him.

Table 1.5 Archivists

- **Local Mbira researchers**

Mbira researchers play a very crucial role in generating data concerning *mbira* as well as suggesting ways of preserving the *mbira*. In this study I managed to interview two *mbira* researchers who have a domestic and international experience.



Sheasby Matiure (left) and the author playing *mbira*, Photographed on 14 December 2012 by Faith Matiure

Sheasby Matiure is a great *mbira* player and researcher. He has performed in North America as an Artist in residence. His experience as Shona by origin together with his experience as a Artist in Residence in America supplemented by research on continuity and change in *mbira* performance in the Diaspora enabled him to provide valid data concerning the evolution of *dandaro* concept in Zimbabwe and in the Diaspora. His PhD thesis focuses on the ethnography of *mbira* performance practice in the United States of America and gave a comparative analysis of the of *mbira*'s expansion abroad and its reduction at home.

	<p>Cosmas Magaya comes from Mhondoro and he is 55 years old. He is a great <i>mbira</i> player who contributed significantly in providing information for the book <i>Soul of Mbira</i>. He performed in <i>mapira</i> ceremonies like spirit possession ceremonies and <i>kurova guva</i>. He also performed as visiting Artist and taught <i>mbira</i> in America. When I interviewed him during 2012 <i>Mbira</i> Festival at Midlands State University his contribution was that there must be an intensification of collaborative activities to augment performances in the field of <i>mbira</i>.</p>
<p>Cosmas Magaya, Photograph taken on 08/09 12 at Midlands State University.</p>	

Table 1.6 Mbira researchers

1.6.3 Data collection, presentation and analysis

The study adopted an applied action research design in which archive materials were collected mainly from Hwedza and Gweru. Applied action research paradigm mainly focuses on the application of theories in order to solve societal problems. It is a pragmatic approach that involves active participation by the researcher. Applied action research is a “hands on” approach which calls for the marrying of theory and practice. This approach lies very well in the paradigm of applied ethnomusicology. In support of this method Davis suggests that:

When products of thousands of years of musical evolution are considered in danger of extinction or of undergoing significant change one response by scholars is conservation through documentation, to study change and undertaking practical “applied” projects within the communities studied for the conservation of living traditions in situ (1992:361).

The *mbira* is an example of such an evolution whose sacred function is in danger of extinction. Applied action research entails personal involvement by the researcher in solving a certain problem in the society. It also embraces fieldwork and borrows a lot of approaches from ethnography and anthropology.

In applying this paradigm I got engaged in the planning, collection, deposition and cataloguing of tangible materials. I also carried out some face to face interviews concerning the indigenous knowledge surrounding the material culture before collection. I took some still photographs and

videos of both the participants and some of the objects collected. Data concerning *mbira dzaVadzimu*, *kurova guva* and *dandaro* rituals were collected through face to face interviews as well as participant observation during field study in Hwedza and Gweru Districts. Applied action research approach is drawn from the field of applied ethnomusicology which is explained by Titon as “the process of putting ethnomusicological research to practical use [and includes] public programming...participatory action research including sustainability initiatives” (2011: xx). In addition Ferrance (2000) considers action research as a reflexive process that allows for inquiring and discussing as components of the research. He goes on to say that it is a collaborative activity among colleagues searching for solutions to everyday, real problems. In this study applied action research method was employed during the collection of tangible materials used during *kurova guva* and *dandaro* and finally depositing them in an archive. It was also used in engaging the community in collaborative activities that involved them in discussions, performance and presentations on issues concerning preservation of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

I also adopted an ethnographic paradigm and also an insider’s perspective since I am also a Shona by origin and an *mbira* player by inheritance. Kottak gives a detailed conceptualization of an ethnographer when he says:

To pursue a holistic goal, ethnographers adopt a free-ranging strategy for gathering information. In a given society or community, the ethnographer moves from setting to setting, place to place, and subject to subject to discover the totality and interconnectedness of social life (2005:25). Accessed from www.mnsate.edu

In line with Kisliuk and Kottak I employed an ethnographic paradigm in which participant observation together with Geertz’s (1973) thick description were adopted in presenting the Shona rituals and *mbira* performances.

I was able to gather empirical data from primary sources through employing what Barz (1997), Kisliuk (1997) and Jackson (1987) suggest; a field worker should be immersed in the society he/she is studying in order to get first hand information. They also suggest that the researcher must employ a do it yourself approach in order to get an in-depth study of a society’s music. The approach afforded me the opportunity to collect and film other events and objects that happen

together with *kurova guva* during some selected *kurova guva* ceremonies and *mbira* symposiums. These embrace costumes for the spirit mediums, dancing props, beer pots, other materials that are used to prepare food like mortar (*duri*), grinding stone (*guyo*), wooden plates, beer pots, snuff boxes, bangles and songs that may not necessarily be from *mbira* but are also sung at certain instances. All these objects are deposited and displayed in the Midlands State University Music Archive (MSUMA).

As an *mbira* player I participated in *dandaro mbira* performances with my group, “Zvirimudeze” mentioned before as an applied method of preserving *mbira* through performance. The group did not only perform for entertainment as part of *dandaro* practices, but also raised money for funding *mbira* symposium which is part of this study. The ensemble managed to raise US \$2500-00 which was used to pay tokens of appreciation to *mbira* ensembles which participated during the symposium.

I also participated by exhibiting *mbira* instruments and other instruments associated with it during the 2011 and 2012 Zimbabwe Trade Fair in Bulawayo, 2011 and 2012 Gweru Agricultural Show, 2011 and 2012 Educational Expo and 2011 Harare Show. The table below shows photographs of some of my displays:

Event	Image	Description
2011 Bulawayo Trade Fair		The author had a chance to display some of the <i>mbiras</i> and his innovations at the 2011 Trade Fair in Bulawayo. Here he is demonstrating to visitors
2011 Mini expo at Midlands State University		This display was done during a mini expo organized by the University in preparation for the Research and Intellectual Expo for tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe.

<p>2011 Gweru Agricultural show.</p>		<p>During Gweru Agricultural show the different <i>mbira</i> were displayed in order to raise awareness of the importance of the instrument as one of Zimbabwe's master pieces. The displays are a way of preserving the <i>mbira</i> through interaction between the instruments and the people. Young ones were able to come face to face with the instruments.</p>
<p>2012 Gweru Agricultural Show</p>		<p>The author is demonstrating to the adjudicators during 2012 Gweru Agricultural Show.</p>
<p>2013 Zimbabwe International Trade Fare</p>		<p>The author is explaining the need to preserve <i>mbira</i> to a group of elders and children during 2013 ZITF in Bulawayo.</p>

Table 1.7 Mbira exhibitions

Displaying various cultural materials is one way of preserving the legacy of *mbira*. The demonstrations during such shows enabled many people to have access to *mbira* and also learn the instrument. during such shows enabled many people to have access to *mbira* and also learn the instrument.

1.7 Conclusion

This Chapter discussed how *kurova guva* practice and the sacredness of *mbira dzaVadzimu* have experienced a paradigm shift as a result of the advent of Christianity, rural to urban migration and commercialization of *mbira*. Currently *mbira dzaVadzimu* has re-emerged in *matandaro* practices common in towns. In this study it is argued that the decline in the frequency of conducting sacred ceremonies like *kurova guva* has subsequently resulted in the decline of the sacred use of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. Although it can be noted that *mbira dzaVadzimu* has improved significantly in its popularity nationally and internationally, its sacred use has been compromised. The cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* has experienced some changes due to the impact of modern musical practices. The move has prompted this study to preserve the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* by establishing two archiving systems. The first is in form of tangible and intangible objects, transcribed *mbira* pieces, still photographs, and ethnographic films. The second, “living archive” which comprises archiving living explicit and implicit knowledge and skills of *mbira* making, tuning, playing and the associate cultural practices, religious beliefs as embodied in the brains, ears, eyes and brains of living people.

The Chapter outlines the significance of this study and it was established that apart from preserving the declining *mbira* the study will also create a knowledge base for those scholars interested in studying musical instruments. The overarching theories under which this study was envisioned are outlined in this Chapter. The research was conducted in Hwedza and Chikomba. The study used an ethnographic paradigm in which participant observation was employed during collection of data and materials. Purposive sampling, together with snowball sampling techniques was used to sample participants for the study and the major ones have been presented in this Chapter. The Chapter also reviews literature covering *mbira dzaVadzimu*, *kurova guva* and archiving. The literature contributed in providing the theoretical framework for this study. The next Chapter will cover *kurova guva* ceremony and the role of *mbira dzaVadzimu* during this ceremony.

CHAPTER 2

KUROVA GUYA CEREMONY AMONG THE SHONA

2.1 Introduction

Kurova guya, which literally means beating the grave is the commonest ceremony conducted by the Shona a year after burial of an elderly woman or man. It is conducted for the purpose of reuniting the spirit of the deceased and its family members. It is also held for the purpose of celebrating the new status of becoming an ancestral spirit. The Shona believe that after the ceremony the spirit will have power to look after its siblings. The success of a *kurova guya* ceremony is greatly dependent on the music performed during all-night ceremonies and in the morning. The music comprises *mbira* pieces and songs that are accompanied by traditional drums (*ngoma*). The music performed during the ceremony validates the essence of the ceremony.

This Chapter discusses the position of *kurova guya* ceremony in the Shona society. It articulates the role of *mbira dzaVadzimu* during *kurova guya* and perceptions held by the Shona concerning *kurova guya*. Discussions on *kurova guya* ceremony are supported by transcriptions of *mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces and other songs accompanied by traditional drums. The transcriptions of *mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces are in pulse and traditional songs accompanied by traditional drums are transcribed in staff notation only.

2.2 Mbira dzaVadzimu the instrument

The etymology of the word ‘*mbira*’ is not clear. However the word is also used by the Shona to refer to a rock rabbit. According to Zambuko, the word *mbira* was derived from the name of the rock rabbit because the sound of the instrument is similar of that of rock rabbits (*mbira*). The word *mbira* has several meanings; the first refers to the traditional instrument comprising a wooden soundboard with metal flat keys mounted on it. The second refers to metal keys mounted on the sound board by a cross bar using wire or chain adjusters and are suspended by a bridge. The third refers to the music that is performed on the *mbira* instrument. The last refers to the dance that accompanies the music performed on *mbira*. Parts of *mbira* instrument are the keys, cross bar, bridge, buzzers and sound board as shown in figure 2.1. The word *mbira dzaVadzimu*

is a combination two words, *mbira* and *dzaVadzimu* which means of the ancestors. In other words the term *mbira dzaVadzimu* means *mbira* that belongs to ancestors.

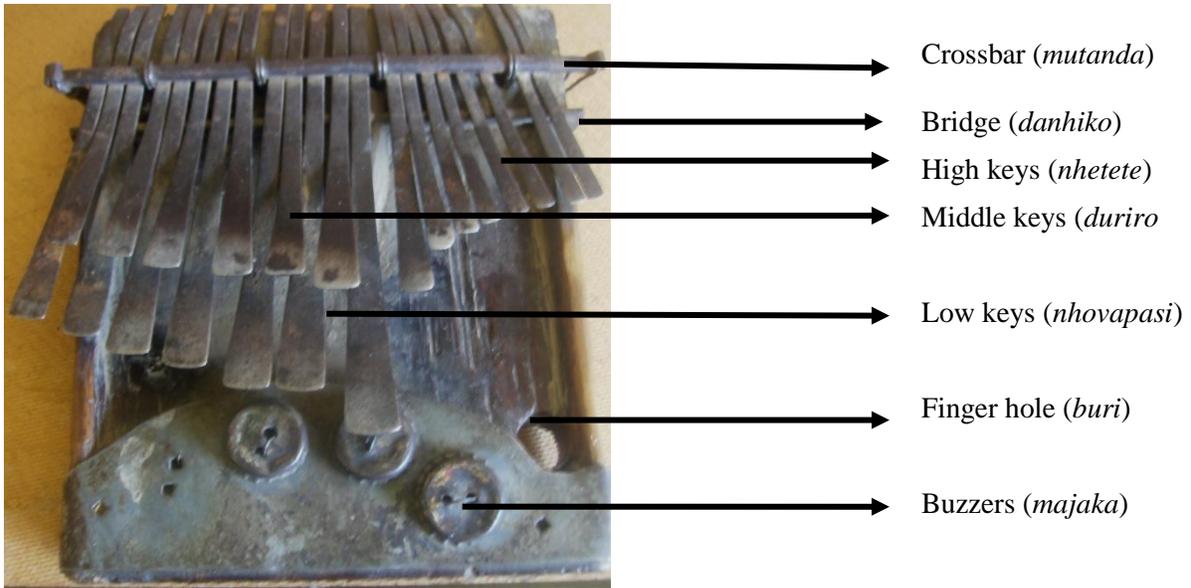


Figure 2.1 *Mbira dzaVadzimu* and its parts

The bottom notes produce the bass line (*mazembera*). They are usually eight in number with one of them belonging to the top manual (G). Most of them are an octave or a fifth lower than some of the top notes. For an *mbira* with G as the tonal order they have the following pitches.

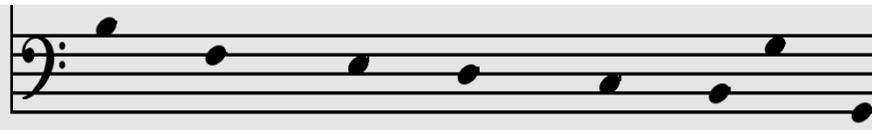


Figure 2.2 Bottom left notes

Top left keys (*Nheverangwena*) are responsible for producing the middle voice. Usually most of *mbira* pieces depend on the top left notes. They also comprise notes of the middle register. Most of them are an octave higher than the bottom notes.

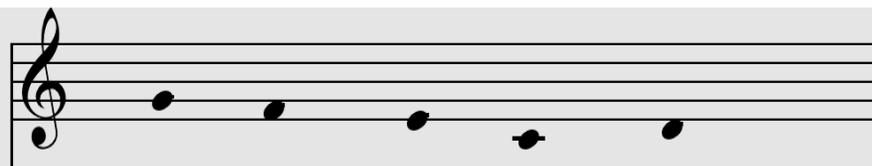


Figure 2.3 Top left notes

Cross bar (*mutanda*) ties the keys firmly on to the soundboard. Bridge (*danhiko*) suspends the keys so that they vibrate freely. Finger-hole (*huri*) services the purposes of enabling proper handling of the instrument by inserting the small finger in the hole. Small keys (*nhetete*) are usually seven in number. They are the smallest and comprise the highest register. They are responsible for producing the melody lead line (*kushaura*). They are played using the right thumb and the right index finger. Rattles (*majaka*) are tied on a metal plate usually below the keys to add a buzzing sound to the entire sound of the *mbira*. They are usually made from bottle tops or sea shells or metal sheets.

The keys of *mbira dzaVadzimu* are played by depressing and releasing the metal keys using two thumbs and the right index finger with the right small finger inserted in the finger-hole. As the keys are depressed and released, they vibrate to produce ringing polyphonic sounds. The pitch of each key is determined by the length, thickness and tension on the key. The key is broadened on the bottom end to increase the surface area for effective plucking of the keys. Special type of wire with high tension is suitable for making the keys of *mbira*. Some traditional *mbira* makers use nails, bicycle spokes, or springs of bed mattresses. Originally the keys are shaped in such a way that the top is narrow and the bottom is broad. The broader side is shaped in three different ways as shown in figure 2.4. The first is a straight edge, the second is a round shape and the last is round but slanted to the right. The different shapes have very little musical significance. The common reason given by most of the *mbira* makers interviewed is that the shaping of the keys is meant to make the entire *mbira* look nice. I agree with the *mbira* makers because I have played *mbiras* with such keys and I did not find any differences in sound production or sound quality except that they looked different. Below are diagrams showing the different shapes for the keys:

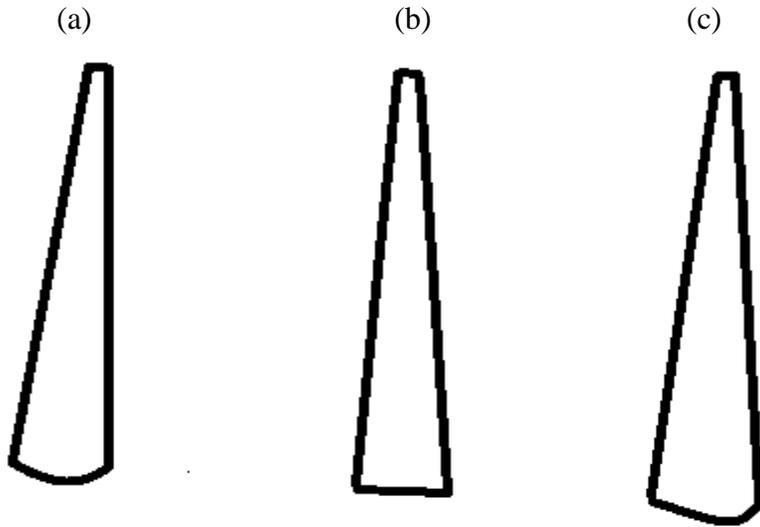


Figure 2.4 Mbira keys with different shapes

2.3 Mbira dzaVadzimu music

Mbira music comprises traditional pieces that have been inherited together with the *mbira*. They depend on basic patterns from which different variations are created. These pieces are passed on to the young through dreams, performance and inheritance. *Mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces are the most important part of the cultural legacy of *mbira* as they are closely associated with the ancestors and this is the basis of the power of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The best *mbira* players in the society are those that are able to play the pieces in a way that attracts the spirit. The pieces performed in an original manner are believed to have the highest potential of attracting the attention of the ancestral spirits as well as creating a devotional framework in which the Shona can solve their pressing problems. The power of *mbira* pieces was clearly explained by Chidzambwa, one of the participants contends that "*nziyo dzembira uta hwaishandiswa navakuru kupedza matambudziko avo*" which translates to: *mbira* pieces are like a weapon used by the elders to fight problems (Interview 19 March 2012). The *mbira* is believed to have power to scare away evil spirits, drawing the favourable spirits closer to the people, and uniting people socially and spiritually.

Mbira pieces which are usually performed during a *kurova guva* ceremony are the same pieces performed during other *mapira* ceremonies like *mukwerera* and spirit possession ceremonies. In other words *mbira* pieces play an important role during most of the Shona rituals. Although they

are performed with some variations, they still retain the basic pattern which depends on the playing technique and the movement of fingers in relationship to the position of the keys. In fact the uniqueness of *mbira dzaVadzimu* is in the arrangement of the keys and the playing technique. The keys are arranged in a special way that makes it easy for the fingering to produce certain pieces.

The arrangement and tuning system of a *mbira* can be directed by the flow of the pieces. For example the pattern shown by the arrows below in figure 2.5 produces *nhemamusasa* basic pattern when played by the left thumb. Note that the patterns are grouped into four movements with twelve pulses each to make a total of 48 pulses for the whole piece.

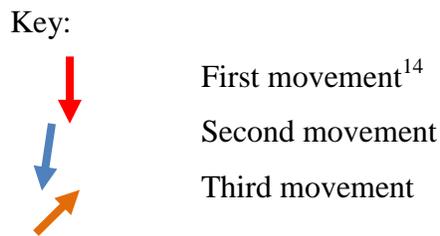
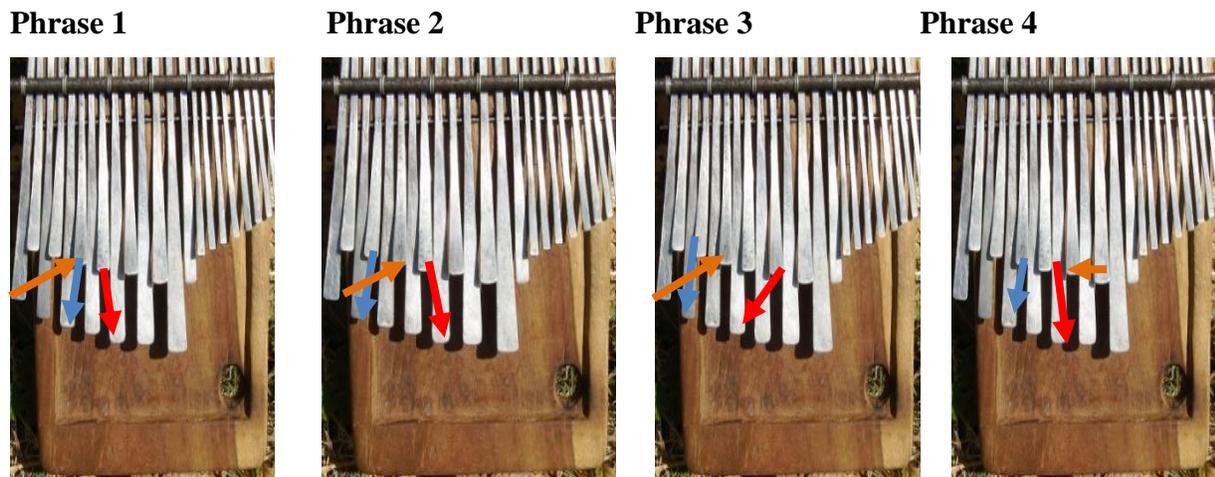


Figure 2.5 Finger movements

¹⁴ In this case movement implies either a down stroke which produces a high to low note interval or an up strike which produces a low to high interval.

2.4 Mbira performance

Mbira performance involves the integration of *mbira*, traditional drums, hand rattle (*hosho*) players, singers and dancers. Each of the above contributes to the production of *mbira* music. In addition *mbira* ensembles can have as many as twenty *mbira* players. *Mbira* players comprise two groups, one group playing the lead *kushaura* and the other providing the response *kubvumira*. Each group plays their lines overlapping in certain instances. Within the process of performing each player improvises on the basic core pattern to come up with own variation. The combination of the two groups' performance produces a complex structure of sound that is unique. The combination of different *mbiras* becomes a network of different lines that move in the same direction. When all the instruments fuse perfectly during a *bira* performance like *kurova guva*, usually it is believed that the performance has been well received by the ancestors.

Mbira performance is always accompanied by hand shakers (*hosho*) which contribute a very important part in *mbira* performance textures as previously indicated. They are usually played in pairs with one maintaining the down beat and the other upbeat in contrasting motion. There may also be more than one *hosho* player in a *mbira* ensemble. The *hosho* players mark the pace of *mbira* music and they also add a traditional rattling flavor which is common in African music. The *hosho* player is like a conductor of a choir whose duty is to determine the pace of the song and holds all the other instruments together. When the hand shakers move fast, every performer is bound to follow the tempo established. Usually the *mbira* players and *hosho* players maintain a consistent tempo. Below are two hand shakers made from traditional gourds.



Figure 2.6 Hand shaker (*hosho*)

Mbira performance can also be accompanied by traditional drums, (*ngoma*) (Figure 2.7). However, some *mbira* players opt not to include the traditional drums. The reason is that the *mbira* is complete on its own as an instrument. This is true because when you listen to *mbira* music closely you hear the sound of the drums too. On the other hand some prefer to accompany *mbira* performance with drums but played in such a way that they do not drown the *mbira*. The combination of the *hosho*, *ngoma* and *mbira* creates a network of sounds that is rich in complementary patterns which are a common feature in African music. (cf DVD 2 Part 1-08:58:10:21)

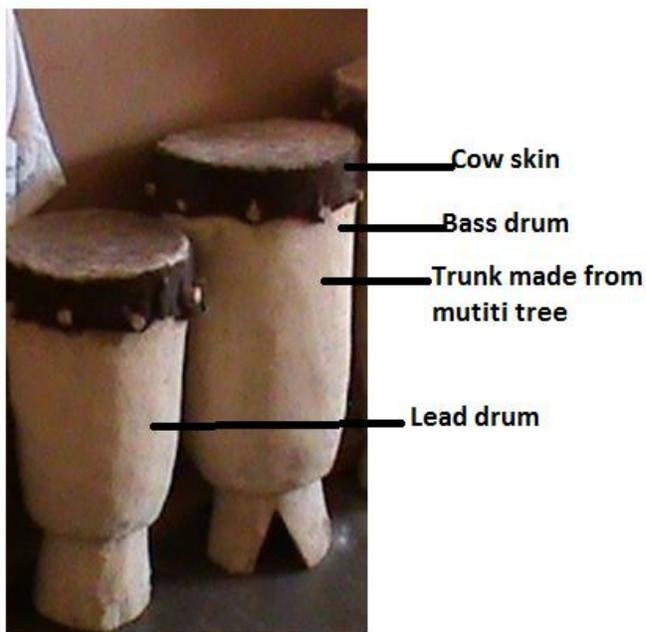


Figure 2.7 Traditional drums, *ngoma*

Mbira performance is not complete if it does not include singing and dancing. *Mbira* singing employs lead and response and poetic utterances, (*kudetemba*), and vocables, (*huro*). Like any other Africans the Shona perceive music and dance as inseparable entities. During *mbira* performance multi-functionalism becomes a common phenomenon where a participant can engage in both singing and dancing or singing and clapping or singing and playing *mbira*. Dancing is usually characterized by free style movements. However, typical *mbira* dance is performed by bending legs alternately with hands stretched. Some dancers enact hunting or fighting expeditions while holding a spear, (*pfumo*), rod, (*tsvimbo*) or moon shaped axe (*gano*). Apart from *mbira* dance, dancers can also dance *shangara* style which fits very well in *mbira*

dance. A participant is free to enter the dance floor and to withdraw when tired. Dancers are motivated by the women's ululation and also chanting by fellow members. Some dance facing the *mbira* players, pretending to be fighting with them. Others engage in a free dance style in any free place available in the room. Shona music performance accommodates freedom of expression. Participants are free to respond to *mbira* music in any way that pleases them. Some participants dance by just nodding their heads while sitting. Performance is highly inclusive and communal with every member taking part in music making. During *kurova guva*, *mbira* is performed for several reasons which are to entertain participants, create a devotional framework, for drawing the spirits' attention, evoking spirits in spirit mediums and instilling a sense of belonging among the participants.

2.5 *Kurova guva*, the ceremony

It is a common belief amongst the Shona that when a person dies his/her spirit does not perish but will stay in the forest for at least a year before reuniting with its family. Gelfand asserts that "One of the fundamental tenets of Shona religion is the belief in real communication with the world of spirit through the medium or host of the particular spirit whose help is sought" (1962:37). In order to reunite the spirit of the dead with the family the *kurova guva* ceremony is conducted a year after burial. Vambe cites Chinyowa (1998) as saying that "the period of a year enables rains to 'cool' the spirit of the dead because amongst the Shona the spirit of the dead is viewed with suspicion, uncertainty, confusion and mistrust" (2009:113).

Kurova guva ceremony transforms the spirit of the deceased to become an ancestor. In a way the ceremony fulfills the Shona philosophy that there is a very strong connection between the world of the living and the world of spirits. In line with this notion Gundani (1994: 123) asserts that "the importance of *kurova guva* ritual is to dramatize the common bond between the living and the dead". The belief among the Shona is that the spirit of the deceased is considered unsettled and loiters around in the forests awaiting its initiation as an ancestor. The initiation ceremony is done through *kurova guva* rituals. The other purpose of *kurova guva* is to "bring back the spirit of the deceased from the grave to his hut to be in the midst of his descendants" (Gelfand 1971:71). The spirit of the deceased can only become an ancestor if all the funerary rituals are performed in accordance with the norms and values of Shona culture. The participants interviewed concurred with most of the literature provided by Bourdillon (1976, 1990), Chiginya

(1982), Gelfand (1968, 1971, 1994), Rutsate (2011) and Vambe (2009) that *kurova guva* is a Shona practice that is conducted in order to escort the spirit of the deceased to his/her home from the grave. Below is a summary of the different participants' description of *kurova guva*:

PARTICIPANTS	DATE AND PLACE	DESCRIPTION IN SHONA	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Muzuva Muhwati	10 January 2012 in Muhwati village, Hwedza District.	<i>Chinangwa kukurumbidza munhu anenge afa kuti uve mudzimu, nokuti mukurarama kwedu munyika yedu yevatema tinovimba kuti afa haarove anoenda kuvadzimu vake vakafawo. (cf DVD 1, Part I-00:18 – 03:54)</i>	The aim is to celebrate the spirit for becoming an ancestor because in our tradition we believe that when someone dies, he does not perish but will join other ancestral spirits who are also departed.
Reverend Samuel Basera	09 January 2012 Hwedza Growth Point	<i>Itsika yevanhu kuti kana munhu akafa mweya wake unenge uri kunze uko saka unoda kuunzwa mumusha. (cf DVD 1 Part II-13:33 – 14:31)</i>	It is our traditional practice that if a person dies his spirit will be outside thus the need to bring it home.
Frank Masimba	10 January 2012 in Chemhanza Mission, Hwedza	<i>Kurova guva uku tichireva kuti kudzora mudzimu mumusha nekuti tanga tine belief yekuti anongotenderera mumhepo umu, zvino kana asati arohwa guva vanofungudzira kuti anenge ari mumhepo asinga kwanisi kuzorera vana.</i>	<i>Kurova guva</i> is meant to bring the spirit home because we have a belief that the spirits will be roaming in the forest without being able to look after the remaining children.
Denford Mukaka	23 January 2012 in Rapako Village, Hwedza District	<i>Chinagwa chekurova guva ndoche kuti tigarisane naye. Vari ikoko naye vanenge vachiziva kuti mwana wedu wakatsakatika arikugara mubvute ega.</i>	The aim of conducting a <i>kurova guva</i> ceremony is for us to be with him. Those in the spiritual world will be saying our son is lonely in the shed of trees.
Elizabeth Masona	24 January 2012 in Mutambirwa Village, Hwedza District	<i>Guva rinorohwa kuti munhu auye kumusha.</i>	<i>Guva</i> ritual is conducted so that the spirit comes back home.
Cosmas Zambuko	15 August 2012 in Mawiri village Hwedza District	<i>Iye anenge agere musango ari mumashizha. Haaende kune vamwe. Kana arohwa guva ave kune vamwe kune matare.</i>	He will be in the forest in the tree leaves. He does not go to the ancestors. When <i>kurova guva</i> has been conducted he/she then joins the other ancestors.
Lazaras Mutsago	11 August 2012 Mutore Village Chikomba District	<i>Chinangwa chekurova guva ndokumudzora kwatiri kuita kuti adzokere kune vamwe achibva mumashizha maanga ari.</i>	The aim of conducting <i>kurova guva</i> is a way of bringing him back from the tree leaves to join his relatives.

Table 2.1 Participants' views on *kurova guva*

From the contributions made by the different participants above, the general belief is that when a person passes on, his or her spirit will not perish but will continue to live outside the village for at least a year. Muzuva's sentiments that *kurova guva* is a celebration of the return of the spirit concur with Vambe (2009:113) who says "*kurova guva* is one such ritual-mythopoetic narrative in which the acknowledgement of the actual physical death of a human being is countered by a celebration of the return of the spirit of that human being". The participants also indicated that the ceremony is currently being conducted for the same reasons although a number of people are no longer following it. All the participants indicated some common important issues, the first being that the spirit hangs in the forest for at least a year before being escorted home. Examples of words that indicate that the spirit stays in the forest are *mumashizha* (in the leaves), *musango* (in the forest), *mumhepo* (in the winds), *mubvute* (in the shade), and *kunze* (out there). All these words indicate that the spirit leaves home soon after the person has passed on and then stays in the forest. During the period alluded to the spirit will be distanced from its family members as well as the other ancestors. The spirit will be unable to help the family members or contribute in spiritual discussion (*matare*), on matters affecting the siblings that the ancestors are believed to engage in.

The second common issue is that the spirit is brought into the home in the early hours of the following day after the all night ceremony. It is a common belief that the spirits are most active during the early hours of the day, (*mambakwedza*)¹⁵. Even manifestation of spirit possession is at its highest peak during the early hours of the day. The whole process of conducting *kurova guva* is a clear indication of how the Shona and their ancestors relate. Gelfand (1999:119) outlines the concerns of the ancestral spirits (*vadzimu*) and one of which is that "the *vadzimu* are annoyed if after a married man's death his family does not hold the ceremony of *kurova guva*, for which beer is brewed and a beast killed in honor of the spirit of the dead man which is brought from the grave to be settled in the village". Gelfand's sentiments are echoed by Cosmas Zambuko when he gives a summary of *kurova guva*:

Tagara kwegore tinozotanga kutsvaga zviyo zvekuti tirove guva. Tobika doro remadzimai vakabereka munhu nezhinji rekwa baba. Doro iroro rinenge rine zvikwata zviviri rekwamai harinwiwe rinonyanya kunwiwa nderekwa baba. Ndiro rinenge richipihwa vanhu vachitamba

¹⁵*Mambakwedza* is the Shona word for dawn

havo. Ramangwana ndopanonongwa zvese. Tinoenda kunotora mudzimu kwakare kumakuva nedoro rezviyo ramai. Tosvika ikoko varidzi vemunhu vosviko deketera vachiti “Aiwa tauya kuzokutora kuti uende kune vamwe” vodira doro riya kumusoro humwe hopihwa vakuwasha vonwa ipapo. Ipapo tobva tosimuka todzokera kumba tichiimba rwuyo rwehondo tonopinda mumba todzika imwe hari yezviyo futi yekugamuchira mudzimu watanotora.

This can be translated to:

After a year we then look for grain to conduct *guva*. We brew the traditional beer from both the maternal and paternal relatives' sides. The beer will be in two portions but the beer from the maternal side is not drunk. Beer from the paternal side will be given to people as they dance and sing the whole night. The following morning we will go to the graves to collect the spirit. We go with traditional brew from the maternal side of the deceased. More of it is brewed by the paternal relatives. The close relatives will give a short prayer saying we have come to take you so that you go to the others. They then pour traditional brew over the grave and the remaining beer is given to the sons-in-law. We then stand up and return home singing songs of war then enter the hut and another pot of traditional brew (*dziva*) is served which will be consumed as a way of receiving the ancestral spirit brought from the graves (*Interview 17 August 2012*).

The main ceremony of *kurova guva* is well explained by Gelfand (1971:72) after he had attended a *kurova guva* ceremony for the spirit of Kaseke, conducted in Chitowa in Murehwa District as follows:

By half past five that evening quite a number of people had gathered and drumming and singing could be heard from the inside *imba*. Drumming and dancing continued throughout the night, until about 5.30 am when the family prepared to go to the grave to bring Kaseke's spirit back to his home and relatives ... the procession started from the *imba* moving slowly to the grave. It was led by the eldest of Kaseke's surviving brothers. As he walked at the head of the group of relations the old man played on the mbira. The songs they like best was '*Yave nyama yekugocha*' (1971:72).

The song *Yave nyama yekugocha* was also mentioned by Cosmas Zambuko who confirmed that the song *Yave nyama yekugocha* is sung when going to escort the spirit (*Interview 17 August 2012*). Zambuko and Gelfand's explanation about the proceedings of *kurova guva* ceremony indicates that music plays a very important role during the whole night and early morning when the relatives are going to fetch the spirit from the grave. The role of music is twofold; the first being to entertain the participants throughout the night and the second one is to escort the spirit. Songs that are sung during the night are not all sacred songs. Some of them are secular songs sung to entertain people since the night is long. The other songs are directly linked with the ceremony. Vambe has this to say about traditional songs:

... it is the contents of the performance of rite of passage that songs can reveal their subterranean energies to carry the freight of a people's culture. In ritualistic contexts, songs not only carry the

content of ritual-myths, but become mythopoetic narratives naming realities in very subtle and complex ways (2009: 113).

Examples of songs for *kurova guva* given by Vambe (2009:113) include *Chaminuka*, *Vana vangu vapera*, *Kuenda mbire*, *Kunatsa muroyi*, and *Ndimambo*. In addition to these songs *mbira* pieces such as *taireva*, *nyamaropa*, *bhukatiende*, *shumba*, *mandarendare*, *chakwi* and *mahororo* can also be played if there are some *mbira* players. (cf DVD 3- Part I-11:58) These songs add value to the whole ceremony since they link directly with the ancestral spirits. When the procession is going to and coming from the graves, *mbira* music is played. Cosmas Zambuko confirmed this action and he even demonstrated by playing the song *Yave nyama yekugocha* accompanied by his *mbira*. It should be understood that *kurova guva* ceremonies may be conducted without *mbira* music. The use of *mbira* depends on the availability of *mbira* players in the community where the ceremony is held. If there happens to be no *mbira* players the participants sing songs that are accompanied by *ngoma*. Usually the songs are about hunting or war.

Kurova guva ceremony involves other minor rituals conducted prior to and after *kurova guva*. Those that are conducted prior are *gata*¹⁶ and *ndongamabwe*¹⁷. Those that are conducted after *guva* are inheritance, *nhaka* and *zita*. The ritual of *nhaka* is confirmed by Gelfand (1999:187) when he says “At the same time, following the ceremony of *kurova guva* is held the ritual of *nhaka* or inheritance.” These minor rituals contribute to the success of *kurova guva*.

It should be noted that the most important part of *kurova guva* ceremony is the ritual of escorting the spirit from the grave to the village. Other stages follow each other chronologically with most of them having *mbira* music or music accompanied by traditional drums or both being the core. The flow diagram below summarizes the procedures of *kurova guva* in order of their occurrence:

¹⁶*Gata* is conducted when relatives of the deceased visit a diviner to establish the cause of the death.

¹⁷*Ndongamabwe* is a ritual conducted at least two weeks after burial. Its aim is to comfort the bereaved family members.

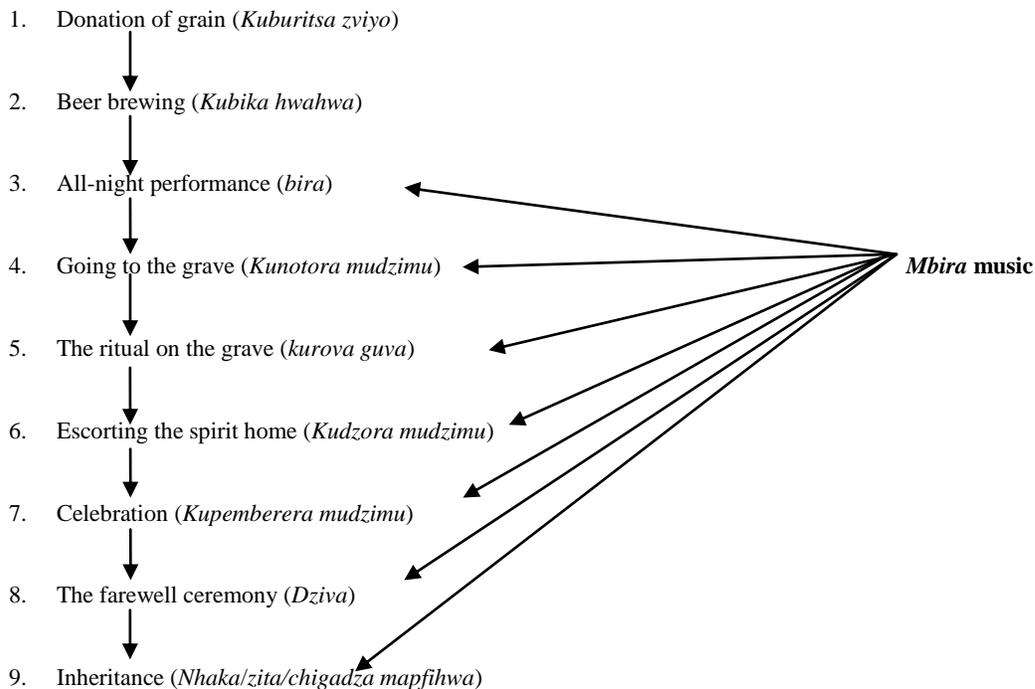


Figure 2.8 Flow diagram for kurova guva showing rituals that involve mbira

The rituals shown in the diagram are all meant to pave way for the spirit of the deceased to enter the spiritual world to become an ancestor. They are also conducted to settle the disturbances caused by death in a family. Usually if such rituals are ignored the Shona believe that the ancestors will not receive the deceased's spirit, instead they will ask the spirit to return to the living and trouble them so that they conduct the rituals. The spirit of the deceased may cause some odd illness (*chiga*) in the family as a sign of its unhappiness. The elders will then consult the diviner who will then advise them to conduct the rituals. However some Shona people ignore the demands of the deceased and in the long future some of the family members face problems in their lives. Muhwati Chinyanga indicated that:

Munoona mukati memhuri paine kurwara rwara uye zvitiko zvange zvisinganyanye kuitika mumhuri imomo. Vofamba [vakuru] pavano nzvitsvaka kun'anga voshopera vonzwa kuti inga mune guva risati rarohwa. Aneshungu [mufi] dzokuti ndidzorei ndiende kunevamwe nekuti kana asati arohwa guva muchiZezuru chedu anenge achiri mumashizha asiri kune vadzimu vedu vakafa kare. (cf DVD 1 Part 1- 00:18 – 03:54)

This can be translated to:

You discover some illnesses and unusual happenings in a family. They [elders] consult the diviner where they will be told that you did not cleanse one of your members. The deceased is unhappy because he/she wants to be escorted back to his home by members because when *kurova guva* ceremony has not been conducted in our Zezuru tradition he will still be in the forest not amongst his ancestors who also passed on long ago.

2.5.1 Opening ritual (*Kupira*)

The Shona people always attempt to sustain their relationship with the supernatural forces by occasionally conducting rituals. Fetterman defines ritual as “repeated patterns of symbolic behavior that play a part in either religious or secular life” (2012:29). “What characterizes a ritual is symbolism and symbolism essentially involves some kind of communication” (Bourdillon 1990:15). Ritual in some way makes use of symbols in order to express and give meaning to actions. At the core of rituals are always modes of communication, both verbal and non-verbal (Cox 1998). These modes of communication are the ones that are referred to by Bourdillon (1990) as “performative” statements. The opening ritual of *kurova guva* involves these performative statements which are presented during prayers (*kupira*). The word *kupira* means to forward one’s grievances. Usually the participants gather in the evening after supper in a traditional hut which is used as kitchen. Men sit on one side and women on the other (Refer to figure 2.11). *Kupira* ritual is performed when the leader of the village places two small clay pots (*zvifuko*) in front of the hut. The one on his right is filled with unprocessed traditional brew (*mhanga*), while the one on his left with sweet traditional brew (*masese*). He then informs the paternal ancestors according to their hierarchy that they are about to start the ceremony. The following are the statements that are usually chanted during this stage as given by Amos Jambwa (Interview 11 August 2012) Note that the names and order differ from village to village:

(Clapping while in a crouching position facing the pots)

<i>Eh Nhira basa riya rakutanga</i>	Eh Nhira the ceremony is about to start
<i>Wochiudza Jambwa</i>	Inform Jambwa
<i>Jambwa oudza Shamayarira</i>	Jambwa then informs Shamayarira
<i>Achazoudza Wendondo</i>	Who will in turn inform Wendondo
<i>Wendondo ochitisivitira kwatisinga zivi</i>	Wendondo will then inform those we do not know.

As soon as he finishes these incantations men clap and women ululate as the leader drinks unprocessed traditional brew (*mhanga*) and passes it around so that everyone sips. After that the leader will walk out and go around the hut from right to left. When he is back a representative

from the maternal side will do the same incantations facing the small pot of *masese*. After the chanting men will again clap and women ululate. The small pot is passed from one member to another as a sign of unity just like the Holy Communion in the Christian church. The sharing of the drink is sign of togetherness (*humwe*). The belief is that after this ritual, both the paternal and maternal ancestors will have been informed and are ready to receive their relative. The Shona people always inform the ancestors about their intention to conduct a sacred ceremony. This is meant to get permission from the ancestors who will then bless the ceremony.

When the opening ritual is over, the participants sing the opening song (*rwiyo rwomusha*). Each Shona village has its own opening song which is led by the village leader or specialist lead singer. The song may be accompanied by *mbira* or traditional drums. For instance Amos Jambwa indicated that the opening song for Jambwa village is called *mbavarira* (Figure 2.9).

Song text:

Lead: <i>Mbavarira chizungu chamatare</i>	(<i>Mbavarira</i> is the place of death)
Response: <i>Hoo yowerere hoiyeiyere yowerere muchariona</i>	(<i>Hoo yowerere hoiyeiyere yowerere</i> you will see it)
Lead: <i>Mbavarira ndizvoka zvawaida</i>	(<i>Mbavarira</i> is what you wanted)
Response: <i>Hoo yowerere hoiyeiyere yowerere muchariona yowerere</i>	(<i>Hoo yowerere hoiye</i> you will see it)

Transcription:

Song Title: *Mbavarira*
 Performed by: Jambwa village participants
 Ceremony: *Kurova guva*
 Date: 15 August 2012
 Transcription by: P Matiore

Mba va ri ra chi zu ngu na ma ki wa

2
 Hi ya a ho we re re ho iye re ho yo we re re mcha riwo na

Ex. 2.1 The song *Mbavarira*

The text of this song refers to the place where the spirit of the deceased hangs around before being escorted home. The song indicates that when we die we will see this place. The song also is a source of inspiration for the Shona. It is one of the songs sung to open a *bira* ceremony. By singing it at the onset of the proceedings, the song marks the beginning of the ceremony. The function of this song is in line with one of the functions of music given by Merriam (1964) which states that music can be used for the validation of social institutions and religious rituals. After the opening song the participants can sing other songs accompanied by *mbira* or traditional drums. The repertoire of the songs that fill the whole night comprises both sacred and secular songs.

2.5.2 Participation during all-night ceremony

The participants occupy some different roles in the process of music making as shown in the diagram in figure 2.10. The instrumentalists (black Xs) sit on the front bench (*rukuvu*) or stools. The idea is to face the dancers and singers to enable communication between participants. In this position the *mbira* players are able to have a clear view of everyone and are also strategically positioned to enable them to coordinate and communicate with the rest of the participants. On the left and right of *mbira* players are the *hosho* player(s) and the drummer(s). The *hosho* player(s) perform while standing in order to allow free movement of the hands (Refer to 2 film appendix 15). Both the *hosho* player(s) and the drum player(s) have to be near the *mbira* players for coordination and interaction in various ways like eye conduct, head nodding, and gestures.

Men (brown Xs) sit on the left and their major role is to clap, sing and whistle. Some leave this position and join the dance floor. The men usually sing the bass line (*mazembera*) in response to the women's lead line (*kushaura*). The women (red Xs) sit on the floor on the right side. They also sing, ululate and occasionally join in the dancing. Dancers (light blue star) occupy the centre usually facing the instrumentalists. Some of the children (dark blue stars) stand in the doorway watching and dancing. This group of children force their way in to observe and imitate the elders. Children learn a lot of skills and concepts through imitation. Next to the men will be pots of traditional brew (small circles). Men take turns to drink by sharing it in a small container called *mukombe*. (Figure 2.10)

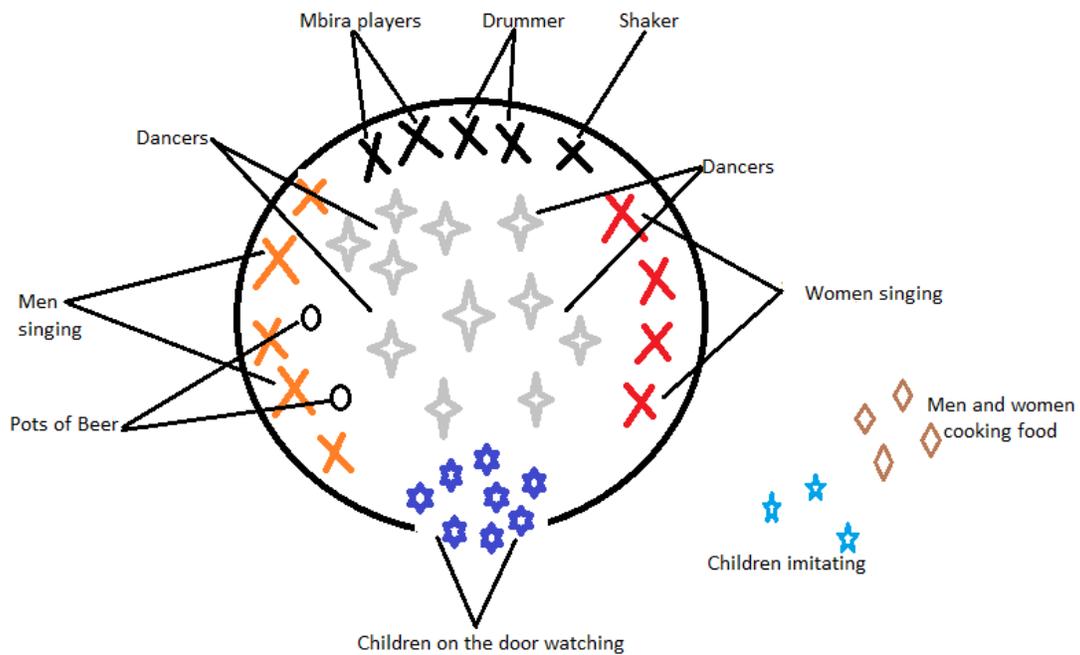


Figure 2.9 Kurova guva set up



Figure 2.01 Traditional cup (mukombe)

Women who drink traditional brew are served in cups. Usually women who drink traditional brew are fewer than men.

Kurova guva ceremony, like any other traditional sacred ceremonies conducted by the Shona, has some extra musical activities that occur concurrently with the main activity. Some of these activities take place outside the hut. They include in-law (*varoora* and *vakuwasha*) who will be cooking for the rest of the participants. These men and women occasionally leave the pots and

join the performance especially when the performance has reached climax. Another category includes children who dance and sing either their own songs or imitating the ones sung inside the hut. It is important to note that during performance everyone is part and parcel of the whole event.

During the night *mbira* players take turns to perform their pieces. That is if there are several *mbira* players in the village. If there is one *mbira* player, he/she will perform until he is tired. Young inexperienced *mbira* players usually play before midnight and the older experienced *mbira* players play during the early hours of the following day. Some of the *mbira* songs are transcribed and discussed in this Chapter. The rest of the transcriptions are compiled for preservation in the archive.

Transcription has always been used by ethnomusicology to document traditional music as well as analyzing music styles of different cultures. Transcribing traditional music has its own challenges. Berliner (1993:52) concurs by saying that “the problem of describing Shona *mbira* music and illustrating the music with notation is a considerable one, for there is something unique about the quality and the effect of a live performance of *mbira* music that defies the description.” Usually the transcriptions do not represent the actual sound as it is when performed especially if western staff notation system is used.

Tonal center G

The image shows a musical transcription of a Shona song in staff notation. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), indicating a tonal center of G. The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style with eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics, starting with a measure number '5' at the beginning. The lyrics are: 'Ho - o - 0 Ho__ ho ye re. Nda__ nzwa ngo ma ku__ ri ra' on the first staff, and 'Ho - o - 0 Ho__ ho ye re Nda- nzwa ngo ma ku - ri' on the second staff. The notation includes rests, slurs, and a repeat sign at the end of the second staff.

Ex. 2.2 *Nyamaropa* in staff notation

Traditional music is better studied in context, however changing the music from sound to symbols makes it possible for better analysis of aspects of the music that are of interest to ethnomusicology. These include the form of the song, chord progression, melodic contour, harmonic structure, motifs and pitch inventory. In this study transcription of *mbira* pieces was done for analysis purposes as well as for preservation. If a piece of *mbira* is written down and

deposited in an archive, it will outlive the instrument itself because the written piece can be accessed by future generations. Several researchers have transcribed *mbira* songs using some form of transcription other than the ordinary tonic solfa notation. Some have modified the tonic solfa notation and come up with their own notations. For example Andrew Tracey, Hugh Tracey, Paul Berliner, Perminus Matiure, Dumi Maraire, Jerry Rutsate, and Richard Muranda have all transcribed traditional music using different forms of notations and of these Dumi Maraire, Paul Berliner, Andrew Tracey, Hugh Tracey, Perminus Matiure, and Richard Muranda have transcribed *mbira* songs while Jerry Rutsate transcribed *mhande* songs. In this study I am going to use both pulse notation and staff notation for *mbira* pieces. Pulse notation is the most accepted notation by many *mbira* researchers. It produces something very close to the actual piece. Paul Berliner and Andrew Tracey have used pulse notation in most of their articles. I will also use staff notation for songs that are not *mbira* pieces which are accompanied by traditional drums.

One of the *mbira* pieces that are played during *kurova guva* ceremony is *nyamaropa*. *Nyamaropa* is believed to be the oldest piece that has given birth to several other pieces performed on *mbira*. Berliner (1993:72) has this to say about the age of *nyamaropa*, “Musicians report that such pieces as *nyamaropa* for example date back to the origin of *mbira dzaVadzimu...*” It is true because most of the *mbira* players that I interviewed confirmed that *nyamaropa* seems to have been developed way back and several pieces were derived from this piece. For example if three *mbira* players play *nyamaropa*, *karigamombe* and *mahororo* together, they produce a good combination with *nyamaropa* as the principal and *karigamombe* and *mahororo* as complementary melodies.

Mbira pieces usually accompany singing which is rich in vocables *mahonyera*, and yodeling *huro* as well as poetic singing style called *kudetemba*. Berliner defines *kudetemba* as “spoken lamentation ... used to express personal troubles” (1993:162). In this case *mbira* provides the opportunity for individuals to express their own personal feelings through poetic singing. Some of the texts involved in the poetic singing directly address social problems affecting people in the society. Others communicate directly with the spiritual world. These problems may be hunger, misunderstandings, war, poverty or fear. Some expressions may be about love, hatred or self-praise. Some of the phrases communicate directly with the spirits. However, some of them are

designed to make people laugh. Berliner identifies several types of *kudeketera* which are the fixed-line type, the narrative and the mosaic type (1993:162). Berliner goes on to say that the fixed-line type provides entertainment, narrative is for secular contexts and tells a “complete story” while mosaics “are an interwoven pattern of improvised lines” (1993:172). Examples of these poetic sayings which I have classified following Berliner’s three types are:

- i) *Mune mvana ndinopinda runa, rweshanu ndinobuda nayo* (If I want a women I attempt four times, the fifth time I win)

This is a narrative style which is usually expressed by unmarried men who charismatically invite unmarried women to join them in love. In fact the *mbira* singer is boasting about his ability to propose love to women.

- ii) *Chamukwenjera chakoromoka* (Chamukwenjera has collapsed)

This is yet another narrative style. Chamukwenjera is the name of a small hill in Chikomba district of Zimbabwe in Mutoro area, an area which was previously occupied by the *Hera* people who were displaced by the Europeans and migrated to the Njanja area, in the southern part of Chikomba. This hill is sacred because a lot of *Hera* people were killed on this hill when they resisted the foreign invasions. The phrase implies that the hill has fallen down. The phrase can be interpreted in many ways. The first interpretation may refer to a very prominent person who has lost his/her integrity or status in the society. The second may mean the death of a chief. The last may refer to a place that used to be sacred and now is unholy. From a broader view, the phrase may mean the abolition of the entire system of Shona beliefs (*chivanhu*) by the exogenous forces of the West. The opposite may also be true: that the colonial rule and land occupation by the British in Zimbabwe is no more. In this case the hill resembles the white supremacy and what has collapsed is the colonial rule.

- iii) *Mazuva angu asara mana* (I am left with four days)

This is another fixed type which literally means that there are only four days left before the bearer of the words passes on. Contextually the phrase means that there is very little time left before someone passes on.

iv) *Mai mwana woye ndongosienda, ndonoona kwakagume nyika* (My wife I am going, I want to see the end of the world)

This falls under what Berliner (1993) call "mosaic type" talking about the desire to venture into the unknown and discover what is beyond the mountains. It refers to the era when the Shona migrated to towns to seek employment and better living conditions. Today the phrase may refer to the issue of Zimbabweans migrating into the Diaspora.

v) *Kudya naticha hukomborerwa* (To eat with a teacher is to be blessed)

This is a narrative style which literally means that if one shares a meal with a teacher, he or she receives some blessings. The phrase refers to the status of teachers in the society. Teachers were taken to be the most respected people in society. The belief is that if you share food with a teacher then you are most likely to be successful in life. Generally it means that if one rubs shoulders with those of high class, the chances are that they are likely to benefit from them.

vi) *Mudzimu weshiri uri mudendere* (The bird's ancestors dwell in a nest)

This is a fixed type which means that the spirit of a bird is in its nest. In other words, home is best. This is a piece of advice to the young people that they should remember that their strength and identity is embedded in their cultural heritage. They should not be fooled into abandoning their culture and follow other people's culture.

Mbira players and participants express their sentiments as they accompany *mbira* singing with the poetic phrases shown above and many more. However, some improvise their own phrases depending on their feelings and situation. Below are the transcriptions of *nyamaropa* and pieces belonging to *nyamaropa* family namely *mahororo*, *karigamombe* and *chaminuka* which are played to accompany the phrases discussed.

It must be noted that the way in which the accompanying instruments for *mbira* music are always almost performed in a similar way in most of the pieces performed on *mbira*. The drum usually articulates the following rhythm although there is room for improvisation.



Shakers and clappers follow the drum and also players can improvise on the basic rhythm line of the drum. This is the reason why the transcriptions of the accompanying instruments is the same in all the *mbira* pieces and *shangara* songs transcribed in this study.

Piece 1: *Nyamaropa*

Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Tonal Center G

I II

III IV

Drum

Ululation

Rattles

Clappers

Key:

- Top right notes (*Nhetete*)
- * Top left notes (*Nheverangwena*)
- ◻ Bottom left notes (*Mazembera*)

Ex 2.3 Nyamaropa piece

Piece 2: Mahororo

Transcription by: P Matiure 2013
 Tonal Center G

Key:

- Top right notes (*Nhetete*)
- * Top left notes (*Nheverangwena*)
- Bottom left notes (*Mazembera*)

Ex 2.4 Mahororo

Mahororo is one of the oldest pieces performed during *kurova guva* ceremony. Usually *mbira* players perform *mahororo* together with *nyamaropa*. Zambuko reiterated the same point and the reason he gave was that *nyamaropa* is the *kushaura* part and *mahororo* is the *kutsinhira* (Interview 17 August 2012). It is also interesting to note that pieces like *nyamaropa* and *mahororo* usually accompany songs rich in vocables only. Today *mbira* players compose text to be accompanied by *mahororo*. The absence of common text for *mahororo* and *nyamaropa* is a sign of antiquity. The piece is also performed during *kurova guva* in order to assist in escorting

the spirit of the deceased from the forest to the village. Another piece that can be played which is similar to *mahororo* is *karigamombe* whose transcription is shown below

Piece 3: *Karigamombe*

Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Tonal center G

Key:

- Top right notes (*Nhetete*)
- * Top left notes (*Nheverangwena*)
- ◻ Bottom left notes (*Mazembera*)

Ex. 2.5 Karigamombe (cf DVD 3 Part II-18:30-18:47)

The term *karigamombe* which means cowboy refers to someone who is physically very strong. It also refers to someone who is capable of solving very difficult problems or someone who has strong power to rule others. The piece gives chiefs courage and hope in their ruling. Its tonal

order and notes are identical to those of *nyamaropa*. Some *mbira* players call it *dhongi mombe mbudzi* which is derived from the sound produced by the first four notes found on the top left manual played from right (tonal note) to left which are G D C C E E. Usually this is the first piece that is taught to beginners. The use of the words *dhongi mombe mbudzi* helps to keep the piece in its original form.

During the *kurova guva* ceremony *karigamombe* is played in the early hours of the night before participants depart to escort the spirit from the grave. The other piece is called *Chaminuka ndimambo*, meaning Chaminuka is a king. The transcription is shown below:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Chaminuka ndimambo</i>	Chaminuka is the King
Response:	<i>Ahee ndimambo</i>	Ahee is the King
Lead:	<i>Chaminuka ndimambo</i>	Chaminuka is the King
Response:	<i>Shumba inogara yega musango</i>	A lion that stays alone in the forest

Source: (Vambe 2009)

Song transcription:

Piece 4: *Chaminuka ndimambo*

Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Tonal center G

The image shows a musical transcription of the piece 'Chaminuka ndimambo' in G major. It consists of four systems of notation, labeled I, II, III, and IV. Each system is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes notes, rests, and fingerings (indicated by numbers 1-5). System I starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. System II continues the melody. System III continues the melody. System IV concludes the piece with a double bar line. The transcription uses a mix of quarter notes, eighth notes, and rests, with some notes having fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5.

Drum

Ululation

Rattles

Clappers

Key:

- Top right notes (*Nhetete*)
- * Top left notes (*Nheverangwena*)
- ◻ Bottom left notes (*Mazembera*)

Ex. 2.6 Chaminuka ndimambo

This is a praise song for Chaminuka who is a territorial spirit for the Shona. The last well-known medium for the spirit of Chamunika was Tsuru, also discussed in Chapter one when I looked at the power of *mbira*. Tsuru was also a *mbira* player who could perform miracles after playing the instruments. He had powers to disappear in mist form if he wanted a disguise. The song is usually sung to praise great spirits too.

Another set of pieces that are performed during the *kurova guva* are those that include *nhemamusasa*, *nehondo*, *taireva*, *nhemakonde*, and *bangiza*. *Nhemamusasa* depicts the migratory nature of the ancient people. It is all about building branch shelters which were temporary booths for the nomads. Contextually, it encourages people to deal with issues while there is still enough time. For instance the text *nhemamusasa karinge zuva nhamo ichauya* means make your shelter while the sun is still shining for the night will come with unforeseen problems. Below is transcription of *nhemamusasa* and text of the song.

Song text:

The piece accompanies the song with the following text;

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lead: | <i>Nhemamusasa</i> | |
| Response: | <i>Haiya woye woye mukaranga</i> | <i>Hiaya woye woye young wife</i> |
| Lead: | <i>Nhemamusasa</i> | |

Response: *Hanzvadzi yamai vako zvaisingarimi*
Lead: *Nhemamusasa*
Response: *Haiya woye woye mukaranga*

Your mother's brother does not farm
Hiaya woye woye young wife

Song transcription:

Piece 5: *Nhemamusasa*

Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Tonal center C

The image shows a musical transcription of the piece 'Nhemamusasa' on a single treble clef staff. The transcription is divided into four sections labeled I, II, III, and IV. Section I consists of 12 measures, Section II of 12 measures, Section III of 12 measures, and Section IV of 12 measures. The notation includes various note types: top right notes (Nhetete) represented by solid black dots, top left notes (Nheverangwena) represented by asterisks, and bottom left notes (Mazembera) represented by circles with a vertical line through them. The notes are placed on the staff lines to indicate pitch and rhythm. Section IV ends with a double bar line.

Key:

- Top right notes (*Nhetete*)
- * Top left notes (*Nheverangwena*)
- ◌ Bottom left notes (*Mazembera*)

Ex. 2.7. *Nhemamusasa Mbira piece* (cf DVD 3 Part II 13:23-13:39)

Nhemamusasa is somehow related to *nyamaropa* in that both have what Brenner refers to as deep-structurally related. They also both have a 12 step standard progression

It is also important to note that *nhemamusasa* when played in a very slow tempo sounds like another old piece called *bangiza*. It is apparent that in *mbira* performance, any form of shift in the tonal order which is almost similar to the change in key in the western sense results a new composition. However pieces were conceived and composed independent of original pieces by either changing the key or the overall harmonic movement. The other implication is that there are several different variations that one can produce on a *mbira* by improvising on a single piece. Never the less the piece remains recognized. Berliner noticed the same thing although explained

it differently when he says “it is interesting to note that *Nyamaropa* and *Nhemamusasa* share basic elements of harmonic and thematic structure in spite of the difference in their tonal centers...” (1993:78). *Nhemamusasa* however has its own family of pieces which share the same scale pattern which are *nehondo*, *mukaranga ane shanje* also called *tanga wabvunza mutupo*, *nhemakonde* and *bangiza*. *Nhemamusasa* is favored by many *mbira* players due to its simple flow. *Nhemamusasa* and other pieces which use the same scale pattern are also performed in *kurova guva* ceremonies in the early hours. They serve the same contextual purpose as the *nyamaropa* family.

Another piece that was identified by Cosmas Zambuko as one that is played during *kurova guva* is *Nhemakonde*, also called *chipembere* (Interview 17 August 2012). The term *Nhemakonde* is formed by two words *nhema* which is the Shona word for rhinoceros and *konde* is from the word *mukonde* which refers to a tree with milky toxic sap. The polyphonic and polyrhythmic nature of the song is likened to the bravery of a rhinoceros (*chipembere*). The early Shona people associated some of their *mbira* pieces and songs with wild animals like *shumba* (lion) and *chipemberere*. The tonic key of *chipemberere* is the same as that of another piece, *bangiza*. The two are some of the very old songs that are preferred by rain spirits *makombwe*. During *kurova guva* these pieces are played early in the morning before going to escort the spirit from the grave. Preserving transcriptions and recording of such songs in an archive will help retain the original harmonic structure of the pieces. Currently *mbira* players like Mbira Dzenharira, E. Mujuru, and Maungira Enharira ensemble have added a lot of different variations to make the pieces more interesting. Some of them have recorded albums which are available on the market. Examples of the recordings are "*Dziva renjuzu*", "*Fare fare tindike*" by Mbira Dzenharira, "*Mbavaira*" and "*Muti mukuru*" by Ephat Mujuru and The Spirit of the People, *Chinamanenji*, *Nhorowondo*, *Hurongwa* and *Ndodyiwa NemaKava* by Maungira Enharira.

Another family of pieces that are performed during *kurova guva* embraces those pieces derived from *Taireva*. The text of the song is as follows:

Song text:

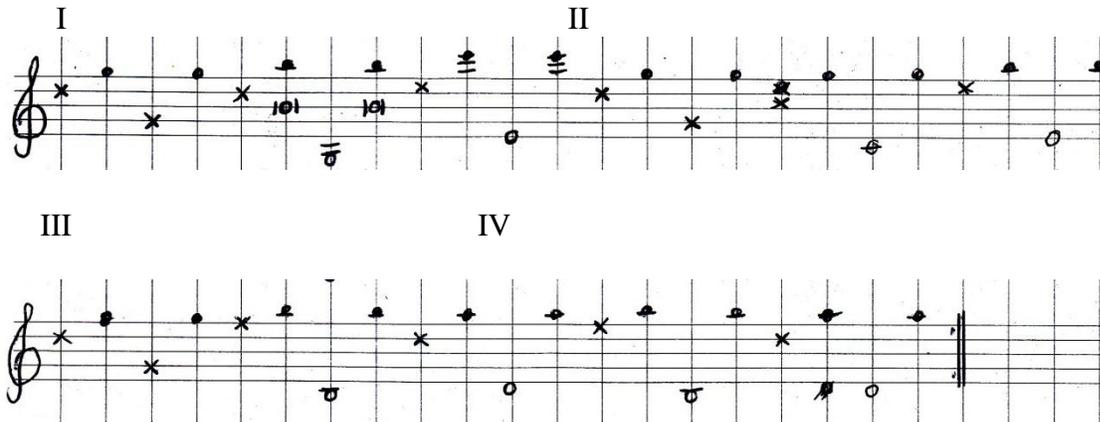
Lead:	<i>Taireva Taireva Taireva Taireva</i>	We used to talk
	<i>Taireva mukoma bvunzaiwo</i>	We used to talk brother ask
Response:	<i>Taimboreva mukoma</i>	We used to talk brother
Lead:	<i>Mwana wenyu kutakura tsotso</i>	Your child has carried twigs

Response: *sedhongi ratakura uswa amai*
Taimboreva mukoma

like a donkey carrying grass mother
 We used to talk brother

Song transcription:

Piece 6: *Taireva*
 Transcription by P Matiure 2013
 Tonal center G



Key:

- Top right notes (*Nhetete*)
- * Top left notes (*Nheverangwena*)
- Bottom left notes (*Mazembera*)

Ex. 2.8 *Taireva* (cf DVD 3 Part II-13:10-13:22)

Taireva family has the same tonal order as that of *nyamaropa*. *Taireva* style is similar to two pieces that share the same “chorus” framework. These are *bhuka tiende* and *shumba*. *Taireva* can be played together with *shumba*. In this case the *mbira* player playing *kushaura* will play *taireva* and the other playing *kutsinhira* will play *shumba*. *Taireva* is a piece which can be played using several variations and has a rich textual terrain. It is about family planning issues, it discourages people from having many children. One of my participants, Zambuko, suggested that this is a family planning song (Interview 17 August 2012). *Shumba* usually accompanies the song *yave nyama yekugocha* that has been discussed before. Some call this song *varimugomba* or *karimugomba*. *Karimugombe* literally means one who is lying in the grave.

Bhukatiende is yet another piece whose harmonic structure is similar to *taireva*. The two share the same tonal centre although *taireva* tends to extend by a phrase. The text of the song *bkukatiende* is as follows:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Sango sango iro</i>	Forest that forest
Response:	<i>Randiremera sango</i>	The forest is heavy for me
Lead:	<i>Sango mugara ndega</i>	I am staying alone in the forest
Response:	<i>Randiremera sango</i>	The forest is heavy for me
Lead:	<i>Ndiudzaiwo kwakainda vamwe</i>	Tell me where others went
Response:	<i>Randiremera sango</i>	The forest is heavy for me
Lead:	<i>Ndoita mugara ndega</i>	I am staying alone
Response:	<i>Randiremera sango</i>	The forest is heavy for me

This is a song referring to poverty and misery. It talks about a poor person who stays alone and is asking the whereabouts of others. When performed during a *kurova guva* ceremony the song *taireva* depicts the loneliness of the spirit which is believed to be still in the forest waiting cleansing. For the piece *bhukatiende* performed by Samuel Mujuru refer to DVD 3 Part II-16:35-16:52).

The activities during all-night *kurova guva* ceremony include traditional brew drinking, dancing and singing. When the *mbira* players are tired or want to quench their thirst, participants sing other songs accompanied by traditional drums. One example is the song *mudzimu dzoka* with the following text and transcription. Note that R stands for the ring of the drum and C for the centre on the rhythmic line of the drum for all the transcriptions:

Song text:

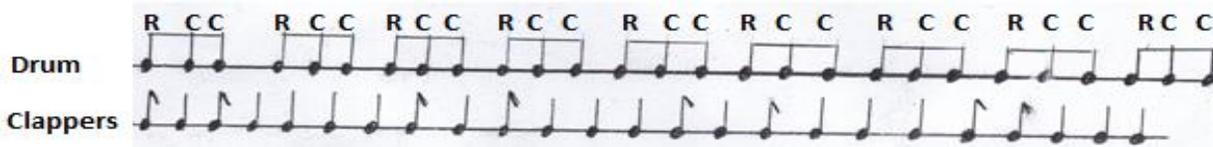
Lead:	<i>Changamire mudzimu dzoka</i>	King the ancestor come back
Response:	<i>Aaa haiyeee kwaziwai changamire</i>	We greet you king

Song transcription:

Song Title: *Mudzimu dzoka*
 Performed by: Jambwa village participants
 Ceremony: *Kurova guva*
 Date: 15 August 2012
 Transcription by: P Matiure 2013



To ve ra mdzi mu dzo ka Ha ho yi ye mdzi mu dzo ka kwa ziwa cha nga mi re.



EX 2.9 Mudzimu dzoka

The song articulates the theory that upholds that there is a strong connection between the living and the dead. During a *kurova guva* ceremony the song is sung to invite the spirit of the deceased to come back to the village to reside amidst its family. The other song is entitled “*Ndaka kuti sara*” the text and transcription of which is shown below:

Ceremony: *Kurova guva*

Date: 15 August 2012

Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Hoiye iyeeeee</i>	
Response:	<i>Iye hahoha</i>	
Lead:	<i>Hoiye iye iyerere</i>	
Response:	<i>Ndaka kuti sara ukaramba</i>	I told you to remain but you refused
Lead:	<i>Hoiye iyeeeee</i>	
Response:	<i>Iye hahoha</i>	
Lead:	<i>Hoiye iye iyerere</i>	
Response:	<i>Rwendo rwuno kwave kunorowa</i>	This time we will not come back
Song Title:	<i>Ndaka kuti sara ukaramba</i>	
Performed by:	<i>Jambwa village participants</i>	

Song Transcription:

Wo ye i ye ha ho ha Wo ye re i ye i ye re re

Nda ka ku ti sa ra u ka ra mba

Ex 2.11 Ndakakuti sara ukaramba

The song talks about the departure of the spirit from the living to the spiritual world. The lead line of this song has vocables only and the response is the one that has the message. Another unique feature about this song is that the response sings first a feature which is not common among the Shona singing styles. Another song commonly sung during *kurova guva* is *Dzinomwa muna Zambezi* discussed below:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Dzinomwa muna Zambezi</i>	They drink in Zambezi
Response:	<i>Mhondoro</i>	Lions
Lead:	<i>Dzinomwa muna Save</i>	They drink in Save
Response:	<i>Mhondoro</i>	Lions

Transcription:

Song Title: *Dzinomwa muna Zambezi*
 Performed by: Jambwa village participants
 Ceremony: *Kurova guva*
 Date: 15 August 2012
 Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Ex 2.11 *Dzinonwa muna Zambezi*

Mhondoro is a term used to refer to a spiritual lion. The Shona believe that a clan spirit can be housed in a lion. This lion looks after its people as well as the environment. If someone goes against rules of the society this lion may appear to him as a sign that the spirits are angry. On the other hand Save is a big river that separates Hwedza District and Chikomba and Zambezi is to north of Zimbabwe. The song implies that these sacred lions drink water in Save and Zambezi Rivers. The contextual meaning of the song may be that great people are associated with great things.

Mbira music and other traditional songs keep participants active throughout the night and the traditional brew gives them energy to remain awake. The other thing that compels everyone to attend is that they know that one day they will need support from other village members, so they must support each other. The Shona use a proverb to that effect which says one good turn deserves another (*kandiro kanoenda kunobva kamwe*). The proverb implies that people do to you what you do to them. So if you do not support other people, they are likely not to support you too.

The other thing that keeps them awake is the hospitality provided provided by the organizers throughout the all-night ceremony. These included traditional brew (*hwahwa*) and food. Traditional brew (*hwahwa*) is valued very much by the Shona. From my fieldwork experiences I

discovered that in every family about 60% of the members drink traditional brew. What motivates participants to attend is the common cause which will be to escort the spirit of the deceased. However materials provision like traditional brew and meat become an additive contribution. Muhwati Chinyanga mentioned that “*Vanorara vachitamba hwahwa huchibuda...*” meaning that they spent the night dancing and drinking traditional brew (Interview 10 January 2012). Chinyanga emphasized two important activities namely performing music and drinking traditional brew. These two activities are always considered to be very crucial whenever the Shona people come together as a family.

2.6 Mbira Music and the ritual at the grave (*Kutora mudzimu*)

Rituals are a common phenomenon in the entire Shona sacred and secular experiences. Bourdillon suggests that we can “include under the term ‘ritual’ actions which are in some way prescribed and repeated, and which convey an element of symbolism” (1990:13). *Kurova guva* literally means beating the grave as previously stated. The belief is that when the grave is beaten it opens up and the spirit gets out. This is done by pouring traditional brew on the grave and singing and dancing to celebrate the coming out of the spirit. *Mbira* music which accompanies the proceedings at the grave facilitates its opening if there happens to be a *mbira* player. In the absence of *mbira* traditional songs accompanied with traditional drums are sung going to the grave, at the grave and returning home. The initial stages of the ritual starts at home when the participants leave the hut and proceed to the grave, singing *Yave nyama yekugacha, nyuchi dzinoruma or Sara mugomo wawega wega*.

The songs sung walking to the grave may differ from place to place. However, the objective of the songs is always the same, to invite the spirit and create a supernatural pathway for the spirit to travel from the forest to the home. The commonest one is the song ‘*Nyama yekugocha*’. Vambe (2009:117) in his article on the function of songs in *kurova guva* presented and discussed the same song. However he provided the text of the song only without providing its transcriptions. According to Vambe songs of *kurova guva* are sung as part of celebration for the coming of the spirit to join the people. Participants act like “hunters of old celebrating a successful hunting expedition” (Vambe 2009:117). They celebrate the return of the member although he/she will be in a spiritual state. It is customary for the Shona to celebrate each time

when something good has happened in their society. They celebrated good harvest, the birth of a new baby, new chief, and good catch by hunters. However the enactment goes beyond mere celebration. In fact it is a veneration system in which the music facilitates the union of the deceased's spirit and the ancestral spirits (*vadzimu*). Below is the transcription of the song *Yave nyama yekugocha*:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Yave nyama yekugocha</i>	It is meat for roasting
Response:	<i>Yowerere hoha hoo</i>	<i>Yowerere hoha hoo</i>
Lead:	<i>Woiye woiye</i>	<i>Woiye woiye</i>
Response:	<i>Baya wabaya</i>	Stab and stab

Transcription:

Song Title: *Yave nyama yekugocha*
 Performed by: Jambwa village participants
 Ceremony: *Kurova guva*
 Date: 15 August 2012
 Transcription by: P Matiure 2013

Ya ve nya ma ye ku go cha Ya ve nya ma ye ku go

Yo we re re Ba ya wa ba ya.

Ex. 2.12 The song nyama yekugocha

When the song is being sung during the procession, drummers play traditional drums while clutching them under their armpits as shown below:



Figure 2.11 Participants singing on their way to the grave. Photography by researcher on 31 September 2013

The meaning of this song is not very clear. The closest meaning was given by Zambuko who claimed that the song is a war song sung for heroes who have won the war. The implication is that the Shona associate death especially that of very old men with war. One participant, Amos Jambwa, confirmed that during *kurova guva* organized for an old man or highly respected individuals in the community like the chief, other men would bring their guns (*magidi*) and fire them at the grave (11th August 2012). Such a practice indicates the possible relationship between *kurova guva* and war. The war song “*Yave nyama yekugocha*” may imply that the spirit has won the war against staying in the forest and is now fit to rejoin the family members and other ancestors who are already in the spiritual world. The participants in Figure 2.25 did not sing *Yave nyama yekugocha* but instead sang the song *Nyuchi dzinoruma*. The text and transcription of the song is shown below:

Song title: *Vashe vashe*
Performed by: Mupfigi villagers
Venue: Manyame home, Mupfigi village Buhera
Documented by: Perminus Matiure
Date: 31 August 2013
Song text:

Lead: *Vashe vashe woye*
 Response: *Tora uta hwako toda
 kuenda dzinoruma*
 Lead: *Nyuchi dzinorumna*
 Response: *Dzinoruma*
 Lead: *Nyuchi dzinoruma*
 Response: *Tora uta hwako
 toda kuenda dzinoruma*

King King *woye*
 Take your bow we want
 to go they sting
 Bees sting
 They sting
 Bees sting
 Take your bow we
 want to go they sting

3

Ex. 2.13 The song *Vashe vashe* (cf DVD I Part I- 07:45-08:49)

The text of the song talks about death issues. When the Shona people say take your bow we want to go, they imply that it is time to leave the world of the living to join the spiritual world. The other song sung during the ritual on the grave is a song entitled *Vana vangu vakura* presented below:

Song title: *Vana vangu vapera*
 Performed by: Mupfigi villagers
 Venue: Manyame home, Mupfigi village Buhera
 Documented by: Perminus Matiure
 Date: 31 August 2013

Song text:

Lead: *Kura uone* (Grow up and see)
 Response: *Vana vangu vapera* (My children have perished)
 Lead: *Kura uone* (Grow up and see)
 Response: *Kurera haizinyore* (Raising them up is not easy)



Ex. 2.14 The song *Vana vangu vavera* (cf DVD I Part I- 08:50-09:20)

It is important to note that due to the shifting trends in the Shona traditional practices and the decline of *kurova guva* ceremony, this song has re-emerged in a new context where it is sung during soccer matches when Zimbabwe national soccer team has won. If such sacred songs are not preserved, the future generations will be unable to relate the song to their real sacred contexts.

When the participants arrive at the grave they dance around it, women ululating and men clapping their hands to accompany *mbira* music. Everyone joins in the singing and dancing as part of celebration. This is the stage where music, whether *mbira* or songs accompanied by drums, plays an important role of opening the grave. The music will then subside and the leader of the family drinks traditional brew and then chants incantations to invite the spirit to be escorted home. According to Zambuko the leader of the village will take a calabash of traditional beer drink and pour some on the grave chanting the following incantation “*Tauya kuzokutora kuti uende kune vamwe*” translated to: We have come to take you so that you go to your relatives (Interview 17 August 2012). As he chants men will be clapping hands and women ululating as sign of respect.

Sometimes before the elder has poured the beer the daughter-in-law (*muroora*)¹⁸ sits on the grave besides the pot of traditional brew covered with a blanket (Figure 2.26). It is part of the Shona tradition that the *varoorora* demand money during cultural events and also make fun activities like mimicking the dress or behavior of the deceased (*kunemera*). They may block the proceedings and demand payment for the ceremony to continue. If they snatch the pot then another one has to be brought to replace it.

¹⁸ The role of *varorora* is to relax the atmosphere whenever the Shona gather for a ceremony.



Figure 2.12 Participants dancing on the grave. Photography by researcher on 31 September 2013

The daughter-in-law (*murorora*) has to be paid some money so that she unveils the cloth and allows them to continue with the procedures. After that the participants come in their order of age to drink a calabash of traditional brew from the pot placed on the grave. The traditional brew that is left in the pot is poured on the grave and the pot is placed upside down and left on the grave for the whole day. The Shona believe that when traditional brew is poured on the grave, the ancestral spirits will drink it. So pouring traditional brew on the grave is sharing the traditional brew with the ancestral spirits. Figure 2.27 shows participants from Mupfigi village in Buhera dancing at the grave of Sekuru Jebias Manyame.



Figure 2.13 Participants at the grave side. Photography by researcher on 31 September 2013

After the ritual of pouring traditional brew and chanting, participants dance and sing for a while and then leave for the village with the elders in front, followed by *mbira* players. They walk and keep on singing and celebrating until they all get back to the hut. Upon entering the hut, the *mbira* and singing intensifies. The music subsides again and the leader of the village kneels and recites the following words which are supported by Vambe (2009):

Tarisa (mutupo)

Nhasi takudzora mumusha

Hausisiri musango

Wava mumusha

Mune vamwe vako

Wochichengeta mhuri

Look (totem)

Today we have escorted you home

You are no longer in the forest

You are in the village

With others

You can now look after your family.

During the ritual that I attended the leader of the village recited as follows:

Zvatapindira muno ndozvatakuda kuita

kuti tabva kunitora mudzimu wedu uko

tichipinza mumba. Zvino tomboombera.

Kana taombera tozoona zvinoteera.

Saka ngatichiombera tichiti tadzora

mudzimu wedu mumba.

(Clapping and ululating)

takudzorai mumba.

Ngarive deveteve.

The reason of getting in here is that

we have escorted the spirit from there into the hut. Now let us clap hands.

After that we will wait for other events.

So let us clap hands saying that we have brought you our beloved brother's spirit home.

Eh Pakuru Eh Pakuru

we have brought you into the hut.

Let there be peace

(cf DVD 1 Part I- 09:59-10:40).

For the whole ritual of escorting the spirit refer to DVD 1 Part 1 06:45-10:40 appendix 5.

The text enshrined in the incantation above shows that the Shona respect totems¹⁹ (*mitupo*). They always use totems to greet each other. Totems define the lineage to which the person or ancestor belongs. Greeting someone using their totem goes beyond the living and connects the one being greeted with their ancestors. The phrase “Today we have escorted you home” confirms that the spirit is believed to be present in the hut. The Shona believe that when the spirit is brought back into the village then it has joined both the living and the ancestors. It is also assumed that those in the spiritual world coexist with the living in the village. The various rituals conducted by the Shona indicate that the Shona cosmology comprises the living and the dead. The absence of either of the two makes the cosmology incomplete. When the spirit has joined its genealogy, only then does it have the power to look after the remaining family. It is expected to protect the family members and contribute to the dialogues that take place amongst other ancestral spirits.

After these incantations women ululate and men clap their hands. The music, dancing, and singing resume. This time they sing any song, especially the deceased’s favorite. Participants dance and sing to celebrate the coming of the new spirit. The belief is that the spirit will be in the hut enjoying the music together with the rest of the participants. Bourdillon (1990:44) agrees that after arriving home from the grave participants celebrate by singing, dancing, drinking and feasting. *Mbira* music serves the purpose of integrating the living and the spirit. Depending on the intensity of the music, in some cases a family member can get possessed by the new spirit at this stage. If that happens then it confirms that the spirit of the deceased has joined the other ancestors. However, during the four *kurova guva* ceremonies that I attended during my field study, no one got possessed and there were no *mbira* players in all of them. The diagram below summarizes the ritual of going to and coming from the grave:

¹⁹ The Shona use a totem as another way of tracing one's genealogy. Totems are meant to avoid marriage among relatives.



Figure 2.16 The intensity of music during escorting the spirit ritual (cf DVD 1 Part 1 06:45-10:40)

The red stars represent the intensity of *mbira* music from the hut and back. The whole ritual from the hut and back is also shown by the photographs below the diagram. Where there is a concentration of stars it implies that the intensity of *mbira* music, singing and dancing is high. The belief is that when the intensity of music is high especially in the hut and at the grave, the spirit is drawn closer. When the participants are walking to and from the grave, the music will have low intensity. In other words according to Shona cosmology it is the *mbira* music or music

accompanied by drumming which carries the spirit. This is in line with the theory which confirms that there is some correspondence that takes place between certain types of music and the spirit. Once that correspondence has occurred the spirit is drawn closer to the world of the living making it easier for the spirit to be escorted home.

2.7 The ritual of slaughtering a beast

Soon after completing the ritual on the grave the maternal parents of the deceased are shown a beast which will be slaughtered by in-laws. What happens is that people will go to the kraal and the head of the family will show the maternal parents the beast to be slaughtered as an offering to the deceased. The maternal parents and the rest of the people will then clap hands and women ululate as a sign of appreciation. If the deceased is a man an ox is killed and if it is a woman a cow is killed. During *kurova guva* ceremony which I attended in Buhera the following were the words that accompanied the ritual of killing the beast as narrated by Jaona:

Tese takadai ndofunga zviru kutaura
Mudhara murikungo zviona
Ndo mombe yabiswa iyi
Nemukuwasha
Ehee hanzi ndipinze
tezvara wangu mumusha
(Clapping and ululation)
Watipa zvino today hedu
Tinotenda.

All of us I think what is said
by the old man is clear
That is the ox that has been donated
by the son-in-law
Ehee he likes it [the cow] to help in escorting
his father-in-law into the village
Mukuwasha wenyu It is your son-in-law
who has given us now we eat meat
Thank you

(cf DVD 1 Part I- 03:55-04:28)

It is a common practice that whenever the Shona gather for a ceremony they respect the idea of feeding visitors. They actually have a proverb, “*Ukama igasva hunozadziswa nekudya*”, which translates to; relationships are sealed through sharing food. However the killing of the beast goes beyond mere feeding of people. Certain parts of the beast are taken and roasted by the in-laws. These are pieces used for the ritual, gullet (*nziu*), liver (*chiropa*), lungs (*bapu*), small intestines (*ura utete*), diaphragm (*ruzarira*), *susu*, and *guru*. The roasted meat is served to everyone but is eaten without salt. Part of the remaining meat will be cooked for the rest of the people and eaten with sadza. Below is a photograph of sons-in-law slaughtering an ox:



Figure 2.17 Sons-in-law laughing the ox. Photography by researcher on 31 September 2013

2.8 Rituals of inheritance (*Zita*)

The ritual that follows is inheritance (*Zita*). *Zita* is conducted in the case of the death of a married man. During the ritual the eldest son is installed as the head of the family which is called *zita* or *tsvimbo*. The son is given the name of the father and his walking stick (*tsvimbo*) (Figure 2.30 photograph 7). Every Shona man is expected to possess a walking stick which symbolizes his authority as the head of the family. The ritual is directed by incantations chanted by the leader. These are some of the words as given by Cosmas Zambuko:

Chiwona nhasi takupa zita rababa
vako netsvimbo yavo iyi (Handing over the rod).
Kubva nhasi chiziva kuti
ndiwe wava baba wemusha uno.
Ndiwe wava (Name of the deceased).
Wochi chengeta mhuri yasara
ne zvese zvakasiwa nababa vako.

Today we have given you your father's name
 as well as this rod.
 From today you are now
 the leader of this family.
 You are now called (Name of deceased).
 Look after the children
 and the property left behind by your father.

(Interview 17 August 2012).

After these incantations people will sing and dance to *mbira* music celebrating the new position of the son. The idea is to choose someone who will be responsible for looking after the family left behind by the deceased. What follows immediately after *zita* involves the selection of the

successor to the deceased who will become the new husband. Soon after that people will celebrate and congratulate the new husband by dancing to *mbira* music or any music of their choice. Some sing the song “*Avo ndibaba*” meaning “There is the father”. The song’s text is presented below:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Avo ndibaba</i>	There is the father
Response:	<i>Tavaona avo ndichangamire tavaona</i>	We have seen him he is the king
Lead:	<i>Tavaona nengundu yavo</i>	We have seen him with his ritual hat
Response:	<i>Tavaona avo ndichangamire tavaona</i>	We have seen him he is the king

Below is a sequence of photographs showing the proceedings of the ritual of inheritance:



Figure 2.18 Ritual of inheritance (Zita) Photography by researcher on 16 August 2013.

Photograph 1

The rest of the participants wait for the heir to come out of the hut. Usually the inheritor goes into the hut where he is covered with a cloth before walking out to sit on the mat outside the hut.

Photograph 2

The heir is covered with a cloth by a nephew (*muzukuru*). Covering him is a traditional custom which shows the importance of the occasion. It also signifies that the son is going to be born again as a successor of his father so people have to see him after unveiling the cloth as a new persona.

Photograph 3

The heir is helped out of the hut by the nephew while the participants ululate and clap.

Photograph 4

The heir and his aide sit on a traditional mat (*rupasa*) waiting the unveiling of the cloth.

Photograph 5

The leader of the village unveils the cloth and again participants ululate and clap hands to welcome the new father.

Photograph 6

The leader of the village gives the successor a traditional axe (*gano*) which belongs to the deceased. When he does that he chants the words:

Chiona nhasi takupa zita rababa vako.
Ndiwe wavababa wemusha uno.
Wochichengeta mhuri yasara.

Look here today we have given you your father's name.
You are now the head of this family.
You should now look after the remaining family.

Photograph 7

The heir is also given a walking stick which belongs to the deceased. (A traditional axe and a walking stick are taken to be the symbols for fatherhood (*tsvimbo dzemurume*) in the Shona culture. Every man is expected to have at least those weapons. Some include a spear on the least. By handing over these weapons to the heir, the villagers are swearing in the heir as the new leader of the family.

Photograph 8

Participants then take turns to counsel the heir. Most of them give advice on how to be responsible and look after the remaining mother and children. In the photograph is one of the members giving advice to the heir.

Photograph 9

The successor returns into the hut where *sadza* (*sadza rezviyo*) is served and people then sing and dance to celebrate the new position of the successor. It is at this point that *mbira* music comes in if there is an *mbira* player present. If not, traditional songs accompanied by traditional drums are sung and people sing and dance. For the ritual of inheritance refer to DVD I Part III- 14:28-16:20).

2.9 The ritual of Succession (*Nhaka*)

The incumbent must be one of the younger or elder brothers of the deceased. All the deceased's brothers and interested parties like the sons and daughters of the sisters of the village (*vazukuru*), of the deceased will all sit on a mat, waiting to be chosen.

The wife of the deceased will first of all jump over a walking stick placed on the ground as a sign that she did not engage in any sexual relationships after the death of the husband. It is a Shona tenet that a woman or man should not engage in sexual intercourse until *kurova guva* ceremony has been conducted. The widow will then take a bowl of water and move around the aspiring husbands and pour the water on the ground in front of those she does not love. When she reaches the one she has chosen to be the successor she washes his hands. Washing his hands is a sign that he is the one whom she has chosen to be the successor.

My findings about the practice of succession indicates that most of the women now prefer to give their own sons water as an indication that they do not want to marry another husband but would like to continue staying in the village looking after her children. In the case of the death of a woman the husband is given another wife by the in-laws. This ritual is called *chigadza mapfihwa*²⁰.

During the two rituals of succession that I attended during my field work women chose their sons as successors. This is a sign that many women who lose their husband prefer to remain looking after their children without necessarily getting married to a relative of the husband. I also discovered that about 80% of homes in the Shona society are headed by widows who refused to be married by relatives of their husbands. Even men are no longer willing to be given another

²⁰*Chigadza mapfihwa* is a ritual meant to give a husband another wife after the first wife has passed on.

wife if their wives pass on. They prefer to marry a new wife who has no relationship with the deceased wife. The reason is that young children refuse to be successors of their sisters as they are now protected by human rights which enshrine their freedom of choice. The current situation in Zimbabwe is such that there is a conflict between traditional values and modern way of life. The majority of people are no longer following some of the traditional values that are likely to violate human rights. The Zimbabwean constitution places women on the same footing with men in terms of decision making. Mothers are now free to refuse to allow their husbands to be successors of other husbands. They fear that they may lose their husbands or this may derail the focus of their husbands and end up failing to look after the family. Of course the fear of the HIV and AIDS pandemic is another reason. Below is a sequence of photographs showing the stages of the ritual of succession with explanations of each photograph.



1
**Men and women
waiting to be chosen**



2
**Widow and her
assistant choosing the
new husband**



3
**The chosen man and
his assistants**

Figure 2.33 Ritual of succession. Photograph taken by author on 16 August 2013.

Photograph 1

All the interested parties sit on a traditional mat awaiting selection. The event is done with a little bit of sarcasm. Some dress in suits and others dress in funny ways. Women may also join especially the nieces (*vazukuru kadzi*). The idea will be to make the whole ritual interesting.

Photograph 2

The widow is now selecting the new husband. Any rejected husband is indicated by pouring water on the ground in front of him/her. In this case the widow is accompanied by her sister. Whenever a contestant is rejected, the audience laughs at him/her. When the widow arrives at the right choice, she then washes the man's hand with water. This is a sign that the man is chosen to be the new husband. In this particular ritual which I attended the widow chose her eldest son.

Photograph 3

Participants celebrate by singing and dancing to show appreciation of the position of the husband. It is slowly becoming a norm that widows select their own sons to be the successor. This does not necessarily mean that the son becomes a husband, but it is an indication that the widow does not want to be remarried by her husband's relatives but rather continue to stay as a single mother in the same village.

2.10 The ritual of *dziva*

The ritual that marks the end of *kurova guva* is the ritual of *dziva* (pool). *Dziva* is a sealed pot of traditional brew that is prepared by the maternal parents of the deceased. (Figure 2.32) Note that the pot is sealed with mud so that the brew is safe since the pot will be placed in front of the hut (*rukuvu*) and left there for the whole night. One of the old women will keep guard of the pot the whole night. No one is allowed to touch or tamper with the ritual pot. It is the most sacred ritual object of the ceremony. Any *kurova guva* that is conducted without this pot is incomplete. The pot's symbolism was interpreted differently by the participants that I interviewed. One dimension given by Muzuva Muhwati is that the pot symbolized the embryonic fluids which enclose the baby in the womb of the mother. In his words Muzuva says: *Kana mukadzi achinge abetserwa anoputsika shupa ndofunga ndipo pakabva nyaya yedziva rinonamwa hari*, which translates to: When a woman has given birth the womb breaks and loses some embryonic fluids, I think that is where the issue of the pool which is a sealed pot came from (Interview 10 January 2012). Zambuko had this dimension: *Topinda mumba, todzika hari yehwahwa hwezviyo*

yekugamuchira mudzimu watanотора uku.” Which translates to: We get inside the hut and a pot of beer is produced whose purpose is to receive the ancestral spirit that we have brought home (Interview 17 August 2012). Zambuko takes this pot to be a present for the new spirit. Others indicated that the ritual marks the end of *kurova guva* ceremony (*mharadza*)²¹. Despite the different views held by the Shona concerning the *dziva*, most of the Shona sub-ethnic groups always include this pot during *kurova guva* ceremonies.



Figure 2.20 Emily Mutusva and two ritual pots (Dziva) Photography taken by author on 16 August 2013.

The traditional brew contained in the ritual pot is shared (*kuchera hari*) by those who lowered the corpse into the grave or by son-in-law (*muzukuru*). Muzuva Muhwati explains: *Padoro riya panozodziurwa dziva rinovhurwa nemukuwasha atanga aombera*, which translates to: The pot will be opened by the son-in-law after clapping hands in reverence (Interview 10 January 2012). After the traditional brew is shared, people dismiss and return to their homes, *kurova guva* ceremony will be over.

2.11 Current state of *kurova guva*

The current state of *kurova guva* shows some shifting trends in the way it is conducted. The major changes are on the attendance and the music performed. The ceremony is also slowly

²¹ *Mharadza* is a word that is derived from the word *kuparara* which means dismiss. *Mharadza* then is the pot that sends off everyone home and marks the end of *kurova guva* ceremony.

being replaced by a new practice called unveiling of the tombstone, *dombo* or “*kuchenura munhu*” (Gundani 1998:216). The same idea was echoed by Reverend Rukarwa when he said “...there is *kurova guva* which would take place a year after burial and our unveiling of the tombstone is also a year after burial which would in a way mean to say these are African practices that have been Christianized and put in the Christian sense” (Interview 25 January 2012). The unveiling of the tombstone ceremony is conducted under the guidance of the pastor. The main activities are singing church songs and preaching. The major ritual will be conducted when the pastor unveils the cloth that covers the tombstone. (Figure 2.33) No *mbira* music is performed during this ceremony. Also traditional brew is not allowed during the ceremony. Those who consume traditional brew usual hide it and only drink when the pastor is gone. The absence of the beer is assumed to keep away the ancestral spirits from the ceremony. Usually traditional brew is believed to be highly associated with the ancestral spirits. The brew is believed to be favored by the ancestral spirits because it quenches the thirst of the ancestral spirits.

It is also important to note that some Shona people conduct both the unveiling of the tombstone and *kurova guva* on the same day which is an indication that the Shona people also live in dual religious life. They conduct the unveiling of the tombstone during the day and *kurova guva* during the night of the same day or may conduct the two ceremonies on different days. From the finding of this study about 30% of the Shona in Gweru and Hwedza have totally abandoned *kurova guva* practices and adopted unveiling of the tomb stone (*dombo*) practices. This is an indication that the *kurova guva* ceremony is gradually being replaced by the unveiling of the tombstone, thus limiting the space for *mbira* performance.



Figure 2.21 Unveiling of the tombstone (*dombo*) for Nathan Jambwa. Photograph taken by author on 10 January 2012

Generally, traditional practices concerning death are gradually being replaced by modern practices which are informed by Christian principles and beliefs. For example it has been a practice that when a family member passes on the elders visit a diviner to establish the cause of the death (*gata*). Currently many people no longer conduct the *gata*, instead they rely on modern methods like post-mortems conducted by pathologists in hospitals. The other practice that has almost disappeared is the ritual held a week after burial (*ndongamabwe*). However the ritual has been replaced by a memorial ceremony called *nyaradzo*²². Reverend Rukarwa argued that:

We know that culture is dynamic and a lot of things are transferred from one culture to another. For instance the funeral, the memorial and the unveiling of the tombstone, if we look at these in an African sense, after burial there is a ceremony which is termed *doro remvura* which is done ten days after burial and if you look at our memorial service it is also ten days after burial... (Interview 25 January 2012).

This memorial ceremony is led by the church, which the deceased used to attend. In the case of the non-Christian any locally available church can lead the proceedings. The ceremony involves preaching and singing in order to console the bereaved family members. No *mbira* music is allowed at this ceremony. Also people are not allowed to drink traditional brew. Pastors are using these ceremonies as a platform to evangelize.

²²*Nyaradzo* is a memorial service normally conducted some weeks after the burial ceremony. The name of the ceremony was derived from a Shona verb *kunyaradza* which means to comfort.

The reduced frequency of sacred rituals including *kurova guva* has ultimately resulted in the decline of the music that is usually performed during these rituals. One of Applied ethnomusicologists' objectives is to retard change caused by modernity by documenting valuable traditional music performed during rituals. Merriam expresses his fear for the disappearance of the music of the folk when he says “the fear is that the music of the folk is fast disappearing and that it must be recorded and studied before it is gone” (1964:80). Although Merriam is referring to music of the folk in general, what he says is also typical of *mbira dzaVadzimu* music.

Dutiro (2007) and Berliner (1993) have also indicated the decline of the sacredness of this instrument. Their sentiments are analogous to Chidzambwa who says:

Iye zvino mbira dzakuita shoma nekuti chanyanya ndeche kuti vazhinji vapera kumhanyira kunonamata. Kunyanya chaita ndeche kudaiso, mumwe anogona kusarurwa nemudzimu, ndouya mudzimu unenge uchida mbira. Zvino iye uyauya anenge achiti haa izvi handichazvidi. Wakutoenda kumunamato. Ndozvanyanya kuderedza mbira. Asi kare dzaikwirira chaizvo. Zvakatotanga manjemanje.

Currently the *mbiras* are becoming fewer because many people are becoming Christians. In most cases what used to happen was that someone could be chosen by the ancestors who liked *mbira*, now that one will be saying haa I no longer want it. This is the major reason why *mbira* declined. However, long ago the instrument was developing quite well (Interview 19 March 2012).

From the data I collected it was quite evident that some people who were chosen to be *mbira* players by ancestors have abandoned playing *mbira*. Some stopped playing the instrument due to health problems which force them to join the church for salvation. One of the participants that I interviewed during fieldwork is Abraham Zharare (Table 1.8). Abraham Zharare happened to be one of the participants during my Master's Thesis (Matiure 2009). In 2008 he was an active *mbira* player and assisted in providing data for my research. However upon visiting him in 2012 the situation was different. Here is his current position concerning *mbira* playing:

Ndakamira kuridza mbira pandaka pinda cheche kuti ndiwane rubatsiro pandakarwara. Ndakanzi ndiregere kuridza mbira kuitira kuti zvechivanhu zvisadzoke kwandiri. Mbira dzababa vangu ndakaenda nadzo kucheche vakadzipisa nezvimwe zvinhu zvechivanhu. Dzangu ndakadzipa shamwari yangu.

I stopped playing *mbira* when I joined the church so that I get help since I was not feeling well. I was told to stop playing *mbira* so that I do not practise traditional sacred rituals. I took my father's

mbira to the church and they burnt it together with other traditional objects. I gave mine to a friend (Interview 19 March 2012).

The participant's sentiments are a clear testimony of how the church has suppressed the Shona religion and the ritual instruments associated with it. The participant is not the only one; of the nine *mbira* players I interviewed three (33%) of them, are no longer playing *mbira*. These are Kudzirai Chidzambwa, Abraham Zharare, and Boaz Mutsago.

Chidzambwa and Zharare are not the only ones who associate the decline of *mbira* with the advent of Christianity. In fact there was 100% agreement that there is a decline of the sacred use of *mbira*. The following table summarizes the sentiments of other participants concerning the decline of *mbira*:

Participant	Sentiments in Shona	English translation
Kudzirai Chidzambwa (Interview 19 th March 2012)	<i>Dziri kudzikira nemhaka yekuti vanhu vazhinji uye vanoridza mbira vava makirisitu.</i>	The <i>mbiras</i> are declining because many people and <i>mbira</i> players are becoming Christians.
Abraham Zharare (Interview 19 th March 2012)	<i>Ndakamira kuridza mbira mushure mekunge ndapinda cheche kuti ndiwane rubatsiro pandakarwara. Ndakanzi ndirege kuridza mbira necheche.</i>	I stopped when I joined church to get help after I became ill. I was advised to stop playing the <i>mbira</i> by the church.
Pastor David Muranga (Interview on 13 th January 2012)	<i>Kana zviri zviridzwa kune vairidza mbira vakunamata nhasi uno. Vamwe vatove vatungamiri vemachechi vanotopupura pamberi peungano...</i>	Pertaining to musical instruments there are people who used to play <i>mbira</i> but have become Christians today. Some are now leaders of the church, they confess in front of the congregation...

Table 2.2 Responses concerning the decline of the sacred efficacy of *mbira*

It can be concluded that there is a good number of people in most Shona societies who have abandoned *kurova guva* practices. Some of the rituals like *nhaka* and *chigadza mapfihwa* which usually follow *kurova guva* have almost disappeared. More importantly it can be noted that although *kurova guva* is still practised by some of the Shona, there is a change in the way it is conducted. Many families no longer follow the traditional approaches discussed above. There are several changes that can be noted. These embrace materials used during the ritual, the music performed, the type of food and drink as well as people's perceptions about *kurova guva*.

Originally participants in *kurova guva* used to be adults only. They were the only ones allowed to participate in singing and dancing inside the hut. Young boys and girls had their own separate performance outside the hut. Today it is surprising to note that boys and girls are also taking part in the singing and dancing in the hut the whole night. The participants also incorporate church songs during the all-night ceremony. The food that is eaten now includes rice and salads which are not traditional foods. I attended three *kurova guva* ceremonies and noted some aspects that changed and those that survived.

Case 1

Location: Chikomba

Village: Jambwa

Occasion: *Kurova guva*

Date: 16 August 2013

The ceremony started around eight o'clock in the evening after supper. The eldest brother of the deceased opened the ceremony by singing the song *mbavarira*. All the participants joined in the singing. There were no *mbira* players during this ceremony. One of the participants Fred Makeni indicated that *mbira* players are hard to come by and they spend the whole night singing and accompanying the singing with traditional drums (Interview 16 August 2013).

After the opening song the elders moved out of the hut and sit around the fire place outside. Young boys and girls took over and sang songs that were a mixture of traditional genres and also political songs. Most of them were *jiti* songs and a few *mhande*. A group of ZANU PF youths arrived around eleven o'clock and sang political songs. This is a clear indication that *kurova guva* is now being conducted in a less serious manner with young boys and girls taking the leading role of singing the whole night instead of men and women.

Some of the elders slept by the fire and those whose homes were nearby went to sleep. The way the ritual was conducted is the same as what Bourdilon (1990) and Vambe (2005) say about this ritual. The participants also sang the song *mbavarira* instead of *nyamayekugocha* which is discussed by Vambe (2009:112). The following day the ritual of slaughtering the beast, *zita* and *nhaka* were conducted. (Figures 2.30 and 2.31) The ceremony was concluded by the drinking of the last pot (*dziva*).

From this ceremony I noted that there are many changes that have taken place with regard to how *kurova guva* is conducted. The outstanding one is that the ritual of escorting the spirit from the grave was conducted in the evening instead of in the morning. Amos Jambwa indicated that people in their area now prefer to conduct this ritual in the evening instead of in the morning. Most of those who still conduct *kurova guva* do so but without *mbira* music.

Case 2

Location: Buhera

Village: Mupfigi

Occasion: *Kurova guva*

Date: 31 August 2013

I attended the second ceremony on the 31st of August 2012 in Buhera. Buhera is to the south of Hwedza. The ceremony started around 2100 hrs when the eldest member of the village gave a short prayer whilst kneeling in front of two small clay pots of sweet brew (*masese*) and unprocessed brew (*mhanga*). The one of the song they sang was Horombo which had a very skillful dance. The transcription of the song is as follows:

Song title: *Horomba*

Performed by: Mupfigi villagers

Venue: Manyame home, Mupfigi village Buhera

Documented by: Perminus Matiure

Date: 31 August 2013



Figure 2.15 The song *Horomba* (cf DVD I Part I- 04:59-06:07)

The other song is *Mudzimu wangu* which talks about the ancestral spirits and how it left its sibling without guidance. Below is the transcription of the song as sung by Mupfigi villagers:

Song title: *Mudzimu wangu*
 Performed by: Mupfigi villagers
 Venue: Manyame home, Mupfigi village Buhera
 Documented by: Perminus Matiure
 Date: 31 August 2013

Mu dzi mu wa ngu ba ba Nya ra ra Wa ka ndi si ya ndi ri nde ga Nya ra

3
 ra toe nda kwe du ku ma dno za Nya

4
 ra ra Toe nda kwe du ku ma ndo za Nya ra ra

Figure 2.16 The song *Mudzimu wangu*. (cf DVD I Part I 06:09-06:24)

All the events were similar to the previous ceremony discussed in case 1, only that the ritual of escorting the spirit home was done in the morning.

I was also able to capture the ritual of going to collect the spirit from the grave, the ritual at the grave and returning. What I witnessed is in line with what Vambe (2009) and Rutsate (2011) explain about the ritual of escorting the spirit from the grave to the home. The only difference is on the song sung during the ritual. Instead of *mbira* music or the song *Yavenyama yekugocha* the participants sang the song “*Vashe vashe*”.

Song title: *Vashe vashe*
 Performed by: Mupfigi villagers
 Venue: Manyame home, Mupfigi village Buhera
 Documented by: Perminus Matiure
 Date: 31 August 2013

Song text:

Lead: *Vashe vashe woye* King King Woye
Response: *Tora uta hwako ndoda dzinoruma* Take your bow we want to go they sting
Lead: *Nyuchi dzinoruma* Bees sting
Response: *Dzinoruma* They sting

The musical score is written in 12/8 time. It consists of two systems. The first system has two staves: a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a bass line. The lyrics 'Va she va she wo ye' are written below the treble staff. The second system also has two staves. The treble staff has a whole rest, and the bass staff has a melody. The lyrics 'Dzi no ru ma' and 'To ra u ta' are written above the treble staff. Below the second system, the lyrics 'hwa ko to da kue nad dzi no ru ma' are written.

Figure 2.17 *Vashe vashe* (cf DVD I Part I-07:45-08:49)

The song simply signifies the rite of passage that people pass certain stages of life from birth to death. The song is not usually sung during the ritual on the grave. However due to the absence of *mbira* music people sing any traditional song. As the song was sung people were donating money to the daughter-in-law (*muroora*) before drinking traditional brew. When the pot of traditional brew was empty, the participants returned home singing the song *Vana vaPfumojena vachauya*. The text of the song is as follows:

Song text:

Lead: *Woye woye woyere woye*
Response: *Vana vaPfumojena vachauya,* Pfumojena's children wil come
hezvo masango ose anorura the forests are dangerous
Gwindingwi rine shumba inoruma Gwindihwi has a lion that bites

(cf DVD 1 Part I-09:39-09:58)

I also noticed that there were no *mbira* players during the whole ceremony. One of the culture bearer interviewed James Tafataona indicated that there are no *mbira* players in the area. Most of them are said to have died and no one took over (Interview 31 August 2012).

Case 3

Location: Hwedza

Village: Mutusva

Occasion: *Kurova guva*

Date: 29 September 2013

Observation

The ceremony was conducted in the same manner as case 1. I was also unable to capture performances during the night because of poor lighting. However I managed to capture some events in the early hours of the following day. I realized that the procedures alluded to by literature concerning the ceremony are in line with what I witnessed during this ceremony. However, the only difference is that there was no *mbira* music. The woman whom I interviewed confirmed that there is only one *mbira* player in the area who charges a lot of money for performing during the ceremony. The other thing is that the ritual of escorting the spirit was also conducted on the eve of the all-night ceremony instead of in the morning like in Case 1.

From the three *kurova guva* ceremonies, it can be concluded that;

- i) The song *Yave nyama yekugocha* is still being sung by some families when they escort the spirit from the grave.
- ii) There are very few *mbira* players still present in the rural communities.
- iii) Participants who spend the whole night singing and dancing are the young boys and girls and women. Men sit by the fire the whole night discussing social issues
- iv) Very few families are still playing *mbira* during *kurova guva* instead political songs, church songs and traditional songs are all sung.
- v) The common features of *kurova guva* are the ritual on the grave, the ritual of killing the cow and the ritual of inheritance (*nhaka/zita*)

The entire *kurova guva* process is summarized in the model below:

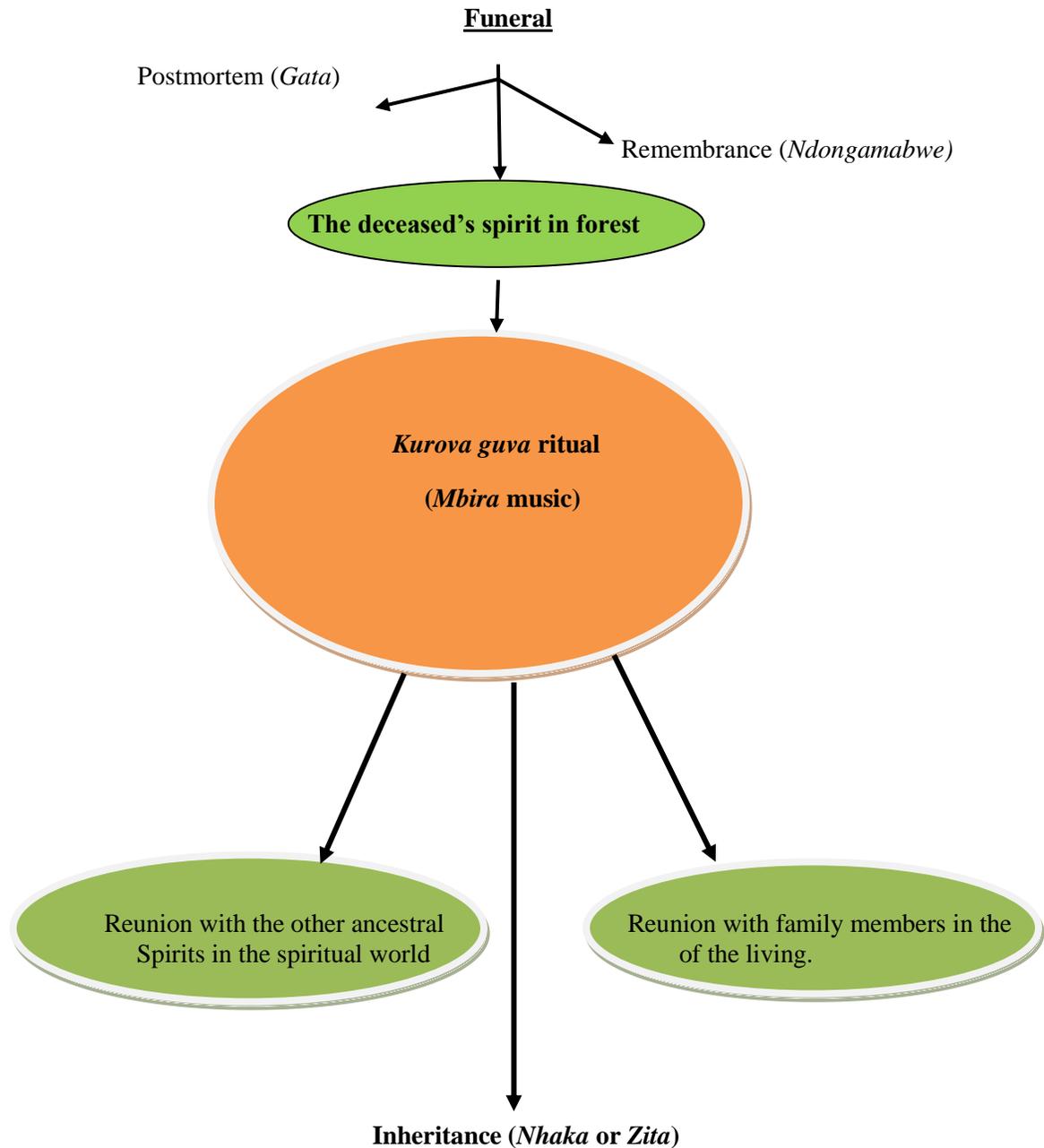


Figure 2.22 Kurova guva model designed by the researcher

From the model it can be noted that after all the rituals of *kurova guva* have been conducted, the spirit of the deceased will be functional in two worlds, the spiritual world and the living world.

2.12 Conclusion

Kurova guva may not achieve its goals unless it is treated as a performance event. Traditional performances entail singing, playing *mbira*, playing traditional drums, ululating and clapping, dancing and even getting engaged in work like cooking. The performative nature of this ceremony enables it to run throughout the whole night with *mbira* music and other traditional songs keeping participants awake. The role of *mbira* becomes paramount in that it acts as the unifying factor between the living and the dead. It also assists in escorting the spirit from the grave to the home.

This Chapter has traced the stages that are followed when preparing and conducting a *kurova guva* ceremony. It has also covered issues concerning *kurova guva* as a performance event and the role of *mbira* music during *kurova guva* night and *kurova guva* ritual. Transcriptions of songs and *mbira* pieces that are usually performed during this ceremony were presented and discussed in this Chapter. In cases where people are still following the practice of *kurova guva*, some changes in perceptions and the way the ceremony is administered were noticed. People are slowly adopting church initiated ceremonies like memorial service *nyaradzo* and unveiling of the tomb stone *dombo*. The decline of such rituals has led to the diminishing of the space for *mbira dzaVadzimu* performances in the Shona societies. However, there has been a shift from such ceremonies to *dandaro* ceremonies commonly practiced in urban areas. The next Chapter traces the evolution of *dandaro* practice and its position in the Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 3

DANDARO PRACTICES

3.1 Introduction

Dandaro ceremony is a modern *mbira* performance commonly practised in towns to entertain people in beer halls and restaurants. *Dandaro* performances can be used as a modern way of preserving *mbira dzaVadzimu*. This Chapter addresses issues concerning the evolution of the contemporary *dandaro* ceremonies that are commonly practiced in urban areas of Zimbabwe. It discusses how *mbira* music has been popularized and commercialized through recording and radio broadcasting. *Mbira dzaVadzimu*'s space in the contemporary *dandaro* is also interrogated in this Chapter. The Chapter identifies and discusses aspects of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* that have changed in order for *mbira* to adjust and accommodate the contemporary styles of music. These changes are the tuning systems, the use of microphone pickups to amplify the sound of the *mbira* and also hybridization of *mbira dzaVadzimu* by adding some keys on the traditional *mbira*.

Modern materials that are currently used to make *mbira* are also discussed in this Chapter. The other important aspects covered in this Chapter are the current perceptions of the Shona towards *mbira* which has changed due to modernity. The last part of the Chapter covers *mbira* performance in the context of *dandaro* and the changing trends from traditional *bira* to contemporary *dandaro*.

3.2 Evolution of *Dandaro* Practices

The word *dandaro* is derived from the word *kutandara* which means to be entertained. In traditional setting family members usually occupy themselves in different ways before going to sleep. This is the time when grandfathers or grandmothers tell their grandchildren some folk tales of hare (*tsuro*) and baboon (*gudo*). During this period the elders would teach the young proverbs (*tsumo*) and riddles (*madimikira*). If one of the members of the family is an *mbira* player he would take his *mbira* and start playing to entertain the rest of the family members before they go to sleep. Other members may join by singing and dancing. The period when members of a family are socializing either by listening to tales or music before they go to sleep and even during the day when they have nothing special to do is called *dandaro*. The role of *mbira* in this case is to provide an opportunity for family members to leisurely interact during family gatherings. The

concept of *dandaro* is a common feature among the Shona especially during winter season when there are less farming activities.

The concept of *dandaro* dates back to the pre-colonial period where it was associated with other secular contexts like drinking parties, traditional weddings and other social gatherings. For instance during a traditional marriage ceremony (*roora*) after the son-in-law has impressed the parents of the bride, an *mbira* player can take his *mbira* and start playing. Other members join in to express their appreciation of what the son-in-law has done. In this case *mbira* music becomes a unifying factor between the in-laws. The music plays the role of interacting participants during a marriage ceremony.

The evolution of *dandaro* in towns is attributed to rural to urban migration of the Shona people which came as result of the emergence of towns in Zimbabwe in the early 1890s. When the Europeans arrived in this country they built industries and factories. Many Shona people, especially men left their homes to seek employment in towns like Salisbury (now Harare), Bulawayo, Gwelo (now called Gweru) and many other smaller towns. *Mbira* players and makers migrated to towns with their *mbira* tradition.

It is important to note that as the music of every society travels, it is transmitted, modified and re-contextualized. The same happened to *mbira* music of the Shona when it migrated to towns. When the Shona arrived in towns, their traditional music, ideologies and traditional practices were adjusted to adapt to the new cosmopolitan life style. Performance of *mbira* for leisure re-emerged and then intensified. The new environment in which *mbira* was performed led to the evolution of modern *dandaro* practices which have become a modern method of preserving *mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces by performing them in night clubs. Therefore enhancement of *dandaro* practices by performing indigenous pieces during *mbira* shows can go a long way in containing the change that are taking place in Shona culture. Avorgbedor (1992) calls for applied ethnomusicological intervention in solving problems emanating from rural to urban migration. In addition Mitchell gives a detailed account of the impact of rural ideologies on urban practices and beliefs as he says:

In any nation, urban and rural represent different social systems. However cultural diffusion or borrowing occurs as people, products, and messages move from one to the other: Migrants bring

rural practices and beliefs to town and take urban patterns back home. The experiences and social forms of the rural area affect adaptation to city life. City folk develop institutions to meet specific urban needs (1966:37).

In line with the concept of *dandaro* Berliner asserts that, “*mbira* music is a regular part of the more recent development of the *dandaro* (plural *matandaro*), which has been growing in popularity in townships.” (1993:187). The difference between a traditional *bira* and a *dandaro* ceremony is that *matandaro* are conducted in towns and they focus more on social interaction than sacred function. In addition Jones confirms that *mbira* ensembles were responsible for “...entertaining patrons in the beer gardens and nightclubs of Harare’s townships” (2008:125). The environment which Jones refers to is different from the usual traditional hut where *mbira* is performed for religious purposes. Even participants during shows in beer gardens and nightclubs are different in the sense that they comprise people from different ethnic origins. Previously *mbira dzaVadzimu* is performed in contexts where participants are of the same lineage and have a common religious background.

Concerning the impact of rural to urban migration on traditional music in general, Jones argues that “the influx of settlers with their own music and the introduction of new employment patterns further influenced indigenous music” (1992:27). Although the move increased the popularity of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in towns both locally and abroad, it left few *mbira* players within the Shona people in the rural areas. In other words the current situation is that the Shona spirituality in which *mbira* is the core continues to exist in principle but is slowly losing space in the Shona cosmology. The Shona traditional beliefs are being undermined by western ideologies and beliefs. Thus modernity has caused changes in *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The *mbira* has given in to new approaches of learning the instrument, new ideas and values about *mbira* that are to be passed on to the next generation through modern means as well as the idea of playing *mbira dzaVadzimu* for commercial purposes.

3.2.1 Commercialization of *mbira*

Commercialization of *mbira* music started as early as the 1940s. The move brought a new dimension of performing *mbira dzaVadzimu* for the purpose of financial gains. Jones firmly confirms the shift of performances from traditional to commercial when she says,

“...performance contexts have extended from traditional to commercial settings and onto international stage” (2008:125). The same was echoed by Mackenzie (2010) in his studies concerning the traditional *mbira* on stage. In his thesis Mackenzie underscores various changes that have taken place the moment *mbira* was introduced on stage. Several *mbira* ensembles currently found in Zimbabwe were formed with the aim of generating income. *Mbira* ensembles appear as independent groups or fuse *mbira* with other western instrument like guitars and keyboards. The most successful band to fuse *mbira* and guitars is Thomas Mapfumo and The Blacks Unlimited which is currently based in the Unites States of America. Other *mbira* players like Stella Chiweshe, Beulah Dyoko, Sekuru Gora, Ephat Mujuru, Mhuri yekwaRwizi, Mhuri yekwaZambuko, Mhuri yekwaChigamba, Mbira Dzenharira have become popular on the local contemporary scene.

Another issue that came as a result of commercialization of *mbira* is that *mbira* makers now make *mbiras* for sell in large quantities instead of making them for personal use in religious contexts. Some brought their *mbira* from rural areas like Mhondoro and Hwedza for resell at Mbare Musika in Harare. Others are exporting *mbira* to foreigners or foreign institutions in countries like America, Sweden, Germany and Canada. These include *mbira* makers like Samuel Mujuru, Albert Chimedza, Chartwell Dutiro, and Cosmas Magaya just to name a few. Samuel Mujuru who is based in Harare says that he sells an average of 100 *mbiras* to America and an average of 60 *mbiras* in Zimbabwe every year. I also at one point sold 45 *mbiras* to the Indiana University in 2006. Ultimately the evolution of *dandaro* in urban areas led to the commercialization of *mbira* through performing the instrument in shows as well as selling the instruments to institutions and individuals in Zimbabwe and abroad.

3.3 Recording and Broadcasting *mbira* music

Recording of music is yet another modern method of preserving music. Recording music enables play back which is fundamental not only to the preservation of the music, but also to transcription and analysis. Moylan defines recording as a process of "capturing the physical dimensions of sound and then reproducing those dimensions either immediately or from a storage medium (magnetic, solid, electronic, digital), thereby returning those dimensions to their physical, acoustic state" (1992:11). Moylan's definition stresses the principles that physical

sound is captured electronically as signals, converted to electronic signal capable of being reproduced depending on the medium storage used. In the case of recording of *mbira* music the implication is that the sound of *mbira* coming straight from the resonator was captured and preserved on a storage medium. This implies that *mbira* music can be reproduced from the storage medium in its original physical state through broadcasting.

Before independence, recording of music in Zimbabwe was accessed through a recording company called Teal Records which was an arm of Gallo Records in South Africa (Eyre 2005:37). Teal Records then became what we call Gramma Records today which became the first recording company followed by Zimbabwe Music Company (ZMC) in Harare. The two then combined to be operated by a single administration. However, the company did very little to promote *mbira* music.

The early recordings of *mbira* were done by a number of *mbira* players around the late 1950s. Jones indicates that “the pioneering musician and band leader Beauler Dyoko was the first woman *mbira* player to be recorded in 1962”(2008: 125). Another recording of *mbira* was done by Stellar Chiweshe who recorded her 45 rpm single entitled *Kasahwa* in 1974. However, Jones focuses on women *mbira* players only. Turino (1998) gives a historical background of broadcasting of *mbira* music in Zimbabwe, the then Rhodesia when he said that, the colonial Rhodesia radio and record companies began to broadcast and disseminate *mbira* and other indigenous music during the 1950s to early 1960s. However, there are other several recordings that took place earlier than the 1960s by male *mbira* players. Recording of *mbira* on 45 rpm singles enabled the selling of *mbira* music as well as broadcasting the music on radios.

Broadcasting music on radio and television is one way of popularizing and marketing both the genre of music and artists. Broadcasting can be defined as a method of transmitting audio and visual signals for onward reception by viewers and listeners on radios and televisions. The history of broadcasting in Zimbabwe can be traced as far back as the Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation (RBC) which was the first radio station in the country currently called Zimbabwe. It was founded in 1932 by the Rhodesia government in Salisbury and Bulawayo. From that period the broadcasting system developed until 1975 when Frequency Modulation (FM) system of

broadcasting was opened in Salisbury and Bulawayo. The songs which were broadcast on these stations included few traditional songs. When Zimbabwe got its independence on 18th April 1980 Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) was established. The new stations under ZBC accommodated traditional genres that include *mbira* music. Several developments took place and today we have four radio channels which are radio one, radio two, three and four. Radio two is responsible for covering traditional music and programs like *Dzechinyakare* in which *mbira* music is also included. The names of these radio stations have since been changed.

Recording and broadcasting of *mbira* contributed to the development of *dandaro* in that ensembles rehearsed in night clubs before visiting the recording studio. Brusila provides a historical perspective of how *mbira* and other African music became popular when she says that:

The recording of *mbira* has a relatively long history. From the 1940s onwards the mobile studios of the local radio companies, first Central African Broadcasting Station and later Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation, recorded African music for their programmes. Also South African record companies and later their Zimbabwean subsidiaries released *mbira* music. In the 1960s and 1970s many *mbira* players, such as Hakurotwi Mude, Cosmas Magaya, Ephant Mujuru, Beauler Dyoko and Stella Chiweshe managed to acquire national fame with the help of such recordings. (2002:37).

Up to date recording of *mbira* has increased significantly. The increase was also caused by the mushrooming of various recording studios all over Zimbabwe. The move has enabled the popularization of traditional music through the use of electronic media and live performance.

Recording *mbira* music is one way of preserving *mbira* pieces. The importance of preserving *mbira* music through recording was echoed by Jones when she says “a number of players of the *mbira huru* (also called *mbira dzaVadzimu*) who were committed to the preservation and popularization of the instrument, became well known through recording and radio broadcast” (2000:28). The above trend clearly demonstrates how commercialization of the *mbira* in Zimbabwe has developed through the use of broadcasting electronic media. *Mbira* music has secured space in the music industry through air play as well as live performance during *mbira* shows in night clubs and beer halls.

3.4 *Mbira dzaVadzimu* in contemporary *dandaro* practices

The evolution of *matandaro* ceremonies in towns led to some significant changes in the tuning systems, resonance system, number of keys, materials used to make the *mbira*, and the construction methods. Most of the changes have brought some positive results in that they transformed *mbira* to compete with other contemporary instruments. The changes also helped *mbira* to secure a firm space in the music industry although in a way the position has compromised the authenticity of the *mbira* as a sacred instrument. The rate at which *mbira* is being influenced by modernity is so high that retarding the rate is not an easy task. The changes that have taken place on the indigenous *mbira* are discussed below.

3.4.1 Changes on tuning systems

Most of the contemporary *mbira* players have adopted modern tuning systems of their *mbiras* although it is true that the implication of scale was also original to African music cultures. The *mbira* is tuned to a particular tonal order based on a starting key which is common to particular *mbira* specie. This tonal order is the same as the tonic of a western scale. An *mbira* maker can tune individual keys that are out of tune by making use of traditional *mbira* tuning themes which are tested by playing *nyamaropa*. She or he then makes sure that each key fits perfectly well in this piece by playing the piece being used to test accurate standard tuning. A key that appears to have a pitch higher than the required pitch as determined by the piece is pulled down until the correct pitch is reached (Figure 3.2). A key that has a lower key is raised by being pushed up. (Figure 3.1)

- **Sharpening a *mbira* key**



Figure 3.1 Sharpening keys of mbira

Sharpening a key is done by pushing the key upwards as shown in the diagram. When the key is pushed up, its length from the bridge is reduced thereby making the part that vibrates shorter to raise the pitch. The other method of sharpening the key, which is commonly used when constructing the *mbira* and tuning the keys for the first time is done by removing the bottom part by cutting a piece off to raise the pitch.



Figure 3.2 Flattening keys of mbira

When reducing the pitch of a key increase the length of the part that vibrates by pulling down the key in the direction shown by the arrow in the photograph above.

Once the keys are tuned and tested with *nyamaropa* piece, the entire instrument is suitably tuned to play other pieces. The *mbira* is said to be characterized by *nyamaropa*. *Nyamaropa* was preferred because it is the oldest song that has been used for this purpose. The reason why an *mbira* piece was used to tune *mbira* was because the approach was easy and fast. No additional devices were needed. Another reason was that what is called '*mbira*' is embedded in the characteristic tone scale structure for *mbira* species, and the pieces performed on it. Using a piece like *nyamaropa* to test the tuning of *mbira dzaVadzimu* was a traditional method of preserving the originality of the instrument. The implication is that once an *mbira* is in standard tuning, it continues to relate to the ancestors. The spirits are quickly attracted by a piece like *nyamaropa* and many other pieces which they used to hear during their life time on earth. It is apparent that

currently some *mbira* makers combine both the traditional and modern methods of tuning *mbira*. One would use the traditional method first and then fine tune using the modern electronic tuners or tuning forks especially if playing with other pitch-based instruments. (Figure 3.3) However expert traditional *mbira* performers do not need such a device. They use the ear to tune their *mbira*. Once the instrument can produce a desired scale structure, then the *mbira* is tuned. According to Turino the fusion of *mbira* and guitars “...does not in itself constitute a heterogenization of the cosmopolitan sphere” (2000:46). Instead it is an indication that the music that is performed by these artists on guitars is borrowed from *mbira* and that the western instruments are being absorbed into the *mbira* world and vice versa. This dimension is hardly looked at by writers and researchers of *mbira*. They always think that *mbira* is being absorbed by western instruments yet the opposite is also true.



Figure 3.3 An electric tuner

3.4.2 Amplification of *mbira*

Another significant change is on the amplification system of *mbira*. About 90% of *mbira* ensembles that perform in *matandaro* ceremonies use microphone pickups connected to an amplifier to make the sound of their *mbira* loud enough to entertain a large audience. Microphone pickups are made through wrapping very thin copper wire which is wound as many as about 7000 coils around a magnet. There are different types of such microphone pickups. Each microphone pickup is designed to receive certain signals which are either of low frequency or high. The microphone pickups are placed firmly under the keys of the *mbira* leaving a space

of about half a millimetre above the microphone pickups. This is meant to allow the keys to vibrate within the magnetic field of the microphone pickups. (Refer to figure 3.5)

When a key is plucked, it vibrates to form sound waves which will cut through the magnetic field of bar magnet in the microphone pickup thereby producing an electronic signal in the microphone pickup. The microphone pickup will convert the acoustic energy into an electronic signal. The signal will then be sent to the amplifier via a mixer which will receive the electronic signal and amplify it to a certain level of adjustable loudness depending on the size of the amplifier and speakers. The sound is then received and transmitted by the speakers making the sound of *mbira* loud enough to be heard by a big audience just like an electric guitar. Below is a diagram summarizing the electronic amplification of *mbira*:

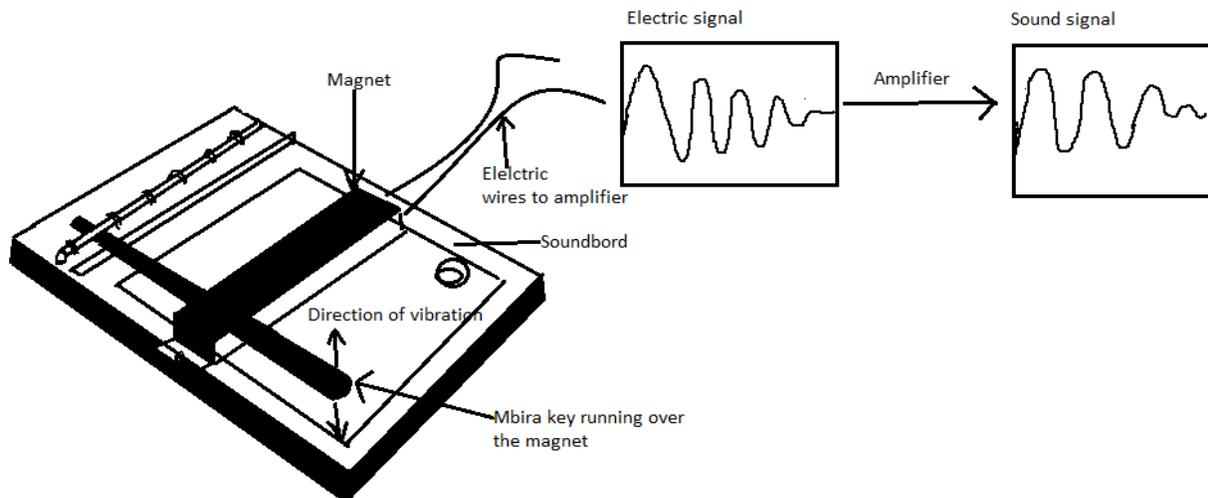


Figure 3.4 Amplification of *mbira*. Diagram designed by author.

The diagram above represents the amplification system of *mbira*. Note that the connection is as follows;

Vibrating *mbira* key → pickup → amplifier → speakers → audience

To maintain the quality of *mbira* some *mbira* ensembles like Mbira Dzenharira make use of microphone pickups extracted from a lead guitar on lead *mbira* (*nheketo*) and pickups from rhythm guitar on rhythm *mbira* (*duriro*) and those from bass guitar are also fitted on bass *mbira* (*nhovapasi*). Below is an *mbira* fitted with three pickup microphones:



Microphone pickups fitted under the keys

Figure 3.5 Microphone pickups fitted on an mbira belonging to Mbira Dzenharira Ensemble. Photograph taken by author on 16 October 2012

Note that three microphone pickups are strategically placed to ensure that every key is within the magnetic field. The keys are made in such a way that they can vibrate freely. Usually long keys are the most suitable for such *mbiras*. The amplification of *mbira* made it possible for *mbira* ensembles to perform to a larger audience in *matandaro* ceremonies held in big halls and stadia. Currently *mbira* ensembles are able to participate in national functions like independence galas alongside other electric bands. The system of connecting *mbiras* to amplifiers has resulted in the reduction in the use of traditional resonators (*mateze*). Before the use of amplifiers, *mbira* was amplified by gourd resonators which were suitable for a small group of people occupying a hut. However, some *mbira* players continue to use the resonator although their *mbiras* will be connected to microphone pickups. The sound produced is a bit different from those that are not in a resonator because of the acoustic principles involved.

Currently some *mbira* players opt to play the *mbira* in its natural state with a resonator but instead use simple microphones to capture the sound. One *mbira* player and researcher who has performed in several shows as a resident artist in America, Sheasby Matiure, has this to say: “*Ini ndinofarira kuridza mbira iri mudeze mayo asi ichi torwa ne microphone panze pedzakaiswa microphone pickups*”, meaning that he prefers playing the *mbira* amplified by a resonator placed close to a microphone rather than fitted microphone pickups (Interview 14 December 2012). Other *mbira* players who prefer using natural gourds are Cosmas Magaya and Irene Chigamba.

Such *mbira* players have adopted a new resonator made from fibre glass, which is more durable than the gourd resonators.

3.4.3 Materials used to make *mbira* today

Early *mbira* keys were made from reeds. Currently the keys are made from scrap materials like nails, springs, bicycle spokes and any metal rods that had high tension which are used to make keys. The keys made from these scrap materials have original sonic taste different from made from factory made wire.

Even the source of wood that is used to make the soundboard of the modern *mbira* has changed. Traditional *mbira* makers used to go into the forest, identify a *mubvamaropa* or *mufenje* tree, cut it and carve out a log to work on and produce the *mbira* soundboard. *Mbira* makers are experimenting with different kinds of wood. The jacaranda and gum tree have been found to be a good substitute. This is also governed by the new laws that regulate the indiscriminate cutting of trees in the forest. Below are photographs of the *mubvamaropa* tree and a log ready to be processed into a soundboard.



Figure 3.6 The stem of *mubvamaropa* tree. Photograph taken by researcher in Mutore village in Chikomba District south of Hwedza on 10 August 2012.



Figure 3.7 Tree log cut from mubvamaropa tree. Photograph taken by researcher in Chitsvuku hills Chikomba on 10 August 2012.

Today most of the makers use planks of timber which come from the *mubvamaropa* or gum tree but processed in mills and sold in factories. The new approach makes it easy for them to construct many *mbiras* in a short period of time.

3.4.4 Changes in perceptions about *mbira*

Currently most of the people in Zimbabwe have changed their perceptions about *mbira*. Previously many people used to associate the instrument with ancestral spirits. It has not always been easy for young people of modern days to appreciate *mbira* in the same way they do other modern instruments. I remember when I came to Midlands State University (MSU) to teach *mbira* in 2005 the students in the Department of Music and Musicology were very uncomfortable with playing *mbira* because of the general feeling by churches that it is associated with evil spirits. The students changed their attitude after explaining clearly to them about the value of the instrument, and playing several pieces. Today *mbira* is the most liked instrument at MSU and is received just like any other instrument. Both the young and the old have developed love for the instrument and this has led to the success of *dandaro* practices in Zimbabwe. People are attending *mbira* shows because of nothing else but the love of the instrument.

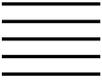
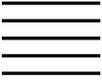
The evolution of *dandaro* ceremony in towns has brought new ways of looking at *mbira*. Previously it was a taboo for a woman to handle *mbira*. In the far past before female *mbira* players like Stella Chiweshe, Beauler Dyoko and Irene Chigamba *mbira* playing was a preserve for men only. Very few women played *mbira* during *mapira* ceremonies. However the current trend has given women an opportunity to join the music industry as *mbira* players. Impey in his article entitled “Popular Music in Africa” wrote “though *mbira dzaVadzimu* is usually considered a man’s instrument, some highly skilled women play it” (2008:142). Most of the female *mbira* players have left the country to join the Diaspora where they are conducting shows to earn a living. Examples are Stella Chiweshe, Beauler Dyoko, Irene Chigamba and many more.

Elders in Hwedza have a feeling that there is nothing wrong in adopting new ways of performing *mbira*. However, there is fear that the modern *mbira* has no power to attract the spirits as indicated by Chidzambwa when he says, “*hapana chakaipa, tinoti varikutandara asi mbira dzavo hadzisivitsi mudzimu...*” which translates to: there is nothing wrong, we say they (*mbira* players) are entertaining themselves but such *mbiras* may not be used to evoke spirits (Interview 19 March 2012). Chidzambwa emphasized the issue of entertainment, *kutandara*; he also went further to indicate that the music performed is not recognized by the spirits. Chidzambwa’s sentiments are absolutely true in that *mbira* music which is performed for entertainment and commercial gain is modified to suit contemporary standards. The resultant music is slightly different from the traditional styles common in rural areas. Usually ancestral spirits are attracted by *mbira* pieces played on an *mbira* whose sonic ambience is similar to what they used to hear.

3.5 *Mbira* performance in the changing contexts

Mbira performance in Zimbabwe is characterized by changing contexts and performance practices. Most of the *mbira* ensembles that I listened to during my field work adopted some new performance practices. The practices draw on a number of aspects from the modern popular bands. The adoption of the western arrangement of the lead, the rhythm and bass is now common in most of *mbira* ensembles in Zimbabwe. Usually *mbira* ensembles used to have several *mbira* players comprising two groups, those playing the lead (*kushaura*) and those playing the response (*kubvumira*). Usually the traditional *mbiras* have notes that lie within the same register. I founded an *mbira* ensemble which adopted this approach of playing *mbiras* in three different

registers. The advantage of such a combination is that the resultant sound has richer polyphony and harmony. The other reason is that the range of sound from the lowest key of the bass to the highest key of the lead is very wide. The combination of the three *mbiras* is more appealing to listeners of the modern world. Table 3.2 below summarizes the three *mbiras* which were designed for ensemble performance. Note that the *mbiras* are hybrids²³ of *dzaVadzimu* and *nyunganyunga*.

Name of <i>mbira</i>	Image	Number of keys	Range
<i>Karimbashauro/</i> <i>Nheketo</i>		19	C' to C''' 
<i>Duriro,</i> <i>Karimba</i>		19	Middle C to C'' 

²³ In this study the term hybrid is used to refer to *mbira* whose arrangement of keys has been altered or fused with keys from another different type of *mbira*.

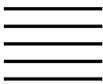
<i>Nhovapasi</i>		18	C,, to C' 
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Table 3.1 A set of mbira with different registers

The *mbiras* presented in the table above are a good example of a set of *mbira* designed for commercial performance in shows. The three instruments have keys that overlap as shown below:

Lead mbira: C' D' E' F' G' A' B' C'' D'' E'' F'' G'' A'' B'' C''' D''' E''' F''' G''' A''' B'' C''''
Rhythm mbira: C E F G A B C' D' E' F' G' A' B' C''
Bass mbira: C, E, F, G, A, B, C D E G A B C'

Note that the keys are arranged in a linear form from the lowest to the highest not necessarily following the way they are arranged on the soundboard. The overlaps that are shown above have a bearing on the resultant sound produced by the three *mbiras*. The overlaps produce some duplication of notes which adds richness to the resultant music. The high notes of the bass *mbira* (*nhovapasi*) are the low notes of the rhythm *mbira* (*duriro*) and the high notes of the *duriro* are the low notes of the lead (*nheketo*). The use of *mbiras* with different registers also create five octaves from C, to C to C' to C'' to C''' to C'''''. As a result one is able to detect the lead, the rhythm and the bass lines quite clearly.

Although most of the *mbira* players that I interviewed indicated that such an arrangement is an adoption of western popular band arrangement, I feel this is an extension of the manuals of the keys that are found on one *mbira*. The manuals of the *mbira* in question, *mbira dzaVadzimu*, are grouped such that there is the lead (*nhetete*) the receiver (*ngwena*) and the bass (*nhovapasi*) as

discussed early in this Chapter. The only difference is that they are found on one soundboard and are played by one person. The combination of the three manuals on one soundboard is a follow-up of the holistic theory which embeds the African philosophy of life. The keys on the *mbira* form a community in which every key participates in the production of the music. Each key's sonic contribution makes the entire instrument a solid nexus of many beautiful voices that interrelate. The philosophy of togetherness is quite common in most of the African societies.

In addition to this arrangement, the modern ensembles have adopted a modern performance style in which *mbira* is performed on stage and with an audience listening unlike the traditional style where everyone participates in one way or the other. In this case the *mbira* music becomes a commodity that is accessed after payment. In this view people come to attend *mbira* shows where they sit down and listen to *mbira* during weekends or after work in the same way westerners would visit the concert hall and sit to listen and appreciate music. Blacking in his long stay with the Venda discovered that “technological development brings about a degree of social exclusion...” (2000:34). The above idea of social exclusion is not common during a traditional *bira* as every participant is involved. However, the modern practice of a stage and audience tends to inhibit music as socially interactive. Instead the practice draws from colonial principles that divide people rather than unite them. The moment *mbira* was introduced on stage *mbira* performance practices were altered in accordance to the ethos of stage performance like costumes and choreography.

During *dandaro*, the *mbira* ensemble performers dominate the entire show. The performance is skewed to the performers on the stage rather than being shared by all members. Another observation is that during the modern *mbira* shows some of the audience participate through dance, singing or clapping and others just sit and enjoy the music. The implication of the above behaviour is that the urban or semi-urban dwellers have adopted the modern principles while at the same time are still aware of the traditional practices.

Mbira performance has become a profession for many people in Zimbabwe. In this case the *mbira* has secured a space within the music industry of Zimbabwe. Mackenzie (2010) has written a very interesting thesis of the traditional *mbira* on stage in which he studies the contemporary

performance practice on the stage. His study shows how *mbira* has re-emerged on the stage in contemporary performance practice not only in Zimbabwe, but also in the Diaspora. Sheasby Matiure concurs when he says: “as of now, the *mbira* itself has found its place in the cosmopolitan popular music performance though it is still strong in its traditional contexts (2008:22). While Sheasby Matiure is correct to say that *mbira* is still strong in traditional contexts, however my findings show that its sacred use is declining and that the instrument is slowly failing to secure space in the Shona cosmology due to the reasons referred to in the early Chapters.

3.5.1 Contemporary *dandaro mbira* songs

The current situation has given room for improvisation and individual composition of songs. *Mbira* players are now composing their own songs in addition to the traditional *mbira* pieces. The songs address current affairs which include political, social, or economical issues. Turino supports this position when he says: “modernist values emphasize new compositions and originality as an acid-test for artist standing” (2000:54). Composition has become personalized instead of being communal. Originally compositions were done for a communal reason, meant to benefit the community not only the composer. Composition in the traditional context is a collaborative affair meant to benefit every member of the community. Ultimately ownership of the composed songs lies in the community not individuals. Whereas in a traditional *bira* ceremony musical performance is meant to solve social problems, during modern *dandaro* it is designed to generate money by making people pay. The songs can be divided into categories: the original traditional *mbira* songs or pieces, modified traditional *mbira* pieces, own composition, and those that are adopted from other genres. Each category is discussed below:

- **Modified traditional *mbira* pieces**

These songs are a modification of the common traditional *mbira* pieces. Examples of such songs are *Ndakwira gomo* by Mbira Dzenharira which is derived from *Nhemamusasa*, *Ndanzwa ngoma kurira* derived from *Nyamaropa*, *Ndiani atora mukadzi wangu* derived from *Karigamombe*, *Zirume rekuparika* derived from *Taireva* and *Simukai titambe ngoma* derived from *Nhemamusasa* and many more. It is important to note that each piece can generate several songs

by just changing the text. Creating songs on already existing traditional *mbira* pieces is another way of preserving the pieces.

Very few young boys and girls are still visiting the village to attend traditional ceremonies. When these pieces are played in *dandaro* contexts, they are transmitted to the present young generation. *Dandaro* becomes a modern context in which the *mbira* is transmitted from the old to the young. In any case very few families are still conducting traditional ceremonies. Usually the young would mingle with elders during a *bira* ceremony or will have their own performances outside the traditional hut. In both cases the *mbira* is orally handed over by the elders to the young during these ceremonies like *kurova guva*. Now that the ceremonies are declining and the young people who grow up in town rarely visit the rural areas, one of the ways for transmitting the *mbira* pieces to the young is through *dandaro* ceremony.

Mbira shows are slowly replacing *mapira* ceremonies in which men and women, boys and girls come together to interact socially while listening to *mbira* music. The traditional *mbira* pieces mentioned before and many more left out have become part of the contemporary *dandaro* practices due to forces of adaption and recontextualization. Turino echoes their sentiments which are given as “we are socialized within particular sounds scapes, and we want to hear, sing, what we grew up hearing, singing and dancing” (2000:55). Through these gatherings the old are transformed, and the young are informed about issues concerning *mbira*.

- **Own composition**

Some of the songs are own compositions addressing issues concerning everyday life experiences. In this case *mbira* players become creative in composing *mbira* songs. Some employ the western approach to composition where the songs follow certain chord progressions. Examples of such composers are Taruona who composes songs around the plight of street kids and accompany them with *mbira*. One of her songs is entitled ‘I met Dambudziko’ in which the artist expresses the sentiments of street kids. Taruona is a Zimbabwean female *mbira* musician based in Harare. Some of her *mbira* songs are sung in English. Another one is the late Master Chivero whose compositions centred on social life experiences in the community and his *mbira* follow the western chord progression. The late Chiwoniso Maraire composed *mbira* songs and some of

them in English. Also the late Takunda Mafika, one of our former students of Midlands State University whose music career was on the rise at the time of his death also composed his own songs accompanied by *mbira*. His most popular hit is “*Musikana wepa* next door” which translates to “The girl from next door”. Such songs are slowly becoming part of the *mbira* repertoire.

- **Adopted genres**

The last category embraces some of the current *mbira* songs derived from other Shona dance styles. One of them is *shangara* which is similar to *mbira* and it involves fast rhythmic footwork often done by one or two performers in response to drumming or *mbira* (Turino 2000:69). It is a secular dance that is usually an expression of joy and happiness. Several *mbira* songs are in *shangara* style. Examples of songs that are borrowed from *shangara* are *Ndanzwa ngoma kurira*, and *mharapara ndihwo husavi*. Another genre is *jiti* which is a fast beat secular genre common among the Zezuru of Bushu area north of Harare the capital city of Zimbabwe. The Zezuru are a sub-ethnic group of the Shona. Most of the songs that won the liberation struggle were *jiti* songs. Examples are *sendekera* and *chiwayawayaya*. The dance that is performed alongside *jiti* is called *kongonya* which is an imitation of baboons. It is one of the fertility dance patterns that use the waist. Modern *mbira* players rearrange existing *jiti* songs to compose *mbira* songs. One example is the song *Muhozi* by Mbira Dzenharira. The beat was also modified by Harare Mambo band to *Muhofisi* but accompanied by guitars.

Another dance style adopted by *mbira* composers is *mhande*. *Mhande* music is discussed at length by Rutsate in both his Master’s of 2007 and PhD theses of 2011. *Mhande* is a rainmaking dance that is characterized by stamping on the ground. Modern *mbira* players also borrow songs from *mhande* and accompany them with *mbira*. For an example, *Mudzimu wasvika* is a *mhande* song which is usually sung to greet the spirit soon after its manifestation in spirit mediums. Another *mhande* song that is usually adopted by *mbira* players is the song *Mudzimu dzoka*. This song is highly spiritual and is used to welcome the spirit in a family. Integrating genres is a sign of diffusion of musical traits from one dance style to another. Nettl is convinced that “songs can move from one culture to another, so are stylistic features, types of forms, scale, rhythm and superimposed on songs already in existence” (1964:5). Following Nettl’s position songs can also

move from one ethnic group to another. Composing *mbira* songs by incorporating aspects of music from other cultures is one way of diversifying the *mbira*.

3.5.2 Some shifting trends

There have been some marked changes in *mbira* performance practices since the evolution of *dandaro* practices in Zimbabwe. The major changes are in the contexts in which the instrument is performed. It is interesting to note that *mbira* is now performed in contexts that have totally nothing to do with sacredness as previously explained. To some extent this phenomenon has removed the usual misconceptions that *mbira* is associated with spirit possession. To that end *mbira* has secured space in most of the modern gatherings like weddings, birthday parties, and political rallies. For instance on the 24th of December Zvirimudeze *Mbira* Ensemble performed at Mr. and Mrs. Chambwera's wedding in Harare. Decent Chambwera (obscured in the photograph) is one of the technicians in the Department of Music and Musicology at Midlands State University in Zimbabwe. He is also the drummer for my *mbira* ensemble Zvirimudeze. Figure 3.12 shows a photograph of the members of the ensemble performing during a wedding ceremony in Harare.



Figure 3.8 Zvirimudeze ensemble members performing at a wedding. Photography taken by Richard Muranda on the 6th of April 2013

The same group performed at yet another wedding again in Harare on the 6th of April. *Mbira* shows are also conducted in places like the Book Café and other hotels in Harare. (Appendix 8)

Mbira ensembles also perform during government functions like the celebration of the President's birthday commonly referred to as the 21st Movement and also during Independence, and Musical Galas like the Unity Galas²⁴. *Mbira* music is also commonly performed in institutions during graduation ceremonies and prize giving days in schools, teachers colleges, polytechnics and universities. In this case the *mbira* music is used to entertain parents and graduates. Many young children are able to access *mbira* music during these ceremonies.

The other change is in the teaching method of *mbira*. Traditionally the young learned *mbira* either by apprentice mode, inspiration or inheritance. Apprentice mode required the student (a boy who wants to learn) to stay with *mbira* players and learn as they perform in *mapira*. When the grandfather who is an *mbira* player for instance is hired to perform in a certain *bira*, he would go together with his grandchild. The boy may start as a *hosho* player and then slowly masters *mbira* playing skills.

Some get inspired by other *mbira* players. Those that learn through inheritance are those who are born *mbira* players. They just need some little help and learn pieces through dreams. All the *mbira* players that I interviewed confirmed that they learned the instrument through dreams. No one really taught them how to play *mbira*. I explained how I learnt to play *mbira* through dreams in my 2009 Masters thesis. However, modern formal methods of learning *mbira* have become common in Zimbabwe. *Mbira* is being taught just like any other instrument by the use of either rote or notation. The modern methods of teaching *mbira* are discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Another change is that *mbira* performance is now controlled by a program of events. During a traditional *bira* the ceremony and the performance was controlled by the events that unfolded and by virtual time. There was no definite starting time or end. The modern *mbira* performance has a time limit depending on the duration of the show and venue. The *mbira* is also performed

²⁴ Unity Galas is organized to commemorate the unity between ZANU PF of Robert Mugabe and ZAPU of Joshua Nkomo

in the absence of traditional ritual objects like moon shaped axes, *makano*, rods, *tsvimbo*, spears, *mapfumo* and other materials which were usually present in traditional ceremonies.

Modern *mbira* performance is structured in such a way that it brings about cultural conservation as indicated by Turino when he argues it is “...instrumental to the primary goal of these ceremonies that are central to contemporary, indigenous, religious, social and musical life” (2000:36). It is true that these ceremonies contribute to the conservation of culture. In some cases *mbira* performances are used to entertain tourists. If one visits the Great Zimbabwe today, which is believed to be once the capital of the Shona people, he or she is greeted with a *mbira* ensemble.

Another important change is that the *mbira* players in most of the contemporary *mbira* ensembles comprise members who have come together because they want to earn a living but do not belong to the same lineage (*dzinza*). Traditionally, *mbira* ensembles usually comprised members of the same lineage who then form an ensemble usually referred to as *mhuri*. This is why we have ensembles like Mhuri yekwaRwizi, Mhuri yekwaZambuko, Mhuri yekwaMujuru, Mhuri yeKwaChaminuka, Mhuri yekwaMagaya and so on. For a group to be called *mhuri* it has to have a reputation and history of *mbira* playing which can be traced as far back as the old generation. The belief is that they inherit the ability to play *mbira* from the same ancestors since they are of the same lineage. The *mbira* players’ power is driven by the spirit of commitment and the desire to achieve a communal goal. Turino supports this idea when he says “participation has to do with expressing a level of social commitment to the event and to the other participants through sonic and kinetic contribution” (2000:53). The energy and zeal to perform is always drawn from the spirit of oneness.

As such a traditional *bira* can be classified as a private family institution whose participants are bound by the same kinship relations. They are usually relatives who have common problems that need to be solved through the *bira*. These relatives work together to achieve a common goal. Unlike the traditional *bira*, the contemporary *dandaro* has participants who are totally unrelated. People coming from different home backgrounds meet in beer halls to listen to *mbira*. In other words modern *dandaro* is a public site in which *mbira* music is accessed by anyone as long as they have money to pay for admission into the night club or beer hall.

It is important to note that when a family intends to conduct a *kurova guva* ceremony, they send someone to go and invite the relevant people. Instead for contemporary *mbira* shows *mbira* ensembles advertise in newspaper columns, on cell phones, radio and television. Groups like *Mbira Dzenharira* and *Mawungira Enharira* usually advertise in newspapers and via cell phones. They also use flyers and posters to advertise. Some groups have websites where they post their information for interested people to access. The use of websites enables many people to access information concerning *mbira* all over the world, a thing which could not have been common in the Shona society. In this study two several *matandaro* shows were conducted in which various *mbira* ensembles performed. The typical ones were conducted at Midlands Hotel and Hwedza Growth point.

3.6 Gweru Show (*Dandaro*)

The *Mbira* Show was conducted on the night of the Symposium day on 19th October 2012 at Midlands Hotel in Gweru City from 19h45 to 02h00. The idea was to enable members of the community who did not attend the symposium have access to *mbira* music. This was the first *mbira* show to be held in Gweru that had several *mbira* ensembles performing. Admission for the show was free. Six ensembles performed during the show which started around 1945 hours in Midlands Hotel Conference Room. The first group to perform was Ras Diva and Musicians at Large (Figure 3.10 Photograph 1) who presented two songs. The group performed when people were still walking in. The group that followed was Duo Likembe which fuses *mbira* and guitars. (Figure 3.10 Photograph 2) The group had not performed during the symposium because they came late. The members are former music students from the Department of Music and Musicology. One of them, Itai Sakarombe is a very good poet. The song they performed accompanied Itai's poem *Pamakaiisa* (Where you put it) which talks about AIDS.

The third ensemble was *Mbira Dzenharira*. (Figure 3.10 Photograph 5) which performed traditional pieces. The audience was moved by Gamadze's wonderful skills of singing and playing *mbira*. The next group was *Dzimbabwe* which again stole the show. (Figure 3.10 Photograph 4) The members were quite energetic and entertaining. The ensemble accompanied their *mbira* with a western drum kit. The use of western drum kit to accompany *mbira* is a sign

of how *mbira* players are incorporating western instruments into *mbira* music. The steady pulse rhythm of the bass drum assists in maintaining the tempo of the music.

Dzimbahwe was followed by Mhembero *mbira* ensemble which featured Irene Chigamba. (Figure 3.10 Photograph 7) This ensemble had four young and energetic members who together with Irene and Sharon Masoka managed to raise the audience to their feet. They performed typically traditional pieces and the young boys and girls danced choreographic styles that depicted different traditional dance styles like *mbira*, *mbende*, *chinyamumbera* and *mbakumba*. Their performance was quite good and the audience not only enjoyed the performance, but also learned a lot from the ensemble.



Figure 3.9 Ensembles that performed during the Gweru Show. All photographs were taken by author on 19 October 2012.

The last ensemble was Mawungira Enharira which pulled the show up to about midnight. (Figure 3.10 Photograph 3 and 8) The ensemble played traditional songs that are usually performed

during traditional *mapira* ceremonies. The traditional drum player for this ensemble articulated *dinhe* style²⁵ by alternating the shell of the drum and the skin. The drum added a lot of intensity to the whole performance. For all the performances during the *Mbira* show refer to DVD 2 Part III-15:04-20:28)

Soon after the Show I had a chance to interview six member form the audience whose ages ranged from twenty to thirty. I did not administer questionnaires because of the environment and time. Collecting them would be difficult since the people were rushing to go home. About 80% of the participants that I interviewed indicated that they have no access to live *mbira* performances. They said that the show reminded them of *mapira* ceremonies which they used to attend in the villages. Now that they are in towns they have nowhere to find *mbira* other than on the radios. For them this was a wonderful day to be always remembered. They suggested that such shows must be organized time and again so that people can have an opportunity to enjoy the *mbira* music which is currently not easy to come by.

My experience with *mbira* music is that when one listens to the music closely, one will spend some days hearing the music. *Mbira* music has that power to stick in one's mind for a long period. Once someone is immersed in *mbira* music, they will not want to miss the shows.

3.7 Hwedza *Mbira* Show (*Dandaro*)

The other *mbira* show was held on the 26th of January 2013 at Hwedza Growth Point which is to the south of Harare the capital city of Zimbabwe. A week before, some posters were displayed in Hwedza Growth Point to market the day. The poster is shown below:

²⁵*Dinhe* dance style is commonly performed by the Korekore people (a sub-ethnic group of the Shona) who are located to the north of Harare the capital city of Zimbabwe. The dance is usually performed during thanks giving ceremonies after a good harvest.

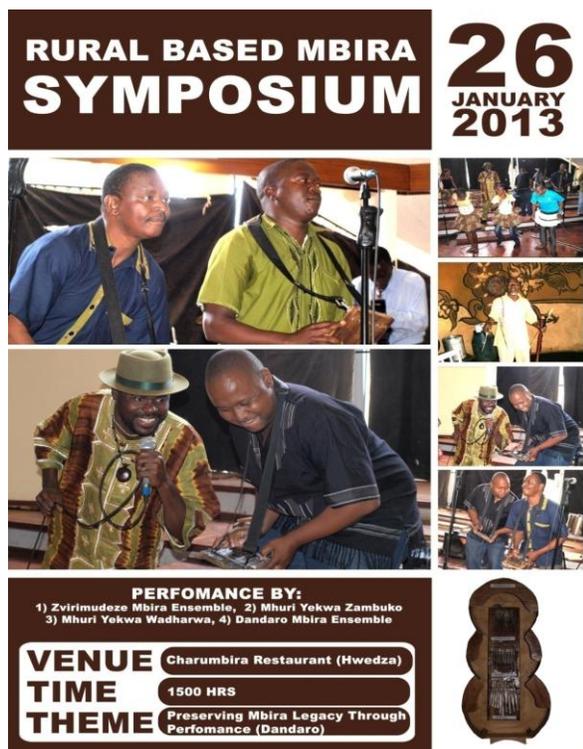


Figure 3.10 Poster for Hwedza Mbira Show

The posters were displayed in most parts of Hwedza Growth Point in Mashonaland East province. The photographs that we used were taken during *Mbira* Symposium. Photography of one of my *mbira* hybrids *karimbamutatu* was also included. This was also meant to attract the attention of the people. We also included one *mbira* player Mr. Cosmas Zambuko who lives in Mawiri Village west of Hwedza (Refer to map 1). We included him because his ensemble was going to perform during the show.

In order to report on field activities during the *mbira* show held in Hwedza, I adopted Barz's use of different fonts to represent different voices. I opted to use Barz's approach because this Show is unique in that it is the only one that I organized in rural areas. The use of different voices is meant to take through the readers so that they clearly experience the events almost in the same manner that I experienced. In the previous Chapters I have indicated that there are currently very few sacred or secular ceremonies in which *mbira* is performed in most of the Shona societies. Organizing *mbira* shows in rural areas is one way of reviving *mapira* ceremonies in rural areas. However the shows are different from the traditional ceremonies in a number of ways. The *mbiras* performed were electrified so that they are loud enough to entertain a bigger audience. The context in which *mbira* was performed was also different in that it was performed in a hall instead of a traditional hut. Performers were on the stage which is not the arrangement in traditional *bira* where everyone is a performer. The narration given below takes the readers from Gweru to Hwedza.

It is a cool Saturday morning. I am at Midlands State University with some of my ensemble members where we are loading our PA system onto the truck. I can see that everyone is busy carrying the equipment. In no time all the different pieces of the PA system are well packed in the truck. Usually ensemble members are not very willing to carry and load the heavy bass bins on to the truck. Because today they will perform to a totally new audience, they are quite motivated. As soon as we have finished loading our equipment, we embark on our journey to Hwedza via Mvuma and Chivhu. We have two cars, one carrying PA systems and the other carrying members. We arrive in Mvuma around eleven in the morning and we proceed to Chivhu where we have some refreshments. Hwedza is now hundred kilometers away when using the dust road and two hundred and twenty when following the tarred road. At times one finds themselves undecided on whether to use a long route which is tarred or use a shorter rough and dusty road. We decide to use the dusty road to save petrol.

The time is three o'clock and we are arriving in Hwedza. Posters are all over and people are waiting patiently. In fact we delayed in leaving Gweru and the dust road delayed us too. We were supposed to start the Show at half past two in the afternoon. As we arrive we see people leaving other beer places coming to Charumbira Restaurant.

As the members start off loading the equipment I proceed to Mawire Village about fifteen kilometers from Hwedza to collect Sekuru Zambuko who is also going to perform tonight. Sekuru Zambuko is a well experienced *mbira* player who assisted me in my Master's thesis on the Relationship between *mbira* and spirit Possession. I am accompanied by a friend Sailas Mangwende. As we arrive back at Hwedza we find the system ready. Straight away without resting sound check starts. Two of our members who have gone to St Barnabas to ferry another group are not yet back. Wonder and myself carry on with the sound check. Sekuru Zambuko joins in and it sounds like we are already performing. People are rushing inside to hear the metallic electronically amplified *mbira* sound. Most of them were hearing such *mbiras* for the first time and were quite surprised.

The other ensemble members are a bit late. I was playing the lead *mbira* which is usually played by Taona who is not yet back with Elijah. I pick up my bass *mbira* which I usually play and connect it to my amplifier. I try it and alas there is no sound. The technician, Absalom Mutavati quickly fixes it and at that very moment the other two members arrive and join the performance. They did not manage to bring the other group from St Barnabas, When they arrived the

members had already gone back to their respective homes. I look at the audience from the stage, the hall is full. There are young boys, young girls and old men. I do not see old women. Usually women are at home looking after the children. They cannot afford to walk at night. If we had started during the day they would have attended. What I realize as the *mbira* sound penetrated the thick smoky air in the hall is that the majority of the audience participants are looking at us with surprise.

The surprise was caused by three things, the quality and audibility of the *mbira* sound, the performance style and dress of the *mbira* players. Our *mbiras* have a very clean sound and when connected to a big PA system via the mixing desk, the sound becomes clearer and very loud enough to be heard from every corner of the hall. Usually *mbira* is resonated by a gourd which is not loud enough to be heard from a distance. The second reason is that our group can perform so proficiently that it attracts the attention of the audience. In fact our playing style is unique because the *mbiras* that we play are hybrids of *mbira dzaVadzimu* and *nyunganyunga*. Lastly the audience was surprised by our dress code. Usually most of *mbira* players have long hair. Our forefathers usually had dread locks (*mhotsi*) which some of the *mbira* players and rain spirit medium (*makombwe*) prefer as a way of consolidating what the forefathers used to do. For instance among the *mbira* players that performed during the symposium discussed above, 70% of them had dread locks.

It is now around ten o'clock and we are a bit tired. We gave chance to Mhuri yekwaZambuko who performed three pieces, *nyamaropa*, *nhemamusasa* and *mahororo*. Mhuri yekwaZambuko comprised two *mbira* and a *hosho* players. They are one of the very few remaining *mbira* players in Hwedza area. The ensemble is one of few remaining groups in Hwedza.

The group is on stage and is performing traditional pieces. Most of elders present liked these pieces. They join in the singing and dancing. We are back again after a twenty minutes of rest. We open with *karigamambe* piece. This is a common traditional *mbira* piece and the whole audience joined in singing, dancing, whistling and clapping. The *mbira* performance reaches a climax and everyone is now part of the performance just the same way they do in a traditional *bira*. One member from the crowd asks for the hand shakers (*hosho*) and starts to play them so well. The *bira* performance has been revived but in a new context of *dandaro*. The traditional *mbira* players (Zambuko's ensemble) share the same stage with modern *mbira* (Zvirimudeze ensemble). It was surprising to note that there was absolutely no violence in this hall. The usual trend is that whenever a

band comes to perform at this restaurant, people usually fight. *Mbira* has the power to harmonize everyone so that participants are bound with one sound and one spirit.

It is one o'clock in the morning. We are tired and we decide to end the show but the audience is still asking for more. We give them two more songs and then ended the show. We are so tired that we cannot pack the PA system. The owner of the restaurant promises to take care of the equipment. We leave the stage. Everyone wants to speak to us. Some are still crying for more performance, others are still singing our most popular songs of the day called "*sabhuku ane nhard*", "*Mhandaro*", and "*chembere yawira mugoronga*". I conduct some informal interviews with about seven participants while the rest of the ensemble members are having some cool drinks. After completing the interviews I take Mhuri yekwa Zambuko back to Mawiri village about 2 kilometers west of Hwedza Growth Point. I am back and very few people are still around. I take three of the ensemble members to my house and the other two are taken to Chikomo's house²⁶. The following day we all gather at Elijah Chikomo's home and were served with breakfast. (Figure 6.16 Photograph 3) After breakfast we go to the Growth Point to pack our PA system. (Figure 6.16 Photograph 1) Before leaving for Gweru we pass through Hwedza Inn where we relax and drink some few glasses of beer. (Figure 6.16 Photograph 2) For the performances refer to DVD 2 Part II-11:39-15:03.

3.8 The outcomes of the Show

Generally the attendance was good and it embraced men, boys and girls. The comments given by participants who attended the Show indicated that the theme, which was "Preservation of *mbira* through performance (*dandaro*) was well articulated by the performances. The sentiments by the participants indicate that some of them were revived by *mbira* music. Most of the participants were of the opinion that such a show should be developed into an annual event. It was unfortunate that two of the ensembles, *mhuri yekwa Wadharwa* and *Mbira Dzenharira* did not manage to come. The other issue was that we were unable to cover all the activities on the program like speeches and presentations. We hope next year we will manage to start on time. The table below summarizes the distribution of the ages of the participants:

²⁶Elijah Chikomo and I once lived in Hwedza and we own houses there.

Participants	Age range	Estimated Number/Percentage
Old men	60 and above	4 (6%)
Men	25 to 59	20 (31%)
Young women	18 to 59	10 (16%)
Young boys	15 to 20	30 (47%)
Old Women	60 and above	0%

Table 3.2 Distribution of participants during the Mbira Show at Hwedza

From the table it can be noted that the majority of the participants were the youth whose ages range from 15 to 20 years. Very few of these young boys and girls had a chance to experience a *bira* in which *mbira* music is performed. Some of these youth were hearing *mbira* music for the first time and this aroused some enthusiasm in them. Tinashe Banhamombe from Muremba village commented saying:

Ini handisati ndanzwa mbira dzichiridzwa pasitegi kana mubira. Mumusha medu hamuna anoridza mbira. Ndinongonzwa mbira muredhiyo chete. Zvamaita izvi zvandinakidza uye ndadzidza kuti mbira chiridzwa chedu chinonakidza chose saka ngachi chengetedzwe.

I have never heard *mbira* being played on stage or in a *bira*. There are no *mbira* players in our village. I have only heard *mbira* on the radio. We have enjoyed what you have done and also that I have learned that *mbira* is a very interesting instrument which needs preservation. (Interview 26 January 2013)

Many young people from Hwedza shared the same sentiments with Tinashe that they know about *mbira* music from radio and televisions but they rarely get an opportunity to hear the instrument played in a *bira* yet they stay in Hwedza where *mbira dzaVadzimu* is believed to have originated. The Hwedza Mbira Show created a platform for them to experience a contemporary *mbira* show.

The young and the elders who attended the show were also impressed by the performances. They listened with interest. The elders commented that such shows revive their memories. They are taken back to the times when *mbira* was still very common in *mapira* ceremonies. One of the participants Ray Danha, 55 year of age commented saying that:

Mati fungidza chinyakare patai ridzirwa mbira mumakuva nanagwenya mbira. Dai makaramba muchidzoka kuno kuzoita mutambo wakadai tingafare chose. Ndiko kuti chivanhu chedu chidzidzwe nevana vari kukura nhasi.

You have reminded us of our tradition when *mbira* was played during *kurova guva* by *mbira* players. If you can come again to perform, we will be happy. This will help our children who are growing today to learn our culture (Interview 26 January 2013).

From the comments given by both the youths and the elders it is clear that access to *mbira* music is limited in Hwedza society. The photograph below shows part of the audience comprising elders and the young who managed to attend the show.



Figure 3.11 Participants during Hwedza Show. Photograph was taken by Absalom Mutavati on 26 January 2013.

Other sentiments provided by some of the participants that I interviewed are listed below;

i) Ray Danha (55 years old)

*Ini ndakapedzisira kunzwa mbira kare
Dai zvakadai zvikaramba zvichiitwa
Zvimwe chivanhu chedu chingararama*

I last heard *mbira* long ago
We wish if you could come back again
We might maintain our tradition

ii) Peter Nyanyeni (45 years old)

*Ah ini ndafara. Pandanzwa ndafunga kuti
muri kuridza maCD
Hamuna here titenge*

Ah I enjoyed. I thought you
are playing CDs
Do you have some for sale

iii) Tinashe Bhanamombe (26 years old)

*Varume mandifungidza
sekuru vangu vairidza mbira*

Gentlemen you have reminded me of
my grandfather who was a *mbira* player

iv) Tonderai Marutya (43 years old)

*Ah ini ndakuda kuridza mbirawo
Munogona kundi dzidzisawo here?*

Ah I now also want to play *mbira*
Can you teach me?

v) Christopher Chiparaushe (31 years old)

*Ini ndine mbira yangu iyi
Dambudziko ndere kuti hapana
Kweku dziridzira. Hamungati
poromotewo here varume.*

I have my *mbira*
The problem is that I do not have
anywhere to play them
Can you not promote us gentlemen?

vi) Sekuru Zambuko (71 years old)

*Ini ndafara kuti ndaridza mbira
dzangu pasiteji kekutanga
Mukadzoka nguva inotevera ndinenge
ndanyatso gadzirira.*

I am happy that I played my *mbira*
for the first time on the stage
If you happen to come back next time I will be
prepared.

vii) Mercy Muchabaiwa (26 years old)

*Ah! nhasi tafara. Hataiziva kuti
mbira dzinorira semagitare.*

Ah! Today we enjoyed. We did not know that
mbira can sound like guitars.

The general feeling was that many people, both the young and the old like *mbira* music very much only that they are not getting access to live *mbira* music as there are very few *mbira* players left and traditional ceremonies where *mbira* is played in Hwedza. It was also established that the *mbira* that is fitted with pickup microphones has improved the quality and amplification of *mbira* music making it suitable for contemporary show performances although it compromises the traditional sound of *mbira*. Usually the changes that are brought by modernity in material culture dilute the indignity of that material. The same can be noted in other instruments that are part of the legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* like traditional drum and hand shakers.

The ability of *mbira* to draw the attention of both the old and the young during *matandaro* ceremonies like the one organized at Hwedza and others organized by other *mbira* ensembles in different parts of Zimbabwe shows how powerful the instrument is. Hwedza show also

established that contemporary *mbira* shows can be a good substitute of the traditional *mapira* ceremonies. The elements of non-tangible elements of the cultural heritage of *mbira* that were preserved during the various performances are summarized in the table below:

Item	Mode of preservation
<i>Mbira</i> playing techniques	Playing <i>mbira</i>
Songs both traditional and contemporary	Listening to various songs performed by ensembles
Knowledge about ritual objects	Observations of ritual objects and dancing props used by dancers
<i>Mbira</i> pieces	Performances by ensembles
Tuning system	Listening to <i>mbiras</i> of different tuning systems
Knowledge on what constitute the cultural legacy of <i>mbira</i>	Observation of instruments that accompany <i>mbira</i> during performance
Knowledge about what has changed on <i>mbira</i>	Observing the nature of <i>mbira</i> instruments played by ensembles members
Traditional costumes	Observing the different costumes worn by performers.

Table 3.3 Aspects preserved during *mbira* performances

3.9 Conclusion

It can be concluded that modern *mbira* shows have become a platform where *mbira* music can be transmitted from *mbira* players to listeners. The repertoires that are performed are either sacred or secular. Turino advances this idea when he says “in Shona musical practice certain repertoires are closely associated with spirit possession (inside the house) activities (sacred) and secular (outside the house) activities” (2000:37). As more and more ‘outside the house’ songs are introduced, there is a likelihood that the ‘inside the house’ songs decline. Hence it is necessary to preserve both the ‘inside the house’ and ‘outside the house’ repertoires. In other words what currently constitute Shona *mbira* are both the inside the house and outside the house repertoires but with more ‘outside the house’ than ‘inside the house’ songs.

The emergence of *dandaro* is characterized by a modified context which is quite different from the usual *bira*. The emergence of *dandaro* in towns is a clear testimony that when cultures

migrate from places of origin to another place, they carry their music with them. When the music re-emerges in the new environment, it is likely to change to adapt to the new environment. The cultural legacy of Shona *mbira* followed the same trend when the Shona migrated from rural homes to towns to seek employment.

The *dandaro* practices culminated in stimulating innovation among the *mbira* players. *Mbira* players modify their *mbira* for commercial purposes. Most players added some keys to the existing *mbira* to alter the quality of sound. Others electrified their *mbiras* so that they can be connected to Public Address Systems for amplification purposes. This made it possible for them to be able to compete with popular bands during national galas and public performances. In addition *mbira* performance has become more democratic in that any one, whether young, old, male, female, Shona, Ndebele, black or white can play without prejudice. Today we have *matandaro* performances in North America and the majority of *mbira* players are white.

Some of the songs performed during *dandaro* are derived from the traditional pieces. *Mbira* players compose their own text based on these pieces. They also integrate traditional genres like *jiti*, *mhande*, *mbakumba*, *dinhe* with *mbira*. By so doing the ensembles are preserving the pieces. I take *mbira* performances during *dandaro* or any ceremony to be yet another way of preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira*. *Dandaro* in this case is taken to be a 'Living archive' of both tangible and intangible heritage of *mbira*.

CHAPTER 4

ARCHIVING TANGIBLE MATERIAL CULTURE OF *MBIRA DZAVADZIMU*

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter covers issues concerning archiving of tangible material culture of the legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The Chapter also discusses why there is need to preserve the material culture of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. It also outlines how *mbira dzaVadzimu* instruments, traditional drums *ngoma*, hand shakers (*hosho*), clappers (*makwa*), dancing props like walking stick (*tsvimbo*), moon-shaped axe (*gano*), spear (*pfumo*) and traditional objects like clay pots (*hari*), traditional cup (*mukombe*), as well as spiritual attire worn by spirit mediums like necklaces, (*zvuma*), bangles (*ndarira*), spiritual attire (*fuko*) and spiritual headgear (*ngundu*) were collected and deposited in the archive.

Recommended approaches contained in different documents concerning the collection process and also those that relate to cataloguing of materials in the archive are also discussed. The Chapter describes how transcriptions of *mbira* pieces, audio/visual recordings of *mbira* pieces recorded during field work for this study and also those that I collected from the International library of African Music in South Africa and still photographs were catalogued in the archive. In order to aptly present outlook of the finished archive, I took some photographs of the materials in the manner they are displayed in the archive and presented them in this chapter. Challenges that were faced during the field collection of tangible materials in the archive are also outlined.

4.2 The need to preserve Material Culture

Material culture can be defined as the value attached to materials by the culture bearers who own them. Material culture is used to solve the society's social, political, religious and economic problems. Prown (1982: 2) defines material culture as:

...artefacts of beliefs, values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions, of a particular community or society at a given time. The term material culture is also frequently used to refer to artefacts themselves, and to the body of material available for such study (1982:2).

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In case of the Shona people, the material culture which is part of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* has experienced some changes in the past decades due to modern technology, rural-

to-urban migration and the advent of the church as indicated in the previous Chapters. Just to recapitulate the changes are: the tuning system which has adopted the western style, the number of keys on the *mbira* which now range from twenty-three to twenty-nine, the distribution of *mbira dzaVadzimu*, the context in which *mbira dzaVadzimu* is performed, the singing style which has more text than vocables, the materials used to make *mbira* resonators and accompanying instruments like hand shakers which are made out of fiber glass. These changes have impacted on the sacredness of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

Mbira dzaVadzimu is known for having the power to connect the living and the spiritual world as reiterated by Chidzambwa when he described *mbira dzaVadzimu* as "*uta hwaishandiswa navakuru vakare kunamata Mwari. Vaiti kana vadziridza zvese zvavaida vaizviwana*", *mbira* was a tool which was used by the ancestors to venerate God. When they (the forefathers) played this instrument, they would get anything which they wanted (Interview, 19 March 2012). In other words, *mbira dzaVadzimu*, according to Chidzambwa, creates a pathway for the communication between the Shona people and God (*Mwari*) and also between the Shona people and their ancestors. The ability of this instrument to connect the living and the world of the spirit makes it very significant in the Shona cosmology. Jones (2008:129) advances Chidzambwa's sentiments when she observes that *mbira*'s meaning and significance of connecting the living and the supernatural world has enabled it to become emblematic in Zimbabwe, virtually a national instrument. Its design and embodiment depicts a Shona identity which attracts protection just like any other emblematic material designs of the nation.

The need to preserve *mbira dzaVadzimu* was supported by Reverend Rukwara when he says, "...maybe we need to establish some archives where we would keep samples of such instruments so that our children may be able to learn and know where we came from" (Interview, 25 January 2012). Reverend Rukwara's suggestion is in line with Bradsher who maintains that, "Archives today constitute an informational and cultural resource and a storehouse of knowledge, and are the key elements in perpetuating and improving...national heritages, cultures and societies" (1988:31). The decline of the sacred use of *mbira dzaVadzimu* implies the loss of the Shona identity, *unhu/ubuntu*. It also means that the future generations of the Shona will lose their heritage and this ultimately will result in the disintegration of the social system that characterizes

the hegemony of the Shona people. In order to preserve the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*, I found it necessary to archive the tangible material culture that is used during *kurova guva* as well as during *dandaro* ceremonies. The process of establishing an archive of materials that are part of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in the context of *kurova guva* and *dandaro* practices will not only assist in preserving them, but will also go a long way in creating a source of valuable knowledge for future scholarly studies.

Apart from modern ways of preserving tangible heritage, the Shona have their own traditional methods of preserving their heritage. One method is through the constant use of the tangible materials during rituals. For instance, performing *mbira dzaVadzimu*, together with *hosho* and *ngoma* during *kurova gura* ceremony and other sacred ceremonies is a way of preserving the instruments and their music by continuously performing them each time such ceremonies are conducted. The ceremonies help in sustaining the instrument and its music. In this case, the ceremony or ritual becomes an archive of the pieces performed on *mbira dzaVadzimu*, the *mbira* itself and other instruments that accompany *mbira dzaVadzimu* and even traditional objects used during the ceremony.

The other traditional method which the Shona use is inheritance. The heritage is handed over from grandparents to grandchildren as part of inheritance. For instance, a grandchild can inherit his grandfather's *mbira*. When he dies, he will further hand the instrument to his own grandchild and so on. During fieldwork, I collected an *mbira* that was inherited by grandchildren, for example those that were collected from Tichaedza Mauraya (MBI/07/12) of Gweru.

My experiences as a Shona by origin and *mbira* player by inheritance have indicated that the traditional method of preserving cultural legacies by making use of inheritance, and performance in sacred ceremonies is slowly declining and being substituted by modern methods. In the absence of traditional methods of preserving *mbira dzaVadzimu*, there is need to preserve the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* using modern approaches of establishing an archive of tangible materials.

4.3 Collection of Tangible Materials for Archiving

Collection of material is a practical expedition that is informed by archive theory which is emphasized by Abraham (1991: 54) when he says, “Practice is the engine that drives archival theory.” According to this theory, the primary thing to do in the field is searching for the materials relevant to one’s collection. After searching for the tangible materials relevant to *mbira dzaVadzimu* mentioned above, I did not just collect materials but also recorded information concerning the source²⁷ of the material, the material itself and the place where it was collected and any other necessary information.

Most of the materials were collected from Hwedza district, Gweru urban and a few from Harare. Collection of materials was done in line with the expectations of ethical considerations. Agawu defines ethics as “a branch of philosophy which studies the nature and criteria of right and wrong action, obligation, values and the good life, and related principles” (2003:199). In addition, Jackson emphasizes ethics by saying, “Ethics...have to do with the moral implication of the role you play while you're doing fieldwork and with the moral consequences of your decisions and actions after you're done with the fieldwork.” (1987:259)

What Jackson says is in line with the current ethnographic paradigm which requires field workers to exercise sound ethics when collecting data or materials from the field. It is important to note that some of the culture bearers today are enlightened on the issue pertaining to modern ethics. They can indicate instances where ethical considerations were not properly administered. For instance, when I visited Cosmas Zambuko, a great traditional *mbira* player, I asked him if I could video record him playing *mbira* pieces. In response, he narrates how he was cheated by a certain researcher when he says, *Imi vafana munongoda kutitepa kuti mugonoita mari nenziyo dzedu isu tisina chatinowana. Gore rapera mumwe mufana akauya akatirekodha pano akabva aenda zvachose kana kumbodzoka kuzonditenda*, which translates to: You young people, you just want to record our music so that you make money without giving us anything. Last year, a similar young man came and recorded me here and never returned to say thank you” (Interview, 17 August 2012). Zambuko’s sentiments are a clear testimony that some of the traditional participants are aware of the need for ethical consideration as well as ownership rights.

²⁷ In this study the word source is taken to refer to the individual from whom the material was collected.

In order to get permission to collect data from participants, I used a release form in which participants indicated their willingness to be interviewed and to surrender their material as shown below:

Terms of Deposit

1. Ownershiop

- The depositor is the legal owner of the material.
- The depositor confirms that he/she is free to willingly and voluntarily lend the material to the Archive.
- The depositor grants the Archive the right to use the material.
- Materials deposited on long term loan remain the property of the depositor who can withdraw them at any time.
- The deposit agreement shall be binding on any successors in title to the ownership of the materials.
- The depositor has the right to notify the Archive of any changes in ownership or contact details.

2. Conservation and preservation

- The material will be stored in the environment monitored by the archive
- The archive will take appropriate measures for preservation

3. Cataloguing

- The material will be listed as part of the Archive cataloguing system.
- The material will be allocated an accession number for the purpose of identification and retrieval.

4. Access

- The material will be available for any interested bona fide individuals.
- The material will be accessible to the public.
- The material will not be removed from the archive without a written consent of the depositor.

5. Withdrawal

- The depositor is free to withdraw their material from the archive any time.

Archivist's Signature..... Date.....
Source's Signature..... Date.....

Figure 4.1 Release form for sources (Source: highered.mcgraw-hill.com, modified by author)

Regarding the collection of materials from the field, Titon reveals that “Most archives require depositors to sign a contract or agreement. This spells out (or should spell out) the rights that the collector has and rights that are being assigned to the archive” (1986: 269). Titon defines a release form as, “a simple contract in which an informant gives a fieldworker specific license regarding the material provided in the collecting session” (1986:269). I adopted the same principle by making the participants read the terms of the depositor form and then sign. All the participants showed willingness to participate in the study by signing the forms. However, I clearly made them understand that I will not use the materials or information for any personal gains and that any intention to use the material or information for any purpose other than for educational use will be done in consultation with the owner.

Apart from the release forms, collection of archival materials makes use of other documentation systems that vary from one archiving system to another. During the collection process, I was

guided by various interrogatives like “who, what, where, when, by whom” for each item collected (Seeger, 1986:269). I also recorded information about the owner of the material and the material on a collection inventory form which is shown below:

Name of researcher: Perminus Matiure

Topic: Archiving the Cultural legacy of Shona *Mbira DzaVadzimu* in the context of *Kurova guva* and *Dandaro* practice

Part A

IDENTIFICATION

1. Type of instrument:.....
2. Date Collected:.....
3. Fieldwork file number:.....

SITE

1. Source name:.....
2. Source number:.....
3. Context:.....
4. Collection method:.....
5. Collector:.....
6. Storage location:.....

OWNER

1. Name of depositor:.....
2. Sex:.....
3. Age:.....
4. Occupation:.....
5. Experience:.....

DESCRIPTION

1. Item type:.....
2. Photography index number:.....
3. Film number:.....
4. Material:.....
5. Quantification:.....
6. Dimensions:.....
7. Decorations:.....
8. Completeness:.....
9. Condition:.....

MODE OF AQUISITION

1. Donation.....
2. Purchase.....Cost \$.....

Part B

ETHICAL CLEARENCE FOR SOURCE

Name:.....

Ivoluntarily accept to donate/sell my..... constructed/ bought on the...../...../.....to Mr. Matiure’s traditional music archive for preservation on this day of.....month of..... 20.....I am aware that I am free to withdraw or repatriate my item any time I wish and the item may not be used for any gainful means but only for academic purposes.

Signature of Source:.....**Date**.....

Signature of collector.....Date.....

Figure 4.2 Collection form

In addition, as a collector, I recorded information concerning the collecting process. During the collection process, it was discovered that most of the material culture used during *kurova guva* ceremony are part of the common domestic utensils used by the Shona in their daily household chores. These materials which embrace wooden plates (*ndiro*) and traditional container (*tswanda*) winnowing tray (*rusero*) automatically become ritual objects during *kurova guva*. As soon as the ceremony is over, some of the utensils regain their common domestic role in the home. The cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* is incomplete without these ritual objects. Below is a table indicating the domestic and ritual functions of some of the materials:

Material	Image	Domestic function	Ritualistic function
Winnowing tray (<i>rusero</i>)		<i>Rusero</i> is used by women to carry grain. It is used to carry different farm products from the field. It is also used to winnow grain before grinding it.	In this context <i>rusero</i> is used to carry the spiritual attire for the spirit medium during <i>kurova guva</i> spirit possession.
Traditional container (<i>tswanda</i>)		It is used to collect grain from the granary. It is also used to carry farm produce from the fields. The smallest can carry 2 kilograms of contents and the largest can carry about 20 kilograms. The large ones are called <i>matengu</i> (singular <i>dengu</i>).	The traditional container is used to carry grain when preparing traditional brew for the ceremony of <i>kurova guva</i> .

<p>Traditional clay pot (<i>chirongo</i>)</p>		<p>The clay pot is used to fetch water. It is also used as a container for sweet traditional brew (<i>mahewu</i>) and also for sour milk (<i>hodzeko</i>).</p>	<p>It is used to contain traditional brew that is consumed during a <i>kurova guva</i> ceremony. It is the one that is used to carry traditional brew for the ritual at the grave. It also used as the ritual pot (<i>dziva</i>) which marks the end of the ceremony.</p>
<p>Traditional cups (<i>mikombe</i>)</p>		<p><i>Mukombe</i> is used to draw water from the main container, (<i>chirongo</i>).</p>	<p>Used to draw beer from the clay pot (<i>hari</i>) during the <i>kurova guva</i> - all night ceremony. The traditional cup is also used to pour traditional brew on the grave during the ritual conducted early in the morning of the all-night ceremony.</p>
<p>Snuff container (<i>chinu</i>)</p>		<p>Snuff container (<i>chinu</i>) is used by those who sniff to contain snuff (<i>bute</i>) before filling the snuff boxes.</p>	<p><i>Chinu</i> is also used by spirit mediums to store snuff in large quantities.</p>
<p>Walking stick (<i>tsvimbo</i>)</p>		<p>Used as a walking stick by the old people.</p>	<p><i>Tsvimbo</i> is used as a dancing prop by spirit mediums during <i>mbira</i> performances. It is also used as a symbol for inheritance during <i>nhaka</i> and <i>zita</i> ritual.</p>

Machete (<i>bakatwa</i>)		The machete is usually part of the weapons carried by a hunter during a hunting expedition.	During <i>kurova guva</i> a machete is used as a dancing prop. A machete is also a symbol of bravery.
Moon-shaped axe (<i>gano</i>)		The moon shaped axe is a hunting weapon used by hunters.	During <i>kurova guva</i> the moon-shaped axe is used as a dancing prop. Spirit mediums believe that when they dance swinging the moon-shaped axe. It is a symbol of fighting against the evil spirits (<i>ngozi</i>).
Mortar (<i>duri</i>)		The mortar is used for pounding grain before taking it to the grinding mill.	The mortar is used to pound grain during preparation of the traditional brew for <i>kurova guva</i> ceremony. Traditional herbalists use it for crushing their traditional medicine in form of roots, leaves and tree twigs.

Table 4.1 Materials and their domestic and ritual function

The various collection forms filled during collection in the field were then compiled to form one inventory form. Part of it is shown below:

Date Collected	Name of Instrument	Collected from (Place/individual)	Condition of the material	Collector
23/02/12	<i>Mbira dzaVadzimu</i>	Mbare	Old	P Matiure
23/04/12	<i>Mbira dzaVadzimu</i>	Wimber/ Gweru	New	P Matiure
12/04/12	<i>Karimba nhovapasi</i>	Tendai Gamadze/ Norton	New	P Matiure
12/04/12	<i>Duriro</i>	Tendai Gamadze/ Norton	New	P Matiure
12/04/12	<i>Karimbashauro/ Nheketo</i>	Tendai Gamadze/ Norton	New	P Matiure
12/02/12	<i>Nyunganhare</i>	P Matiure/ Gweru	New	P Matiure
12/04/12	<i>Duro</i>	Mbuya Manyame/ Buhera	Old	P Matiure

Table 4.2 Sample of information filled on the collection form

4.4 Cataloguing system

What follows after collection is cataloguing which is a systematic method of assigning accession numbers to materials deposited in the archive. The collected materials were then deposited²⁸ in the archive by classifying them under five major areas which are: (i) musical instruments, (ii) traditional objects, (iii) transcriptions of *mbira* pieces (iv) audio-visual recordings of interviews and performances, and (v) still photographs of materials, *mbira* researchers and players.

Every item deposited is given an accession number created by taking the first three letters of the name of the item followed by the position of entry for the instrument and, lastly, the year of deposit. For example, the first *mbira* to be catalogued has an accession number of MBI/01/12. The number indicates that the instrument was the first to be catalogued in the year of 2012. This follows that the second *mbira* to be deposited is MBI/02/12; the third is MBI/03/12, and so on. For the first traditional drums, (*ngoma*) the accession number is NGO/01/12, the hand shakers (*hoshho*) is HOS/01/12, leg rattles (*magabvu*) or (*magagada*) is MAG/01/12, clappers (*makwa*) is MAK/01/12 and the horn (*hwamanda*) is HWA/01/12. All the instruments were collected and recorded in the same way.

A material record form was also used to keep record of the deposited materials. This record form harmonizes all the individual collection forms whose contents are summarized in Table 4.2 below:

Material record form

Name of Archive:	Midlands State University Music Archive (MSUMA)
Year Established:	2012
Archivist:	Perminus Matiure
Type of Materials:	Traditional musical instruments, photographs, ritual objects, ethnographic films

²⁸ In this study the word deposit is taken to mean the process of forwarding a material to an archive.

Accession no.	Date deposited	Material	Collector	Source	Depositor
MBI/01/12	23/02/12	<i>mbira dzaVadzimu</i>	P Matiure	Mbare	P Matiure
MBI/ 02/12	23/04/12	<i>mbira dzaVadzimu</i>	P Matiure	Wimber	P Matiure
MBI/ 03/12	12/04/12	<i>Karimba nhovapasi</i>	P Matiure	T Gamadze	P Matiure
NDU/04/12	12/04/12	<i>Duriro</i>	P Matiure	T Gamadze	P Matiure
MBI/ 05/12	12/04/12	<i>Karimbashauro/nheketo</i>	P Matiure	T Gamadze	P Matiure
MBI /06/12	12/02/12	<i>Nyunganhare</i>	P Matiure	P Matiure	P Matiure

Table 4.3 Sample of a materials record form

For easy access to information, every material is accompanied by a card. The information on the card includes the accession number, the name of the instrument, the source, collector, description of the instrument, and a brief explanation of its function during a *bira*. When a visitor enters the archive, they can quickly get information about the instrument by referring to this card. For example a card for *mbira* whose accession number is MBI/07/12 is as follows:

MBI/07/12
 NAME: *Mbira dzaVadzimu*
 LOCATION: Chikomba District
 SOURCE: Boas Mutsago
 DEPOSITOR: P Matiure
 COLLECTOR: P Matiure
 DATE COLLECTED:
 10/08/12
DESCRIPTION: The *mbira* belongs to Boas Mutsago who bought it from Chigondo in Hwedza around 1973. It has 22 keys and is tuned in *nyamaropa*. The instrument has been played in both sacred and secular

Figure 4.3 Card that accompanies a material

In the next section are some the tangible materials collected and preserved in the archive.

4.4.1 Musical instruments

The following are some of the tangible material culture collected and deposited in the archive. Each material is accompanied by its name, accession number, a brief history of the instrument, its description and information about its owner:



Mbira dzaVadzimu (Accession number MBI/07/12)

This *mbira* was donated to the archive by Tichaedza Mauraya who currently resides in Gweru. According to Tichaedza, the *mbira* was constructed in 1963 and was given to him by his uncle Chabvanduka who lives in Gokwe. The *mbira* was played by Chabvanduka during several sacred *mapira* ceremonies like *kurova guva* to evoke spirits in spirit mediums. It has twenty-two keys and is tuned in *mahororo*. It is the oldest *mbira* in the archive so far



Mbira dzaVadzimu (Accession number MBI/04/12)

This *mbira dzaVadzimu* was collected from Boas Mutsago who lives at Sadza Growth, south of Hwedza, on the 10th of August 2012. The instrument was estimated to be over forty years old.

The owner confirmed that he bought it around 1973 from an old man in Chigondo area in Hwedza. The *mbira* has twenty-two keys and is tuned in *nyamaropa*.



***Nyunganhare* in C major (Accession number MBI/08/12)**

This *mbira* is called *nyunganhare* with tonal centre of C major. I made it by combining the left of *mbira dzaVadzimu* and the right of *nyunganyunga*. This *nyunganhare* has twenty-three keys and is a new instrument which I constructed in April 2012 and its accession date is in August 2012. It is performed for entertainment, especially when *mbira dzaVadzimu* is played together with *nyunganyunga*. It serves the purpose of fusing *mbira dzaVadzimu* and *nyunganyunga*.



Karimbamutatu (Accession number MBI/09/12)

This is a unique *mbira* in that it is the first of its kind in Zimbabwe. The *mbira* is a combination of the three *mbiras*, *karimbashauro*, *nyunganyunga* and *nhovapasi*. I invented it to be played as a solo instrument and can be played to produce several combinations by playing the top, middle or bottom. The different combinations that can be found on this *mbira* are illustrated in Chapter 5. I deposited this *mbira* as part of the intangible materials of *mbira dzaVadzimu* heritage because pieces usually played on *mbira dzaVadzimu* are played on this *mbira*.



Nhovapasi (Accession number MBI/02/11)

Nhovapasi is a bass *mbira* that was designed to play the bass line of pieces which are usually played on *mbira dzaVadzimu*. It was constructed by Tendai Gamadze of Mbira Dzenharira in 2011 and it has seventeen keys tuned in key C major. The keys are similar to those of *nyunganyunga* but transposed an octave lower. Some microphone pickups are fitted below the keys for amplification purposes. This *mbira* is performed during entertainment ceremonies (*matandaro*) together with lead *mbira* (*duriro*), rhythm *mbira* (*nheketo*) and *mbira dzaVadzimu*.



***Duriro* (Accession number MBI/03/11)**

This *mbira* is called *duriro* and was constructed by Mbira Dzenharira in 2011. It has nineteen keys tuned in C major. The *mbira* is able to play pieces usually played on *mbira dzaVadzimu* and is played together with *nhovapasi*, *karimbashauro* and *mbira dzaVadzimu*. *Duriro* plays the rhythm and its keys are within the middle register of key C major.



***Nheketo/Karimbashauro* (Accession number MBI/04/11)**

Nheketo has its keys transposed an octave higher than *duriro* and has nineteen keys also tuned in C major. I completed the upper octave by adding four keys: D, E, F and G. The additional keys made it possible for the *mbira* to produce the lead line for pieces played on *mbira dzaVadzimu*, hence its name *karimbashauro*, meaning the *karimba* that leads.



***Nyunganhare* (Accession number MBI/05/12)**

This is another hybrid of *mbira dzaVadzimu* tuned in G major and I constructed this *mbira* in 2006. The *mbira* was presented at SASRIM conference in South Africa in 2008 and in Germany at Gottingen in 2012 during a *mbira* symposium organized by Brenner Klaus-Peter²⁹.

²⁹ Brenner is an experienced researcher of traditional music. He has carried out studies about the Shona music especially *mbira* and *chipendani*. He is a *mbira* player and *mbira* teacher. He organized the symposium in question to create an opportunity for *mbira* researchers to present their research findings. The symposium was very successful.



***Mbira dzaVadzimu (Vembe)* (Accession number MBI/09/12)**

This hybrid of *mbira dzaVadzimu* called *vembe* was constructed by Philip Chimukuyu in 2011. It has 23 keys and is tuned in C. It is slightly different from *dzaVadzimu* in that the tuning system and arrangement of the keys are altered by shifting the tonal order for *mbira* to the key on the 4th position from the left of the top manual.



Figure 4.4 Tichaedza Mauraya soon after completing his mbira

***Mbira dzaVadzimu* (Accession number MBI/06/12)**

This is a new *mbira dzaVadzimu* constructed by Tichaedza of Gweru in May 2012 and its accession date is June 2012. It has twenty-two keys and is tuned with tonal order based on the

standard tuning of A. This *mbira* has twenty-two keys and it is tuned using a western style. This *mbira* has never been played in any performance since it is new. Tichaedza made this *mbira* as part of demonstration of how to make *mbira* using modern method as illustrated in figure 5.1 in Chapter 5.



Figure 4.5 Jaona Magova holding his traditional drum of chidzimba type. Photograph by author on June 2012 at Manyame Village in Buhera.



Traditional drums (*ngoma*) (Accession number NGO/04/12)

The traditional drum (*ngoma*) plays a pivotal role in both sacred and secular ceremonies in the Shona society. The traditional drum is believed by the Shona to symbolize the voice of the ancestors. The ability of *ngoma* to produce volume of sound loud enough to be heard from a distance enables it to draw the attention of both the living and the dead. The embodiment of the skin of the drum may not be taken for granted as observed by Nzewi when he says:

Such a skin carries spirituality energy because of the presence of dry, fresh blood in the skin... In the African philosophy of life, the drum, although simple in appearance, is deeply evocative in action, inspiring creativity as well as producing a profoundly beneficial effect on humans, the human society and other living things... There is symbolic connection between the drum as a sonic force and blood as a life force (2007: 58).

Nzewi's sentiments clearly show that there is a strong bond between the traditional drum and members of a society. What Nzewi is saying is also true for the Shona who treat the sound of the drum as a signal of life and social hegemony. The traditional drum is played to accompany *mbira* music by articulating the timeline of the song. The drum also adds the intensity of the performance of *mbira* during *kurova guva* and also during *dandaro* performances.

I managed to collect and deposit a small old drum of *chidzimba* type that was donated by Jaona Magova from Buhera, south of Hwedza. The drum has been played in both secular and sacred functions for a long time. The owner cannot remember when he made it but confirmed that he made the body from *mutiti* tree and the membrane from the skin of a cow called *Manzuma*.



Figure 4.6 Solomon Ncube and Kuzan Sivanda with their traditional drums of *chidzimba* type. Photograph taken by author on 12 June 2011.

A set of traditional drums (*ngoma*) (Accession numbers NGO/01/12, NGO/02/12 and NGO/03/12)

The three traditional drums of *chidzimba* type were made in Silobela, Lower Gweru District. I purchased them on the 12th of June 2012 from Solomon Ncube and Kuzan Sivanda who made them using *mutiti* tree. The drums are played as a trio with the biggest playing response (*kutsinhira*), the medium playing the rhythm (*kupfura*) and the smallest playing the lead (*kushaura*).



Hand shakers (*hosho*) (Accession number HOS/01/12)

These traditional hand shakers are made from gourds (*mapudzi*). *Mapudzi* are a special type of pumpkins grown by the Shona peasant farmers of Zimbabwe. Inside each *hosho* are some small seeds (*hota*) that hit against the walls of the shaker to produce a rattling sound. The hand shakers above were bought from Gweru Musika in November 2011. The vendor, Mercy Shumba, who sold them to me, indicated that they were made in Gokwe by her son in 2010.



Hand shakers (modern *hosho*) (Accession number HOS/02/12)

The two hand shakers shown were collected from Mrs. Lydia Jambwa of Chikomba near Hwedza on the 11th of August 2012. The shakers are made from fiber glass. They are, however more durable than those made from gourd. Lydia Jambwa plays them in the Roman Catholic Church but opted to donate them to the archive since she has another set of hand rattles



Traditional Resonator (*deze*) (Accession number DEZ/ 0/12)

The resonator was collected from Boas Mutsago of Chikomba, south of Hwedza, on the 10th of August 2012. He made it in 1998 from pumpkin and has used it to amplify his *mbira* in both sacred and secular ceremonies. Boas's resonator has broken several times during performances because gourd resonators are fragile.



Modern Resonator (*deze*) (Accession number DEZ/02/12)

This is a modern resonator which was bought from Chirikure Chirikure in Harare in 2011. The resonator is made from fiber glass. The idea of making fiber glass resonators was introduced by Andrew Tracey at Kwanongoma College of Music in Bulawayo. Although it is made of material which is different from that of a gourd, it still serves the same purpose of increasing the volume of the sound of the *mbira*. The attachment of buzzers on both the resonator and *mbira* is a Shona practice that is meant to create a buzzing sound which is believed to be associated with the ancestral spirits.



Traditional horn (*hwamanda*) (Accession number HWA/01/12)

This traditional horn was collected from Jezenga Chikadaya of Farm Number 55 Zviyambe, in Hwedza District. The horn is used to accompany *mbira* music during *kurova guva* performance. It is made from the horn of an antelope. Currently, the horn is used to accompany songs in churches services as shown below:



Figure 4.7 A man playing hwamanda to accompany a Dutch Reformed Church song during a memorial service in Manyame Village, Buhera. Photograph taken by author on 26 August 2012.



Leg rattles (*Magagada*) (Accession number MAG/ 01/12)

These leg rattles (*magagada*) were bought from Gweru Musika, adjacent to the long distance bus terminus called Kudzanai. A lot of people from the rural areas surrounding Gweru city which include Gokwe, Shurugwi, Zaka, Lower Gweru and Chiundura bring their different artefacts and instruments and sell them at Gweru Musika. The rattles are made from wild fruits collected from the forest. Leg rattles are used by dancers to resonate their dancing steps. They also assist in articulating the rhythm of the music when the dancer stamps on the ground. They produce a rattling sound similar to hand shakers.

4.4.2 Traditional Objects



**Traditional basket (*Chitswanda*)
(Accession number TSW/01/12)**

Traditional basket (*chitswanda*) is part of the traditional utensils used during traditional ceremonies to collect grain from the granary. *Chitswanda* is made out of leaves of palm tree (*murara*) and some cow dung (*ndove*) is applied on it to make it stronger. I bought it from Mbare Musika in Harare on the 4th of December 2011. It is a medium *tswanda* that weighs 5 kilograms when full.



Winnowing tray (*rusero*) (Accession number RUS/01/1)

The winnowing tray (*rusero*) is used to carry grain used to prepare traditional brew during *kurova guva* ceremony. It is made from palm leaves and decorated with leaves that are painted brown. The tray was bought from Mbare in Harare on the 4th of December 2011. The tray was made in 2010 and its diameter is about 40 cm. I was unable to establish the person who made it.



Clay pot (*chirongo*) (Accession number CHI/01/13)

The traditional clay pot (*chirongo*) was collected from Mr.s Lydia Jambwa of Chikomba near Hwedza on 11th August 2012. The pot is used to serve beer during *kurova guva*. It is also used to fetch water from the river or well and its volume is about 10 litres. The biggest ones are called *mhirimo* which can contain about 30 liters and the smallest *chipfuko* with volume of 2 liters.



Mortar (*duri*) (Accession number DUR/01/12)

This mortar is the oldest of materials collected from the late Mbuya Manyame of Buhera, south of Hwedza area, on 26 August 2012. It is believed to have been made in 1960. It is used to crush grain before grinding it with a stone (*guyo*). The mortar is slowly being taken over by modern grinding mills. Usually, women are the ones who use the mortar to crush grain. The job may be done by a single woman or two. In the case of two women, two sticks (*mitswi*) will be used in one mortar which is called *kudzidzana*. The mortar is carved from a trunk of a *mutiti* tree which is the same tree used to make traditional drum (*ngoma*). Its shape is similar to that of a traditional drum of the *chidzimba* type shown in Accession number NGO/1/12, NGO/2/12 and NGO/3/12 above.

4.4.3 Films

Films, particularly ethnographic films are yet another form of preserving seemingly dying intangible cultural legacies of the world. Usually, curators go into the field and take videos which they then deposit in the archive as raw data which is then catalogued for further editing.

The films deposited in the archive contain information concerning *mbira dzaVadzimu*, *dandaro* and *kurova guva* ritual as well as those containing clips for the conference, symposium and *mbira* shows organized as part of this PhD thesis. The films act as sources of indigenous knowledge obtained from primary sources.

Each film is given a serial number which can be used to identify the film from the main record. For example, the first film is given the number FIL/01/12. The letters FIL are for the first three letters of the word film. The first two numbers are for the position and the last two for the year. Additional information about the film was recorded following the structure used by the Archive of World Music at Harvard library. An example of how the information was recorded is shown in the table below:

Film number	Film title	Publisher	Description	Credits	Technical information	Summary
FIL/01/12	2011 <i>Mbira</i> Conference	P Matiure	The film provides a reflection of what transpired during <i>mbira</i> 2011 <i>Mbira</i> Conference.	Many thanks to Music and Musicology staff and students, Mbira Dzenharira ensemble, The Dean of Social Sciences, Mr. Gwatidzo	The film has both long and close-up shots. It is in PAL. Shots were taken by a Sony 2000 digital camera.	The film is about performances by Mbira Dzenharira.

Table 4.4 Information accompanying films

The films are classified according to those that are for performances by different *mbira* ensembles, especially those that were performed during the symposium and shows; interviews carried out during fieldwork; demonstration of how to make musical instruments; demonstrations of how to play *mbira* pieces showing fingering.

4.4.4 Transcribed *mbira* pieces and traditional songs (Intangible)

Transcription is defined by Agawu as “a translation into musical symbols of a sound reality” (2003:50). In other words, transcription involves translating musical sound from one medium to another. It can be from audio to visual or visual to audio or from one notation to another, for instance, from staff notation to tonic solfa notation. Historically, transcription of music was

instrumental to the evolution of the field of ethnomusicology. This was made possible by the invention of the cents system by Thomas Edison in the 19th century.

Transcription of traditional music using the cents system started as far back as the 18th century when it was done for comparative purposes. List propounds that “For a study to be ethnomusicological, the scholar must transcribe the music by one means or another; analyze its style and its structure.” (1979:2). The motive was to analyze and compare the music of different ethnic groups of non-western societies. Comparison was only possible after the songs were transcribed. Transcription has boosted scholarly studies in ethnomusicology today. Most of ethnomusicological studies have songs that are transcribed using a particular notation system.

Agawu (2003:50) identifies scholars who transcribed traditional songs of certain ethnic groups. These are Hornbostel, who transcribed the music by Pangwe, Ewe, Bateke, Babutu, Luvemba, Makua, Madhona, and Nymezi in the 1920s; Jones transcribed Ghananian and Zambian repertoires in (1959), Nzewi’s (1991) transcriptions of the Nigerian repertoires; Nketia’s Akan funeral dirges of (1955); Rose Brandel’s transcription of African music in the 1950s and 1960s; Kubik’s transcriptions of Eastern, Southern and Central African music, and many more. Transcription of any music relies greatly on the use of special notations. The notations are usually designed by researchers, depending on the nature of the music to be transcribed. Various *mbira* teachers invented their own notation to use for teaching. The sole aim was to improve the learning and teaching of the instrument. Examples of some of the scholars who transcribed *mbira* music of Zimbabwe are Hugh Tracy and Andrew Tracy³⁰ who made use of pulse notation as well as Berliner whose notation combines pulse and western staff notation. Each notation has its own strengths and weaknesses. However, current scholars have been working very hard to come up with the most appropriate notations to transcribe *mbira* music. The *mbira* pieces deposited in the archive were transcribed in both pulse notation and staff notations done using Sibelius software. However, the songs that are accompanied by drumming were transcribed using staff notation only and were compiled to form their own booklet.

³⁰ Andrew Tracy is the son of Hugh Tracy. Both father and son researched extensively African musical instruments and established a big collection of these instruments in the International Library of African Music at Rhodes University, Graham’s town in South Africa. They both wrote a number of articles on *mbira dzaVadzimu* and other African musical instruments.

Songs accompanied by drums were transcribed since they are also performed in alternation with *mbira* pieces during *kurova guva* all-night ceremony. The songs are accompanied by drumming and the text may refer to the context of *kurova guva*. In this case text plays a very important role of conveying message about the escorting of the spirit from the grave to the home. List has this say about text: “Thus we study the texts of the songs sung...the kinetic activities that occur simultaneously with the music” (1979:2). The text depicts the context in which music is performed. Dorson has this to say about the text:

A text represents the basic source, the pure stream, the inviolable document of oral tradition. It comes from the lips of a speaker or singer and is set down with word for word exactness by a collector, using the method of handwritten dictation or mechanical recording (1964:1).

Following Dorson’s thinking, the text of the songs helped in getting the meaning about *kurova guva* out of the oral tradition of the Shona people. In addition, the study managed to collect texts from participants through interviews and some of them were quoted verbatim in this write-up.

4.4.5 Still Photographs (intangible)

Preservation of tangible heritage in the form of still photographs is acceptable in the applied ethnomusicological studies. A photograph is an image of an object taken by a camera. A number of objects are preserved in form of photographs in museums, albums and books. The researcher adopted the use of photographs in preserving some of the objects of the cultural legacy of the Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The archive has a section of still photographs of instruments, traditional materials and *mbira* researchers and makers. The photographs are also classified according to those for performance, musical instruments, traditional objects, and *mbira* researchers. Still photographs are part of visual images which are very important in preserving tangible materials in pictorial form. Banks provides a very valid reason for making use of images like photographs in social research when he says:

...images are ubiquitous in society, and because of this some consideration of visual representation can potentially be included in all studies of society...images in creation and collection of data might be able to reveal some sociological insight that is not accessible by any other means (2007:3).

Likewise, still photographs displayed in the archive represent what is currently available in the society and are a representation of the legacy of Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The idea of preserving legacies in the form of images is informed by cultural material theory. Banks (2007: 60) further unpacks this theory when he says:

...images encountered in the field are objects, or are encountered in material content. As a consequence, such objects can be said to have biographies in the sense that they have previous entanglements with the lives of people, which may prove important to their current roles in society when encountered by the researcher (2007:60).

Still photographs are displayed so that visitors can see the photographs and use their imagination to visualize the role of the images during *kurova guva* or *dandaro* ceremonies. Some of them represent materials which I could not bring into the archive. Each photograph is accompanied by information concerning the date taken, location, depositor, photographer and the description of the image as shown below:

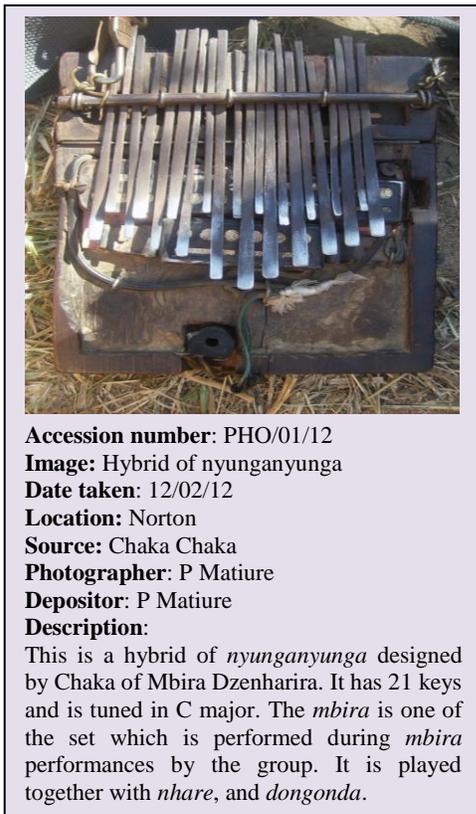


Figure 4.8 Photograph display

4.5 The internal outlook of the archive room

The archive room is located in the Department of Music and Musicology at Midlands State University in a small office in Room NSB 36. I chose this location because the students from this department and from other related departments like Media Studies, Theatre and Arts, and Culture Studies can have access to the materials deposited in the archive. The idea of generating learning material through archives is supported by Nettl when he says:

This (archive) includes the production of text and instructional materials for schools, the support of ethnic festivals, the rebuilding of cultures, all of them dependent on sound and visual records of activities and performances no longer practiced (2005:163).

Similarly, the archive established through this study will go a long way in creating text and learning materials for all levels of education. Below are pictures showing the entrance and the inside part of the archive:

- **Entrance**

The entrance has a poster labeled 'Music Archive' displayed on the door.



Figure 4.9 Entrance to the archive

- **The right side (bottom)**

The right side has the bulk of the materials. The materials are classified according to musical instruments, traditional objects, films and photographs.



Figure 4.10 The right side of the archive (bottom). Photograph taken by author on 24/05/2013

- **The right side (bottom and top)**

Since the room for the archive is small, I decided to hang some the materials on the walls. I made sure I hanged those that are light.



Figure 4.11 The right side of the archive (Top and bottom). Photograph taken by author on 24/05/2013

- **Front view** (Computer with software files, films and still photos, tapes with unedited video clips; DVDs with ethnographic films, and library books)



Figure 4.12 Front view

- **Extreme left side**



Figure 4.13 Left side view

The table below summarizes the quantity of the material deposited in the archive.

Material	Quantity	Description
<i>Mbira</i>	Thirty	They involve <i>mbira dzaVadzimu</i> in different tunings, <i>nyunganyunga</i> , <i>njari</i> and hybrids of <i>mbira dzaVadzimu</i> .
Hand rattles (<i>hosho</i>)	Three pairs	The hand shakers are in two types: those made from gourds and those made from fiber glass.
Traditional drums (<i>ngoma</i>)	Seven	There are different types with different sizes and shapes.
Small traditional hand drum (<i>handinga</i>)	Two	These are played using sticks and are smaller than <i>ngoma</i> .
Clappers (<i>makwa</i>)	Three pairs	They are all made from <i>mukwa</i> .
Horn (<i>hwamanda</i>)	Two	The two are antelope horns.
Paintings	One	This is a painting of two female hands playing <i>mbira</i> . According to the artist, Tendai Tawagwisa, the hands are of Irene Chigamba whom he painted during the 2012 Mbira Symposium.
Photographs	Twenty-six	They include images of researchers of <i>mbira</i> , musical instruments and traditional objects.
Ritual objects	Fifteen	These are materials that are part of the cultural legacy of <i>mbira</i> which are used during <i>kurova guva</i> ceremony.
Films	Seven	The films cover interviews, demonstrations of <i>mbira</i> pieces and recorded traditional songs.

Table 4.5 Summary of some of the materials collected

4.6 Challenges

Usually, archivists are faced with a number of challenges during collection and deposition of materials in the archive. The challenges emanated from role conflict caused by the multifunctional nature of the profession as well as overlapping of roles. The archivist finds him or herself faced with conflicting interests. I also had similar challenges when I engaged in all the roles mentioned above. Sometimes I failed to define my position and found myself shifting roles at certain stages of my study. Sometimes I found myself over emphasizing certain areas at the expense of others. However, from another angle, multiple roles created an opportunity for me to experience the various roles of an archivist.

The other challenge that I encountered was lack of finance. Although both University of KwaZulu-Natal, where I was registered, and Midlands State University, where I am employed assisted this study financially, the money was not enough to buy all the materials that I came

across. I also had a challenge of getting an assistant who could take good films whenever I was participating in performances. Taking films for academic purposes requires someone who is well trained and qualified to engage the theories of syntax and semantics in filming a performance. He/she should have knowledge about when to take a long shot and when to take a close-up shot and so on. I got some assistance from Shadreck Dzingai, one of our senior students in the department. The film clips he captured left out a lot of important details. It is important to note that although the use of an assistant in taking pictures and film is advisable during research, it has its own limitations. The assistant may fail to capture the images according to the researcher's intentions.

The other challenge was that the archive room that I managed to secure is small. It is also used as an office for me and one more staff member. Because of the limited space, materials are crowded in the archive. The limited space made display and arrangement of materials difficult. I hope the University will be able to provide a bigger room for the archive and treat it as part of the university library facilities. The biggest challenge was that I was always overwhelmed with archive work. Collecting, cataloguing and displaying materials at the same time and compiling information about the instruments as well as writing Chapters for the whole PhD thesis demanded a lot of time.

4.7 Conclusion

Collection of materials for an archive is a difficult and yet fascinating activity. It calls for hard work and discipline on the part of the collector and depositor. It also calls for thorough documentation as well as organizational skills in term of cataloguing. Some forms have to be filled in as part of record keeping and cataloguing. The Midlands State University Music Archive, (MUSMA) was established in order to preserve tangible materials that are part of cultural legacies of the Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu* in the context of *kurova guva* and *dandaro* practices. Particular emphasis was placed on traditional *mbira dzaVadzimu* instruments and ritual materials that are usually used during *kurova guva* ritual and *mbira* pieces. *Mbira dzaVadzimu* hybrids and other *mbiras* like *nyunganyunga* which assist in preserving the cultural heritage of *mbira* through performance of *mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces on the *nyunganyunga mbira* during *matadaro* ceremonies were also deposited in the archive.

Tangible materials were collected by paying particular attention to ethical consideration. Letters of consent were signed by participants before they were interviewed and before they agreed to be photographed or sell their material. They also signed forms to show that they were willing to deposit their material in the archive. Materials were classified according to type and use. Some Accession numbers were allocated to these instruments for easy access. Apart from these materials, *mbira* pieces and traditional songs, some photographs and films were also deposited in the archive. Danielson (2001:4) posits that “sound recordings of voices of the past have opened up new imaginative and emotional vistas for numerous individuals and communities.” As an extension of this idea, the archive established includes recordings of both visual and audio images. Every material deposited was accompanied by a card with an accession number and some important information concerning the history of the materials and function during *kurova guva* or *dandaro*. The next Chapter is concerned with archiving intangible heritage of *mbira dzaVadzimu* through collaboration during the 2011 Conference and the 2012 Symposium. It reflects on the proceedings of the 2011 *Mbira* Conference and 2012 *Mbira* Symposium, both conducted at Midlands State University.

CHAPTER 5

CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA AS ARCHIVING SYSTEMS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter focuses on modern ways of preserving the intangible cultural legacy of *mbira* which include contemporary *mbira* shows (*matandaro*), *mbira* conferences and symposiums and formal teaching of *mbira* in institutions. In this case, *mbira* shows, conferences, symposia and formal education are considered as archiving systems in which the cultural legacy of *mbira* is disseminated and preserved. As previously alluded to in this study in Chapter One, I refer to this type of archiving system as 'living archive' since the intangible materials of *mbira* is preserved in living entities as they interact and collaborate. I consider this form of preserving to be very effective in that it is long-lasting. In other words when skills are preserved in people, chances are that the people can further hand the skills over to the next generation there by sustaining the skills for a longer period of time.

People are taken to be living repositories of skills, knowledge and ideologies. Once some aspects of the cultural legacy of *mbira* have been preserved in people then the likelihood is that they will be sustained by being handed over from one generation to the next. The Chapter explains how the 2011 Mbira Conference and the 2012 Mbira Symposium, both organized by the author as part of this study and held at Midlands State University – were incorporated as a way of preserving the intangible cultural of *mbira daVadzimu*.

5.2 Gweru Mbira Conference

Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, several organizations, institutions and associations like National Arts Council and Chibuku Neshamwari Festivals have been working hard to promote *mbira* through *mbira* festivals. The festivals involved performances of *mbira* music as well as other traditional dance styles of Zimbabwe. Although the move has been quite effective in popularizing *mbira* in and outside Zimbabwe, festivals did not create space for the young and the old to collaborate as a way of transmitting the intangible materials and acknowledgement of *mbira* from one generation to another. In order to close this gap, a conference was organized in which culture bearers, *mbira* players, *mbira* makers, *mbira* researchers, *mbira* teachers and

students from schools, colleges and universities came together to share knowledge and skills concerning *mbira*.

The conference was held on the 31st of March 2011 at Midlands State University. The author was assisted by the Department of Music and Musicology at Midlands State University (MSU) in the Faculty of Social Sciences in organizing the conference. The theme of the conference was “Safeguarding Intangible Heritage: Sustaining Our *Mbira* Heritage through Research and Performance.” The aim was to initiate and establish synergies among *mbira* makers, traditional and modern *mbira* players, students from primary and secondary schools, teachers colleges and universities, researchers and community members. This conference marked the beginning of a long journey whose purpose is to preserve the intangible aspects of *mbira dzavadzimu*. The activities involved presentations, performances and workshops. Presentations were on research findings by some of the *mbira* researchers. Performances were done by invited *mbira* ensembles and two workshops were conducted by Tendai Gamadze and Almon Moyo.

In order to make the conference a success, the Department of Music and Musicology in conjunction with Provincial Arts Council in Gweru, held several preparatory meetings. Fifteen members from the Department of Music and Musicology were allocated duties in their respective committees. The committees that were formed were responsible for transport, marketing, stage decoration, liaison, ushering, and designing the programme. The directors of the conference were the Chairperson of the Department, Mrs Shoko, and one of the staff members, Mr. Chikomo. In order to market the conference we displayed some flyers in the university and in Gweru City.

Appendix 10

The participants comprised *mbira* researchers, *mbira* players and scholars. Amongst the *mbira* researchers was Tendai Gamadze of Mbira Dzenharira Ensemble. Tendai Gamadze has researched on *mbira*, especially the modern amplification system of *mbira*. His research enabled his ensemble to produce *mbiras* with clean sound that has less distortion³¹. Another outcome of his research is the composition of *mbira* ensemble, comprising *mbiras* of different registers but

³¹ Sound distortion is the undesired change of waves that are caused by the passing of electronic signals through a circuit. Sound distortions are inevitable; however they need to be reduced so that they do not disturb the quality of the sound.

tuned with the same tonal order. This arrangement has been adopted by most of the modern *mbira* ensembles in Zimbabwe for the same principle. Another *mbira* researcher who attended the conference was Almon Moyo. Almon Moyo is a *mbira* maker whose research culminated in the discovery of alternative materials for making *mbira*. He discovered that the jacaranda tree can be a very good substitute of *mukwa* wood for making *mbira* soundboards.

We invited five *mbira* ensembles, Mbira Dzenharira, Mbira DzeShurugwi, United College of Education, Mbira Ensemble from Midlands State University and Chikumbiro Primary School from Gweru urban. Apart from the teachers who were part of the *mbira* players, other teachers from schools in Gweru were also invited. Since they spend most of their time with children, they have the greatest chances of influencing the children's perceptions and behavior. The presence of teachers was meant to motivate them to go and teach *mbira* and also instill appreciation of the instrument and its music in children.

School children were invited as participants so that they could get exposed to *mbira* at an early age. The schools that were invited were Matongo Primary School, Fletcher High School and Senga Secondary School. Since the frequency of traditional ceremonies where music like *mbira* is performed is now very low, organizing conferences of this nature provides children an opportunity to have access to knowledge about *mbira*. The photograph of some of the students from Senga High School who were waiting for the conference to start is shown in Figure 5.4, photograph 1. The conference was also attended by students from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Arts at Midlands State University. The idea was also to motivate them to engage in researches that are meant to document information concerning *mbira dzaVadzimu* and its position in the Shona society.



Figure 5.1 2011Mbira conference photographs. Photographs by author on 31st March 2011.

Photograph 1

These are students from Fletcher high school which is about two kilometers east of Midlands State University. The students love *mbira* and were brought to the conference by one of the senior teachers from the school. They comprised two girls and two boys.

Photograph 2

Photograph 2 portrays Mbira Dzenharira ensemble members performing on stage. The leader of the ensemble is on the extreme left wearing a green robe. The ensemble brought five members only. One of the ensemble members did not come because he was not feeling well.

Photograph 3

The photograph portrays Tendai Gamadze presenting his speech during the conference.

Photograph 4

The last photograph shows part of the conference participants. These include members of Mbira Dzenharira ensemble, staff members and students from the Department of Music and Musicology and students from Fletcher High School and United College of Music.

5.2.1 Workshops

Workshops play a pivotal role in transmitting skills and knowledge from experts to learners. The aim of a workshop is to improve on the existing knowledge and also to expose participants to the most recent developments in the field of *mbira*. In this study, I employed the use of workshops in order to create an opportunity for participants to learn from experts. When skills and knowledge about *mbira* are inculcated in participants, then the aspects of *mbira dzaVadzimu* is preserved in them. The participants can further impart the skills to the next generation.

The first workshop was conducted by Almon Moyo. His focus was on how to construct *mbira*. The workshop was attended by children from schools and students from United College and Midlands State University. The first part of the presentation covered the rationale behind the construction of *mbira*. The presenter reiterated the point that the continuous existence and consistency of *mbira* is greatly dependent on the ability of the young generation to construct the same *mbira* which the forefathers used to make. Moyo alluded to the fact that innovation contributes to the preservation of the cultural legacy of *mbira*. He went further to say that materials used to make the soundboard and keys of *mbira*, the number of keys, the resonation system and pieces performed on *mbira* are slowly being affected by modernity, thus there is need to study the change and document it.

In the second part, he identified the tools that are used in *mbira* construction and further explained how they are used. One important point he raised was that there are two methods of making *mbira*, namely the traditional method and the modern method. Moyo confirmed that the traditional method makes use of homemade tools and materials available at home and the modern method uses more sophisticated tools and machinery that can quicken the rate of construction. He concluded by encouraging the young students to engage in *mbira* construction so that the supply of the instrument improves. When more and more *mbiras* are constructed, then there are likely to be more *mbira* players and the instrument becomes easy to preserve.

Another workshop was presented by Tichaedza Mauraya³² during 2012 Mbira Symposium who demonstrated how to make *mbira dzaVadzimu*. He started by showing how the soundboard is made, followed by the keys and then mounting of the keys. Below is a flow diagram showing how Tichaedza demonstrated how to make *mbira*.

Step One (making the sound board)



The soundboard is made from *mubvamaropa* wood. The measurements depend on the maker's preferences. The one used by Mauraya was 25cm by 15cm.

Step Two (Making *mbira* keys and fitting them)



³² Tichaedza Mauraya is an *mbira* maker who stays at number 23 Northly Park in Gweru. He was introduced in Chapter One.

He demonstrated how to fit in the keys, starting with the lowest key of the bottom left manual. The keys are fitted in their order from right to left. In this case three keys have been fitted but not tuned. Note that the shortest is not yet in position.

Step Three



After the bottom manual was completed Mauraya went on to add keys to the top left manual and one on the right. The one on the right was fitted at the same time because it belongs to the same register as those in the top left manual. In each case the added key was tuned by comparing it with another key of the same position on a complete *mbira*. The last keys to be fitted were those for the right manual which comprise keys of the highest register (*nheketo/nhetete*). The high notes were just explained since there was not enough time to complete the task. Mauraya promised to complete the *mbira* later on.

Step Four



Figure 5.2 Flow diagram showing the construction of *mbira*. Photograph by author on 19th October 2012

He then fine-tuned the *mbira* and added some buzzers on the *mbira* as the last thing. Participants had a chance to ask questions on how *mbira* is made. Tichaedza Mauraya concluded by saying that the process of making *mbira* differs from individual to individual. Each *mbira* maker has his own method of making *mbira*. Some use traditional methods of using homemade tools and others use modern ways of using electronic machinery. However, the most important thing is to produce a *mbira* that can play *mbira* pieces like *nhemamusasa* and many others. (cf DVD 3 Part III-18:48-20:48)

5.2.2 Paper presentations and speeches

The first to give a speech on the 31st on March 2011 was the Dean of Social Sciences, Mr. Nharo Gwatidzo. The Dean emphasized the need to respect and honor our *mbira* heritage. He challenged the conference organizers to expand their coverage in the next conference to accommodate more groups from various parts of the country. The Dean emphasized the need to preserve our *mbira* heritage by teaching the instrument in schools and colleges. He recommended that the conference should expand and accommodate a wider spectrum of activities and people. He also encouraged *mbira* scholars to intensify their research on *mbira*. For him, *mbira dzaVadzimu* is at the centre of Zimbabwe's social and economic development and is part of our identity. The Dean concluded by saying that throughout the world, *mbira* is greatly associated with Zimbabwe yet, in Zimbabwe, we do not give it the respect it deserves.

The next presenter was Mr. Wonder Maguraushe who is a lecturer in the Department of Music and Musicology at Midlands State University. He presented a paper entitled "Relevance and usefulness of notation in the teaching of *mbira*." He was advocating for the standardization of *mbira* notation as a way of preserving *mbira* songs as well as easing the teaching and learning of the instrument. *Mbira* teachers make use of different notation systems that are used to assist in the teaching and learning *mbira* pieces. It was Wonder Maguraushe's opinion that a standardized notation that can be used in schools for teaching *mbira* across the nation be established. From Maguraushe's presentation once an *mbira* piece has been transcribed using a particular notation system, then it is preserved for future reference by generations to come.

Mr. Claudio Chipendo, another lecturer in the department of Music and Musicology presented a paper entitled "Issues of continuity and change in *mbira*." His presentation highlighted some of the changes that have taken place concerning *mbira*. He identified some of the changes like the materials used to make *mbira*, the context in which it is performed and the learning and teaching approaches of *mbira*. It is true that a number of aspects of *mbira* have changed with time and space. For instance, the instrument is now fused with other Western instruments. Chipendo also identified those aspects of *mbira* that have continued to survive. His paper outlined the changes that have led to the shift of *mbira*. Chipendo maintained that the changes were attributed to cultural dynamism and modern technology and these include the tuning systems, the material used to make the resonators, and also the songs played on *mbira* have changed. He further suggested that there is need to guard against loss of our important heritage of *mbira dzaVadzimu* and this can be done through documentation of the instrument.

It is important to note that musical cultures of the world are ever-changing. As a result, some changes are experienced as the music migrates to other places where it is concretized with other musical cultures. Globalization and cosmopolitanism have both caused some changes in *mbira* music as indicated by Turino (2000). It is important for ethnomusicologists to take stock of the extent to which traditional music is experiencing some changes and attempt to document and retard the change where possible. Otto contends that, "What is problematic about African civilization is how to salvage, preserve and maintain their great cultures, which are in danger of being lost in the same way as the folk music tradition has been lost to the West" (1998:6).

The presentation that followed Chipendo was given by Mr. Tendai Gamadze who was the guest speaker of the day (Figure 5.4, photograph 3). He was chosen to be the guest of honor because of his vast experience in *mbira* research, *mbira*-making and *mbira*-playing. He has also contributed to the revival of *mbira* through the formation of Mbira DzeNharira Ensemble which performs in restaurants and beer halls during *matandaro* ceremonies. His presentation was basically on how he formed the ensemble, Mbira Dzenharira. Gamadze shared with the participants the importance of knowledge about metals when making *mbira* keys. He also mentioned the need to preserve the heritage of *mbira dzaVadzimu* since it is one of the most sacred instruments in Zimbabwe.

Gamadze also highlighted the fact that his involvement in *mbira* shows in urban areas is one way of preserving *mbira dzaVadzimu*. As long as *mbira* players continue to play the instrument even outside traditional contexts, the pieces played on the instrument continue to exist. Gamadze encouraged more *mbira* ensembles to be formed so that more people are exposed to *mbira* music during shows.

Miss Abigail Sivanda, who is Gweru's Provincial Arts Manager, gave a very informative presentation. Her speech emphasized the role of Arts Councils in promoting talent as well as preserving cultural heritage. She maintained that as Zimbabweans, we should be proud of our identity and should not be fooled to shun our music and adopt foreign music. She concluded by saying that, we are what we are because of our music and that music permeates all our social and spiritual activities.

5.2.3 Evaluation of the Conference

Towards the end of the conference, some questionnaires were administered to twenty participants. *Mbira* ensemble leaders whose groups performed during the conference were interviewed. (Refer to appendix 1) All (100%) the participants interviewed indicated that the idea of organizing *mbira* conferences of this nature was long overdue. They admitted that the conference was a success and that they benefited a lot from the presentations, speeches and performances. They also learned a lot about the history, role, and performance of *mbira*. They were very happy to meet and mingle with mature professional *mbira* players, especially members of Mbira Dzenharira.

There was 100% agreement by interviewed participants that they will continue to attend the conference since it will be an annual event. Issues concerning the introduction of 'The School of *Mbira*,' as a vision were discussed at length during lunch time. The conference delegates agreed that a symposium be held in 2013 and asked if more *mbira* ensembles and presenters could be invited. Generally, the conference was successful in initiating the move to preserve Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu* through performances, presentations and collaborations. The interaction of school children, students and adults created a rich atmosphere in which knowledge and skills about *mbira* were not only shared but also handed over from the elders to the young. The children who attended the conference did not perform but had a chance to interact with *mbira* players. They

also benefited from paper presentations. A photograph of some of the participants who attended the 2011 conference is shown in Figure 5.2, photograph 4. They comprised *mbira* players, *mbira* makers, researchers, protagonists (*vasharukwa*), lecturers, university students, secondary school students, college students, primary school children and community members.

5.2.4 Challenges

Although the conference was a success, there were some challenges that were faced. The major one was lack of finance. Banks, retail outlets and individual business people promised to sponsor the conference but nothing materialized. Some *mbira* ensembles failed to attend because the Department was unable to provide them with transport to come to Gweru. The events in the programme were too many to be covered in a day and, because of this, some of the events were rushed. The other challenge was that the proceedings of the conference were continuously interrupted by electricity power cuts. However, against all these odds, the conference managed to achieve its goal of creating space for both the young and the old to share ideas concerning the *mbira dzaVadzimu*. Knowledge and skills were transmitted from the elders to the young.

5.3 Mbira Symposium

As part of this study, a symposium was held in order to preserve the intangible aspects of *mbira* on the 19th of October 2012 in the Great Hall at Midlands State University. This was a follow-up of the 2011 Conference and a lot of groundwork had been done in preparation for the symposium. Several meetings were held and preparations involved all the members of staff and students in the Department of Music and Musicology. In order to make the event more meaningful, I decided to involve two officials from the National Arts Council and one community member. Each member of staff was assigned a task and the Chairperson of the Department of Music and Musicology, Mr.s Tendai Shoko, the leader of *mbira* ensemble in the department, Mr. Elijah Chikomo, the Provincial Arts Manager, Midlands Province, and I coordinated the events and took turns to chair the meetings. The Research Board sponsored the symposium with \$4 023.00

The 2012 Mbira Symposium was characterized by a large turn-up of participants, including *mbira* researchers, *mbira* players, *mbira* makers, college students, lecturers, university students, school children and community members. The table below summarizes the attendance:

Category	Institution/Names	Number	Totals
Primary Schools	Matongo Primary School	10	48
	Senga Primary School	10	
	CJR Primary School	8	
	Fletcher High School	12	
	Thornhill High School	8	
College students	United College of Education	15	18
	Midlands Music Academy	3	
University students	Midlands State University	80	80
Associations	Provincial Arts Council	2	2
Lecturers	Mary Mount Teachers College	20	23
	United College of Education	1	
	Midlands State University	2	
Mbira makers	Tendai Gamadze, Cosmas Magaya	2	2
Exhibitors	Perminus Matiure	1	1
Visual Artists	Tendai Tawagwisa	1	1
Businessman	Mr. Obry Chamboko	1	1
Presenters	Dr Mhiripiri, Dr Matiure, Claudio Chipendo, Cosmas Magaya Rev Bayethe Dumisane (Principal Director Ministry of Ed and Culture), P Matiure (MSU lecturer), G Dube (MSU student)	7	7
<i>Mbira</i> ensembles	Mbira Dzenharira	8	44
	Mawungira Enharira	8	
	Mhembero Mbira Ensemble	5	
	Zimbabwe Mbira Ensemble	9	
	Zvirimudeze	6	
	Musicians at large	2	
	Dual iLembe	5	
	Muck Mbira Ensemble	5	
	Mai Mutingo (solo)	1	
	Ms Sharon Asoka	1	
Community members	Gweru urban	60	60
Grand Total			293

Table 5.1 Composition of participants

The large turn-out is a clear indication that people are willing to learn *mbira*. The university students were the greatest number making up 80 (25%) because all the students from the Department of Music and Musicology and students from other related departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences attended. The programme covered speeches, presentations, exhibitions and

performances (Table 5.3). The symposium was supposed to start at 0800 hours and end around 1710 hours.





Figure 5.3 Presenters and speakers during the 2012 Mbira Symposium. All photographs were taken by the author except number (3) which was taken by Shadreck Dzingai on 19 October 2012 in the Great Hall at Midlands State University.

To open the symposium, the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Paul Bajila, invited the Chairperson of the Department of Music and Musicology, Mrs Tendai Shoko (Figure 5.13, photograph 5), to give a welcome speech. In her welcome speech, she highlighted that it is sad to realise that *mbira* is given more respect and space outside Zimbabwe than within the country. She indicated that one of the aims of the symposium was to create space for the instrument through performance and presentations. To quote her, she said:

The reason why we have decided to conduct this symposium is that *mbira* belongs to Zimbabwe. We want them to be more common in Zimbabwe than in America and other countries. We want our children like those who are here from Cecil John Rhodes and Senga to grow knowing more about this instrument. If you are a Zimbabwean, you should be proud to be associated with this occasion (Speech, 19 October 2012).

Mrs Tendai Shoko called on Zimbabweans to make an effort to play *mbira* so that the *mbira* is kept alive. She also indicated that the proceedings of the day will embrace paper presentations, displays, performances, and interaction among participants. After the introductions, the acting Dean, Dr Muhlahlo (Figure 5.3, photograph 10), in his opening remarks emphasized the need to respect our heritage, especially the *mbira*. He promised that the university will continue to fund similar functions as it is the mandate of the institution to support programmes that are organised to preserve heritage.

5.3.1 Paper presentations

Several national level and international symposia are held annually or bi-annually where participants meet to present academic papers, demonstrate certain skills or engage in panel discussions on a particular topic. Such conferences have become platforms where ideas are interrogated and peer-reviewed for publication purposes. In a way, such conferences or symposia enhance the preservation of knowledge through collaboration. The presentations during 2012 Mbira Symposium at Midlands State University were all about preservation of the cultural heritage of *mbira*.

The first paper was presented by Godfrey Dube (Figure 5.3, photograph 2), a fourth-year student in the Department of Music and Musicology. His paper discussed the need to preserve the legacy of *mbira* from a student's point of view. In his presentation he challenged other students who did not manage to prepare papers to present, and he further observed that:

We have come together as the custodians of *mbira*, to showcase and exhibit tangible and non-tangible artifacts of our tradition in form of *mbira*. By doing this, we are reminding each other to continue observing our culture, identity and tradition. And this platform was set for us to showcase innovations on the traditional *mbira* for it to fit into the contemporary context (Unpublished Symposium Proceedings, 19 October 2012).

Dube's statement is in line with this study's focus on preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of *mbira* through displaying traditional materials as well as organizing some events that assist in preserving the intangible heritage of *mbira*.

The second paper presented by Claudio Chipendo (Figure 5.3, photograph 8) was entitled "*Mbira* in the two worlds." He made a comparative analysis of the role of *mbira* in Africa, focusing on Zimbabwe and the Diaspora. He highlighted that, while *mbira* has managed to maintain its status in and outside Zimbabwe, it has shown some significant changes caused by a number of factors. Chipendo indicated that "factors like colonialism, modernism, globalization and traveling cultures have caused some changes among African people and instrument as well as musical practices and performance of *mbira*" (Symposium Proceedings, 19 October 2012).

The author's presentation followed Claudio Chipendo's paper (Figure 5.3, photograph 3). The aim was to help participants become aware of the purpose of the symposium which was to preserve the cultural heritage of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. He further justified the choice of the theme "Preserving the heritage of *mbira* through performance and collaboration" and how it relates to his study. The aims were:

- to create an opportunity for *mbira* lovers, players, makers and researchers to collaborate and create synergies where possible.
- to allow a deliberate transmission of *mbira* playing skills from the elders, professional players and *mbira* makers to the school children, college and university students.
- to preserve the cultural heritage of *mbira* through performance and collaboration.

I went further to give the background of how *mbira* was like in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. I also highlighted the causes of the decline of the cultural legacy of *mbira* and the sacred contexts in which the instrument was usually performed. The last part of the paper explored on the evolution of *matandaro mbira* shows in towns. My presentation challenged participants to think seriously about the need to share experiences and ways of preserving *mbira*.

The paper that followed was presented by Dr Sheasby Matiure (Figure 5.3, photograph 9) Dr Sheasby Matiure is a lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe. His paper was about "The *mbira* in the Diaspora". The main focus was on expansionism overseas and reductionism at home. As *mbira* player and researcher who has spent five years in America as an artist in residence, Dr Matiure through personal experience as well as his PhD studies came to conclude that as *mbira* migrated to overseas countries, it experienced expansionism in the Diaspora while at the same

time showing reductionism³³ at home in Zimbabwe. Dr Sheasby Matiure's paper clearly spelt out how *mbira* teaching was initiated by Kwanongoma College of Music and how it eventually migrated to America. He also gave a comparative analysis of the state of *mbira* in Zimbabwe and in America. Dr Matiure also gave a historical perspective of the *mbira* and reminded the participants what the late Dr Dumisan Maraire used to say about the spread of *mbira*, "*Mbira dzatambarara serumhodzi*", which translated to: "The *mbira* has spread all over the world like a pumpkin plant." He confirmed that what is happening here at home is not the same as what is happening overseas. In his words, he said, "*Zviri kuitika kumusha zvishoma pane zviri kuitika overseas*." This translates to: "What is happening at home is less than what is happening overseas" (Paper presentation, *Mbira* Symposium, 19 October 2012).

Dr Matiure's paper was part of his PhD findings and very informative and detailed. The participants benefited a lot from this presentation as it traced how *mbira* found its way to America. He attributed its migration to America to contributions by *mbira* players like Dr Dumi Maraire, Mujuru family, Irene Chigamba (who was present at the symposium), Tute Chigamba, the father of Irene, Cosmas Magaya (who was also present on the day), Beauler Dyoko, Musekiwa Chingodza, Solomon Murungu, Mbira Dzenharira, Mawungira Enharira, Mbira Dzemuninga, and the presenter³⁴.

Dr Matiure also identified *mbira* researchers both at home and in the Diaspora. His main concern was about how *mbira* is gaining more prominence in America and other countries in the Diaspora than in Zimbabwe, its home. His sentiments are in line with the focus of this study which is to preserve the intangible aspects of *mbira* through organization of symposia and *mbira* shows.

The presentation that followed was Cosmas Magaya (Figure 5.3, photograph 11). He is one of the great *mbira* players who has successfully put Zimbabwe *mbira* on the map. Magaya comes from Mhondoro, south-west of Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. He was very instrumental

³³ In this context the presenter used the word 'reductionism' to refer to the decline of the sacred efficacy of *mbira* in Zimbabwe

³⁴ Most of these *mbira* players went to North America because they were sponsored by American researchers who wanted them to teach other Americans *mbira*. To date there are many Americans who are now well trained *mbira* players.

in providing some of the information used by Berliner to write his monograph, 'The Soul of Mbira'. In his presentation, he narrated how the documentation of *mbira* started in Zimbabwe. Magaya also explained how he helped Berliner with information concerning *mbira*. He also explained to the participants how he teaches *mbira* in America and how people from other parts of the world appreciate the *mbira*. Magaya also made reference to the recent visit to Germany where he went together with the author, Laina Gumboreshumba³⁵ and Dr Sheasby Matiure who presented before him.

Cosmas Magaya was followed by Dr Nhamo Mhiripiri, a lecturer in the Department of Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University (Figure 5.3, photograph 7). Dr Nhamo Mhiripiri has written extensively about contemporary music in Zimbabwe, especially on issues concerning the development of *sungura*, women in *sungura* and copyright issues in music. In his presentation, he first gave a brief background of how he got interested in music. His paper articulated issues concerning liveliness in performance and performative writing. He also mentioned that he has religiously followed the group, Zvirimudeze *mbira* ensemble. According to him, the group's performance provoked serious academic engagement with him. He was compelled to think of theorizing performance and was prompted to write a paper to advance the theory of liveliness as it relates to performative writing.

He applauded the concept of academic professionals taking a keen interest in preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira* through performance in *matandaro* ceremonies. Usually, *mbira* playing has been an activity for non-academics. The involvement of academic professionals in the performance of *mbira* has categorically invited other different professionals to develop love for *mbira*. In his words, Dr Nhamo Mhiripiri confirmed that:

From Chamboko restaurant where we meet to listen to Zvirimudeze, I have seen people from diverse social backgrounds coming to meet because Zvirimudeze is performing. Examples are the city surveyor, managers and several professionals (Unpublished Symposium Proceedings, 19 October 2012).

³⁵ Laina Gumbareshumba is the daughter of Sekuru Gumboreshumba who taught Andrew Tracy *mbira dzaVadzimu*. She is also a great *mbira* player and researcher. Currently she is a PhD student at Rhodes University.

According to him, *mbira* has a crucial role to play in social cohesion and in healing. In conclusion, Dr Mhiripiri encouraged people to place *mbira* at the centre of our social activities. His paper was an eye-opener to many participants as it challenged them to consider theorization of *mbira* performance as a way of preserving the cultural legacy of the instrument.

The guest speaker was Reverend Bayethe Damasane who is the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (Figure 5.3, photograph 6). Reverend Damasane is a distinguished artist commentator who is gifted in speaking about cultural issues. The guest speaker gave a very enlightening speech and encouraged *mbira* players to continue playing the instrument without any prejudice. The guest speaker also discussed the role of the Ministry of Education, Arts, Sport and Culture in preserving cultural heritage in general and cultural legacy of *mbira* in particular.

The Director was very clear on the need to consider *mbira* as one of Zimbabwe's masterpieces³⁶ which is part of the UNESCO inventory list under convention of 2003 which is "the promotion and protection of the intangible heritage (cf DVD 3 Part 1- 01:11 – 03:38). He maintained that awarding *mbira* that status has attracted the need to preserve it. Damasane further indicated that associations whose mandate is to preserve the seemingly dying cultural heritage are ready to fund anyone whose endeavor is to protect *mbira*. The guest speaker was very much impressed by the idea of an *mbira* symposium as well as how it was organized. As such, he advised the organizers to increase the attendance in the 2013 Mbira Symposium. He encouraged the founder of the symposium to team up with him so that he can assist in sourcing sponsorship for 2013 Mbira Symposium from UNESCO. For the presentations refer to DVD 3 Part 1-00:25-12:03).

5.3.2 Exhibition of traditional objects and *mbira dzaVadzimu* hybrids

Visual ethnography is one way of representing a culture's heritage. As a way of enhancing the preservation of the cultural of *mbira*, I decided to include displays (Figure 5.10) during this symposium. I managed to display three *mbira* hybrids and traditional objects that are part of the

³⁶ Masterpieces are tangible materials that resemble the identity of a country and must be protected against extinction.

legacy of *mbira* and several traditional materials. The three *mbira* hybrids are *nyunganhare*, *karimbashauro* and *karimbamutatu*.

Nyunganhare is a hybrid that I made by combining the left keys of *mbira dzaVadzimu* or *nhare* and the right keys of *nyunganyunga*. I coined the *mbira nyunganhare* to imply that part of *nyunganyunga* was combined with *nhare*. During the exhibition, I displayed some flyers with photographs and flow diagrams showing how this *mbira* evolved as shown below:



Nhare



Nyunganyunga

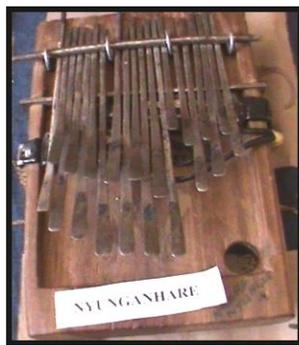


Figure 5.4 Flow diagram of the evolution of nyunganhare

The other hybrid that the author exhibited was *karimbashauro* which developed from *karimba* also called *nyunganyunga*. Kwanongoma *karimba* which was designed by Andrew Tracy with the help of Jege Tapera³⁷ has fifteen keys with the top left and top right manuals having keys of the same pitch. Nyunganyunga is the *mbira* commonly taught in schools and colleges because of its small size and few keys. Each time when the author played *mbira* pieces, which are usually played on *mbira dzaVadzimu* like *nhemamusasa* on *nyunganyunga*, notes were not enough to produce the lead (*kushaura*) line common in *mbira* music. In order to preserve the *mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces by playing them on *nyunganyunga*, he added some keys on the left top manual of *nyunganyunga* to enable it to produce the lead line.

The third hybrid which was exhibited is *karimbamutatu*. This is the author's latest hybrid which is a combination of three *mbiras* mounted on one soundboard. *Karimbamutatu* attracted the attention of participants because of its shape and size. Apart from being a solo instrument, *karimbamutatu* is also an ornament. He made it in such a way that, when not played, one can display it in his house. The shape of the resonator is an imitation of the usual arrangement of the clay pots (*zvirongo*) in a Shona hut as shown below:



Figure 5.5 Karimbashauro and clay pots

³⁷ Jege Tapera is the one who brought *karimba* to Kwanongoma College of Music in Bulawayo after getting it from Mozambique. He worked with Andrew Tracey to develop the current *nyunganyunga* which they named Kwanongoma *karimba*.

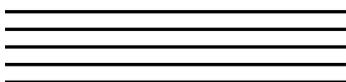
The *mbira* embeds some philosophical underpinnings that resonate with the Shona ideologies of life. The first one is the circular shape common on the three resonators which symbolizes African thought which is believed to be embracive and circular. The different layers of this *mbira* signify the African philosophy of hierarchy (*kukwira gomo hupoterera*), that is, the bottom big resonator symbolizes the majority of the members of the society, who when they want to communicate with God, they do it via their ancestors who will then connect the living with God (Mwari). The middle resonator symbolizes the ancestors whose duty is to intermediate between the living and God. The top resonator symbolizes God who is the most high.

The keys have a different interpretation. The notes in the bottom *mbira* are the men's voice whose sound is full of bravery. If the notes are played they produce the lowest register. The group of notes in the middle *mbira* symbolizes the women whose voices are within the middle register. The top *mbira* has notes that symbolize the children of the village. They have the highest register. In other words the *mbira* can resemble the theory of cosmology which can be interpreted at village, clan or territorial level.

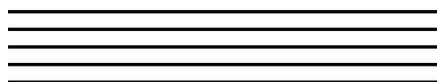
As participants toured the displays, I demonstrated the different combinations that can be created when playing *karimbamutatu* as follows:



Combination 1



Combination 2

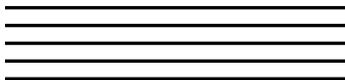


The top *mbira* has the highest register and produces the lead. surrogates the melody line.

The middle right and bottom left It also produces a very interesting combination which has he middle and bottom keys



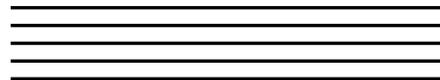
Combination 3



This combination produces the low sound of the *mbira* which is suitable for bass line.



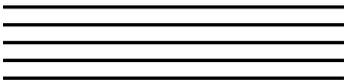
Combination 4



The middle *mbira* is suitable for the rhythm and its sound lies within the Middle register of the whole *mbira*.



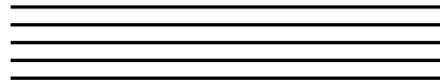
Combination 5



This combination has notes of the top Right and bottom left.



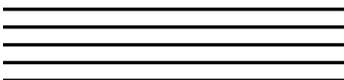
Combination 6



The middle left and combined with the bottom right.



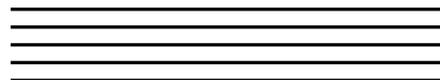
Combination 7



Top left is combined with the bottom right right



Combination 8



Top left is combined with the middle

Figure 5.6 Combinations found on karimbamutatu

Many participants had a chance to interact with some of the traditional materials like the moon-shaped axe, the spear and the walking stick which are usually held by spirit medium when dancing in *mapira* ceremonies that are hard to come by these days. Below is a photograph showing part of the materials displayed during the conference.



Figure 5.10 Displays during the symposium. The photograph was taken by the author on 19 October 2012 in the Great Hall at Midlands State University.

Before breaking for lunch, participants were also given time to visit the Midlands State University Music Archive discussed in the previous Chapter. Comments from participants reflected that they learned a lot from the materials displayed in the archive. Some of them, especially children, said that they were seeing some of the materials for the first time. They took photographs of some of the materials for their own personal use. It was their first time to see such a collection of traditional musical instruments. One lecturer from United College of Education in Bulawayo (UCE) ³⁸promised to establish his own archive at the college after being inspired by what he saw in the archive.

5.3.3 Symposium feedback

Soon after the symposium, I distributed some questionnaires to be filled by participants (Refer to Appendix 3). There was 100% agreement that the symposium was very successful. People gave positive comments and indicated that the symposium has opened a lot of debate and raised

³⁸UCE is a college that trains teachers to teach at primary level. Kwanongoma College of Music is currently functioning under the administration of this college.

awareness among the participants. The idea of involving children and youth from primary through tertiary levels was appreciated. The majority of the participants indicated that the performances, especially by primary school children were the most interesting part of the symposium. There was also 100% agreement that such symposia go a long way in archiving intangible elements of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The table below summarizes the aspects that were preserved through presentations and workshops:

Item	Mode of preservation
<i>Mbira</i> playing techniques	Demonstrations during workshop
Knowledge about ritual objects	Paper presentation
History of <i>mbira</i>	Paper presentation
Tuning system	Paper presentation
<i>Mbira</i> making skills	Demonstration during workshop
<i>Mbira</i> pieces	Paper presentation
Knowledge on what constitute the cultural of <i>mbira</i>	Paper presentation
Love and appreciation of <i>mbira</i>	Collaboration and paper presentation
Varieties and hybrids of <i>mbira</i>	Paper presentation and workshop
Knowledge about the sacred and secular functions of <i>mbira</i>	Paper presentation
Knowledge on parts of <i>mbira</i>	Paper presentation
Knowledge about the musical function of <i>mbira</i> during <i>kurova guva</i> and <i>dandaro</i>	Paper presentation
Knowledge about the non-musical functions of <i>mbira</i> during <i>kurova guva</i> and <i>dandaro</i>	Paper presentation
Issues of continuity and change in <i>mbira</i>	Discussion

Table 5.2 Aspects was preserved during the symposium

The negative comments about the symposium were that too many activities were packed in one day. The suggestion that was given was that next time two days should be allocated, one for presentations and exhibitions and the other day for performances. They also complained that presentations should not come after a performance because this could disturb the flow of the

events. The author found these comments to be very helpful and took note of them for the betterment of the next symposium.

5.4 Conclusion

Paper presentations and displays are a modern method of preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira dzavadzimu*. The approaches are a special type of a 'living archive' in which space for participants to collaborate on issues concerning the intangible cultural legacy of *mbira* is created. Participants benefited from the discussions, presentations and displays during the conference and the symposium that were held at Midlands State University. All the participants administered with questionnaires concurred that the sacred function of *mbira* and materials associated with it are slowly declining. The reasons they gave include the advent of Christianity, the adoption of modern music practices and the shift in the use of *mbira* from the rural environment to urban. What they said resonates with what some of the participants³⁹ that I interviewed during my field work said.

They also appreciated the evolution of contemporary *matandaro mbira* shows which play a pivotal role in preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira*. However, they realized that a lot of changes have taken place since *mbira* migrated from rural areas to towns. Changes witnessed during the conference and the symposiums are the resonation system and the song played on *mbira*. The other issue was that the perception that women must not touch or play *mbira* has changed. There is an increase in the number of women who now play *mbira* in Zimbabwe. The participants also appreciated the whole idea of preserving the intangible cultural legacy of *mbira* using a 'living archive', which involves preserving knowledge, skills and values in people's memory.

³⁹ These participants are Muzuva Muhwati, Cosmas Zambuko, Abraham Zharare and Kudzirai Chidzambwa all introduced in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 6

PERFORMANCES AND FORMAL EDUCATION

6.1 Introduction

Performance of traditional music, especially during rituals or ceremonies is one way of sustaining the music so that it survives for a longer time. As the participants get involved in music making, they share several aspects of music. Old and new songs are rehearsed and new skills of playing instruments and singing are developed as performance takes place. Most of the African cultures learn music as they perform during ceremonies. Even composition is done through improvisation as performance unfolds. Tinashe Mandityira⁴⁰ who is an *mbira* player and teacher at Zimbabwe College of Music has this to say about improvisation, *Pese pandinoridza mbira ndinowedzera maridziro matsva panziyo dzandinoridza kana dzandinonzwa*: “Whenever I play *mbira* I add new lines to the pieces that I play or the lines that I hear” (Interview 17th of August 2012). The same point is echoed by Azim who says “I realize that the way I improvise derives from the way I hear a piece during each moment I am playing” (1999:179). In other words learning occurs as performance unfolds as clearly explained by Nzewi when he says “In African sense, learning is an interactive performance experience, while performance is never-ending learning experience” (2007:14). The same is experienced during an *mbira* performance especially among the performers.

Based on Mandityira, Azim and Nzewi’s views it can be concluded that performance is a highly interactive learning institution. As such it is one way of transmitting the cultural legacies of *mbira dzaVadzimu* to the young. Intangible cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*, which embraces the *mbira* pieces, the playing technique, the dance, the singing styles and tuning systems, can be preserved through performance in *matandaro* ceremonies and in schools and colleges since there are very few *mapira* ceremonies being conducted in rural areas. As part of this study the author organized some *mbira* performances in form of *mbira* shows in which his ensemble “Zvirimudeze” and other ensembles performed in night clubs and institutions. The idea was to expose people to *mbira* music through performance during *mbira* shows. These *mbira*

⁴⁰ Tinashe Mandityira is a *mbira* teacher at Zimbabwe College of Music in Harare. He was also introduced in Chapter 1 Table 1.4.

performances were organized as a way of substituting *mapira* ceremonies which are slowly disappearing in Shona societies.

Several shows have been organized in Gweru and Harare. However, I decided to focus on Hwedza and one major show at Midlands Hotel in Gweru. In an attempt to make the presentation of the activities during the Hwedza show engaging, I adopted Barz's⁴¹ (1997) use of different font styles to represent different voices in narrating the proceedings of the show. In the narratives, I used font face agency FB to represent my voice, Tunga to represent the reflective voice and Bodoni MT to represent interaction with my field notes. I chose to use Barz's style to reflect on Hwedza show so as to make my reflections of the show engaging.

Another very effective modern method of preserving knowledge is through formal education. When skills and concepts are taught to children, the same children can use them in future and also transmit them to the next generation. To that end it is important to introduce *mbira* to contemporary children when they are still young. Although this project is meant to benefit children in many schools in Gweru urban, I decided to start with Senga Primary school. This school is adjacent to Midlands State University where the author works so it was easy for me to constantly visit the school to teach the children *mbira*.

Many schools are willing to teach *mbira* but the problem is that they do not have the instruments and teachers who can teach *mbira*. It can be noted that many Shona people are in the business of constructing *mbira* and exporting them to overseas countries where they are bought with prices ranging from US \$150 to US \$200. They are earning a living from the heritage left for us by our forefathers. My argument is that can they not plough back by donating a few *mbiras* to schools as a way of empowering the young as well as facilitating learning of the instrument. I shared this concept with Tichaedza Mauraya⁴² and he agreed to donate twelve *mbiras* to Senga Primary School. I then used the *mbiras* for teaching children at this school. The ensemble then participated during the 2012 Symposium alongside other ensembles from Gweru, Harare and

⁴¹Barz's use of different fonts to represent different voices was adopted in this study in order to make my presentation more engaging. The approach makes it possible for me to present my reflections, field notes and analysis in a clear and concise manner.

⁴²Tichaedza was introduced in Chapter Table 1.4

Norton. This Chapter discusses how *mbira* performances during *mbira* shows and the teaching of *mbira* in schools can be used to preserve intangible of *mbira* in people.

6.2 Performances during *Mbira* Conference

Mbira performance is a complex system that involves aspects of recreation, interaction, group solidarity, socialization, drama, poetry, acquisition and development of skills and entertainment. Like any other African society the Shona embrace singing, dancing, gestures and artistic displays when they perform *mbira* music. Concerning the relationship between recreation and entertainment Nzewi maintains that;

The principles of recreation and entertainment are embedded in all the social and human objectives or contexts of an artistic display, which is the central idea of creating, acting or enjoying together and which informs the principle of “play” as a generic term for the musical arts in some African cultures” (2003:13).

Nzewi is very explicit about the nature of recreation and entertainment in African cultures. He is correct to say that Africans do not separate entertainment and social interaction and this is also true for the Shona. Whenever they perform *mbira* whether for sacred or secular purposes, they make and enjoy music together as a group (*humwe*). Music performance becomes a communal involves every member of a society. When they perform as a group their individual efforts are combined to form one communal thing. Any contribution that a participant makes during performance is for the benefit of the community. It is done with the others in mind and individualism ceases to exist.

Even composition of songs and pieces is done for the benefit of the community. Agawu gives a clear theorization of composition in the African sense when he takes composition to be “done with actual or imagined others, as if the composer were a plural rather than a singular” (2003:5). Improvisation is common in *mbira* performance. *Mbira* players add lines in the process of performance. An experienced *mbira* player, that is, one who has played the instrument for a long time usually creates several variations⁴³ of the same pieces.

Mbira performances are not only responsible for linking the living and the supernatural world but are also a special way of archiving the cultural legacy of the Shona *mbira*. Seeger (1980:11)

⁴³ Variations are different improvised ways of articulating notes of a particular *mbira* piece.

suggested that ethnographers should answer the questions of What, Where, How, When, By Whom, and Why in order to understand the nature of a performance context. In other words *mbira* performance during a *kurova guva* embraces musical instruments, and material culture (what), it is conducted in a traditional hut, and the main ritual is conducted at the grave (where), the performance is done in a special way with music alternating with rituals and traditional brew drinking (how), it is done during a particular period of the year, that is every month except November and on any day of the week (when), some people have to perform certain duties for example *mbira* players play *mbira*, women sing, ululate and dance, men sing and dance, and elders lead the proceedings of the ceremony and rituals (by whom), and it has to be done for a reason, that is to escort the spirit of the deceased home (why). In the case of a *kurova guva mbira* performance, it is important to note that every performance is either for socializing the participants or authenticating a ritual.

Kurova guva ceremony acts as a living archiving system in which the cultural legacy of *mbira* is preserved in people through performance. What happens is that songs of *mbira* are not written on paper or recorded electronically; instead they are preserved in people's memories through oral means. Traditional songs, procedures followed when conducting rituals, texts, gestures, norms and values are all transmitted orally during *kurova guva* ceremony with *mbira* performances as the core. There are no written records about the songs and procedures. Nzewi (2007:43) refers to the system as 'orality'.

'Orality' can be viewed as a process by which traditional values are transmitted and preserved in living people by oral means. Nzewi gives a comprehensive comparison of 'orality' and literacy when he says:

Orality is knowledge regenerated and advanced through pragmatic, infinite re-creativity; literacy is knowledge patented and re-experienced as a finite product. Orality commands knowing and expressing knowledge in the context of fellow human interacting and sensing...Orality coerces contextual sensitivity, alertness of mind; literacy emphasizes calculated procedures (2007:43).

Orality can also be considered as a deliberate process by which cultural practices are shared among members with very little written records. Communal thought guided by elders' knowledge base becomes the corner posts for indigenous knowledge system. Riddles, proverbs and

figurative expressions are part of this indigenous knowledge system used to express feelings and ideas in various cultural practices common in the Shona society.

The Shona perception of *mbira* performance practice is drawn from the philosophy of *unhu/ubuntu*. Several definitions of the term *ubuntu/unhu* have been suggested by a number of authors like Kamwangamalu (1999), Bengu (1996), Makhudu (1993), Mthembu (1996), Prinsloo (1996), and Laden (1997). The most convincing definition of *ubuntu* is given by Laden when he says, “*Ubuntu* is understood as a collective solidarity whereby the self is perceived primarily in relation to the perception of others, that is, persons are perceived less as dependent of one another, and as more interdependent of one another” (1997:134). Drawing from Laden's definition, it can be noted that some of the Shona consider *mbira* performance as a collective involvement by all members of the village. It can also be defined as a psycho-physical activity in which members of a village engage in sonic, physical, spiritual and social enactment. The performance is usually directed towards achievement of a communal goal. Performance in this context embraces musical activities like singing, playing instruments, gestures, dancing, clapping and ululating. For some performance practice enhances solidarity, identity and group cohesion. It is one way in which the Shona fulfill a shared common vision. By and large it is a preservation process where norms, values, ethos, and legacies of music are archived in the members' memories of their culture.

As part of this study I organized some *mbira* shows during a conference in 2011 and a symposium in 2013 at Midlands State University and another *mbira* show at Hwedza Growth Point. During the conference about five *mbira* ensembles performed as part of practical demonstrations. The ensembles comprised students from colleges and universities as well as elders from around Gweru. The students who performed first were part of the *mbira* ensemble from Midlands State University Department, Music and Musicology. They performed two songs one derived from *taireva* piece entitled *Zirume rekuparika* and the other was a folk *jiti* song entitled *muhozi*. The text of the song *Zirume rekuparika* is as follows:

Lead: *Zirume rekuparika rakarara jongwe
rikarira maihwe ndaneta ini*
 Response: *Ahoi kaviri kaviri*
 Lead: *Nezuro maiva kwavaHosi
mangwana muri kwamai Ncube
nhasi muriwo kwangu*
 Response: *Ahoi vahosi vachema*

The polygamist slept until the cock
crowed mother I am tired
Ahoi twice more
 Yesterday you were with the first wife
 Next day you will be with Ncube
 Today you are mine
Ahoi the first wife has cried

The text of the song warns men to avoid marrying many wives and stick to one wife that they can afford to look after. It increases awareness on the importance of family planning in the Shona society. Because of the limitation of natural resources, the government encourages people to plan their families carefully. Performing the piece *taireva*, one of the oldest songs played on *mbira* during *kurova guva* in the presence of elders and the young, is one way of preserving the piece in people while at the same time entertaining them.

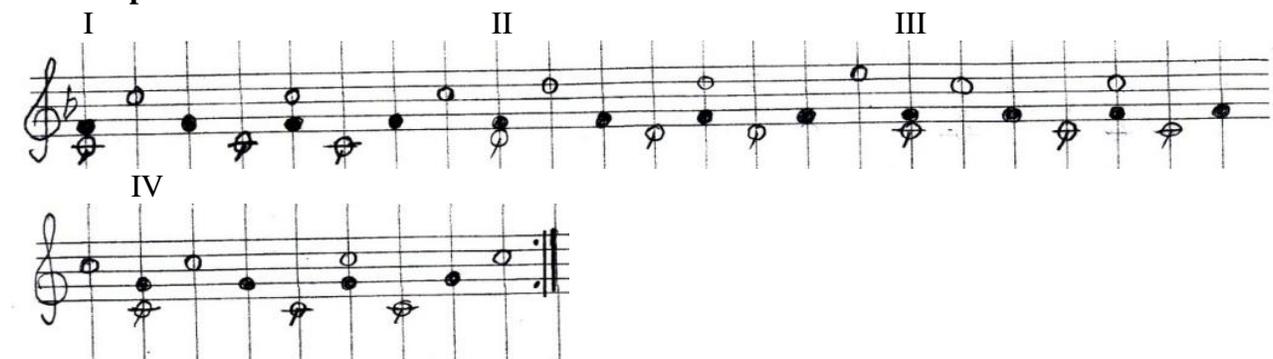
The second song, *Muhozi* is usually sung for entertainment during social gatherings like traditional brew parties. The song was first rearranged on *mbira* by Mbira Dzenharira. The song talks about the noise that mice make when they are in the granary (*muhozi*). The text and the transcription of the song are as follows:

Song text:

Lead: *Nyatoterera unzwe kuchema*
 Response: *Ah muhozi umo mune mhere
nyatsoterera unzwe kuchema*

Listen to the cry
 Ah in the granary there is some noise
 listen carefully to the cry

Transcription:



Ex 6.1 Transcription of the piece *Muhozi* on *mbira*

Students from United College of Education in Bulawayo where Kwanongoma was once situated followed and performed a song entitled *vamudhara*. These students travelled all way from

Bulawayo, which is 120 kilometers west of Gweru to come to attend the conference. They are training as teachers majoring in music. The song *vamudhara* is a common folk song usually sung during traditional brew parties when people are drunk. The song refers to an old man who visits social gatherings almost every day without giving himself time to work for the family. It was good that the students attended the conference as they are going to further teach the pieces performed by other ensembles to enhance the knowledge and skills in *mbira*.

The other ensemble that performed came from the town of Shurugwi. Shurugwi is a small mining town that is located 60 kilometers South East of Gweru. The group comprised both the young and elders whose ages ranged from 20 to 60 years. They performed about four songs which were performed in an original traditional manner. The songs were derived from old *mbira dzaVadzimu* pieces. These were *nhemamusasa* (Figure 2.4), *taireva* (Figure 2.14), *nyamaropa* (Figure 2.6) and *mahororo* (Figure 2.10). The participants interviewed indicated that they were impressed by the composition of the ensemble which had a mixture of the young and the old *mbira* players. Such a composition enables passing of *mbira* playing skills from experienced players to the young. This is yet another preservation method that can be employed in the archiving of the cultural legacy of the Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

We also invited teachers who are already teaching in both primary and secondary schools. Two of the invited teachers from Chikumbiro Primary School in Mkoba suburb of Gweru performed a song called *Chemutengure*. According Mrs Ruzive *Chemutengure* is one of oldest folk songs usually performed on *mbira* for entertainment. The text is presented below:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Chemutengure</i>	<i>Chemutengure</i>
Response:	<i>Chemutengure</i>	<i>Chemutengure</i>
Lead:	<i>Chave chamutengure vhiri rengoro</i>	(<i>Chemutengure</i> with wheels)
Response:	<i>Woye woye</i>	<i>Woye woye</i>
Lead:	<i>Wanditi muchairi wandionei?</i>	(You say I am a chariot driver what have you seen?)
Response:	<i>Woye woye</i>	<i>Woye woye</i>
Lead:	<i>Ndaona bhurukwe rizere dova</i>	(I have seen your trousers with dew)
Response:	<i>Woye woye</i>	<i>Woye woye</i>
Lead:	<i>Mukadzi wemutyairi hashai dovi</i>	(A chariot driver's wife has no problem of peanut butter)
Response:	<i>Woye woye</i>	<i>Woye woye</i>

6.3 Performances during *Mbira* Symposium

The *Mbira* symposium held in 2012 created yet another opportunity for *mbira* ensembles to perform *mbira* in the presence of both the young and the old. Various ensembles and soloists performed both traditional and contemporary songs all accompanied by *mbira*. The first ensemble to perform was from Senga Primary School which was discussed early in this Chapter. The performers in this ensemble range in age from ten to twelve years. The ensemble performed the song *Vanotambura nedoro* which is derived from *Chemutengure* piece. It was quite encouraging to see such young children playing *mbira*. When they performed the audience screamed with happiness. The participants were surprised to see such young children playing *mbira* and singing so confidently and skilfully. Teaching children at primary level not only helps them in learning how to play *mbira*, but provide them with the indigenous knowledge that informs *mbira*. This is one way of transmitting the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* to young generation. The acquired knowledge and skills will be inculcated in these children at a young age and ultimately the legacy of *mbira* is preserved in them through performance. One other important outcome is that the young children were able to interact with elders on issues concerning *mbira*. Such a move is ideal for the sustenance of the legacy of *mbira*. The text of the song is as follows:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Chirombowe nderera</i>	<i>Chirombowe nderera</i>
Response:	<i>Vanotambura nedoro</i>	They have a lot of traditional brew
Lead:	<i>Chirombowe nderera</i>	<i>Chirombowe nderera</i>
Response:	<i>Vanotambura nedoro</i>	They have a lot of traditional brew
Lead:	<i>Zuva ravira hiye hiye hiye</i>	The sun has set <i>hiyehiye hiye</i>
Response:	<i>Vanotambura nedoro</i>	They have alot of traditional brew

(cf DVD 2 Part I- 00:43-01:12)

This is a folk song usually sung for entertainment. It simply indicates that there is plenty of traditional brew to drink.

The group that followed Senga Primary School was Musicians at Large led by Ras Diva (Figure 6.1 Photograph 10). This was a duet that had one *mbira* accompanied by a traditional drum. The group has toured neighbouring countries like Botswana and South Africa. The group usually

fuses *mbira* and a guitar. They played two songs and the one that was liked most was called *dangurangu*.

The next performance was from Cecil John Rhodes Primary School. (Figure 6.1 Photograph 2) The group was lead by Editor Chihora who teaches music at Cecil John Rhodes Primary school and one of the African instruments he teaches is *mbira* the *nyunganyunga* type. The ensemble comprised two teachers and six children. The lead was sung by Chihora and rest of the ensemble responded. The song they performed was *vamudhara* whose text is shown below:

Song text:

Lead:	<i>Vamudhara mapfeka manyatera,</i>	Old man you have worn sandals
	<i>doro marinzwepi semune mari</i>	Where is traditional brew as if you have money
Response:	<i>Haiwa tevera</i>	<i>Haiwa</i> follow
Lead:	<i>Ndomutevera mambo</i>	I will follow the king
Response:	<i>Haiwa tevera</i>	<i>Haiwa</i> follow

(cf DVD 2 Part I- 01:13-01:33)

After Cecil John Rhodes, Thornhill High School (Figure 6.1 Photograph 6) performed the piece *nhemamusasa*, one of the oldest pieces played on *mbira dzaVadzimu*. The audience enjoyed this performance very much. The *mbiras* they performed were *nyunganyunga* type tuned in F major⁴⁴ and were accompanied by a western drum kit which made the intensity of the whole performance great because of the intensity of the drums. The transcription of *nhemamusasa* on *nyunganyunga* is shown below. When school children perform such old pieces like *nhemamusasa*, this is another effective method of transmitting *mbira* pieces to children who will pass them to the next generation. It is important to note that I also helped this school to form a vibrant *mbira* ensemble which performed on this day. It is the wish of many that the schools in Zimbabwe manage to teach and form *mbira* ensembles, which will go a long way in preserving the cultural heritage of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

⁴⁴ Most of Kwanongoma *karimba/nyunganyunga mbiras* are tuned in F sharp major to suit children's voices.

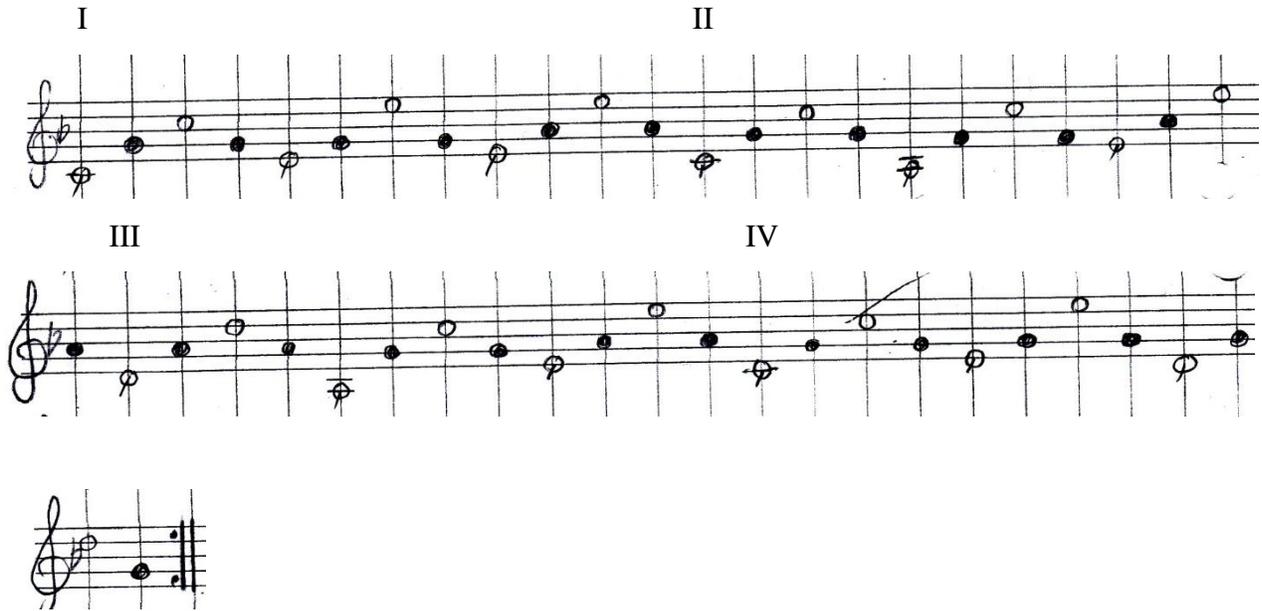


Figure 6.3 *Nhemamusasa on nyunganyunga*

The participants were surprised to see such young children performing to a large audience so well. The idea of catching them young was evidenced at this symposium with three schools, two primary schools and one secondary taking part in the performances. It was quite encouraging and indeed the cultural heritage of *mbira* can be preserved by archiving it in participants, both young and old.

The only solo performer of the day was Camen Mutengo. (Figure 6.1 Photograph 7) Mutengo is a former student in the department of Music and Musicology. She is also one of my former students who got inspired to play the *mbira* instrument. Mrs. Mutengo is now a skilled *mbira* player who has recorded two albums where *mbira* was fused with other western instruments like guitars. Her powerful voice filled the hall as she performed a very melodious yet emotional song called *Kutaura*. Her singing was rich in yodelling singing style which made the audience listen motionlessly. The message of the song was about the problems that we face in life. She switched from Shona to Ndebele which are the two major languages of Zimbabwe.

The ensemble that followed comprised Roman Catholic Church members in Gweru. The ensemble was led by Chimukoko. (Figure 6.1 Photograph 8) It is important to note that the Roman Catholic Church in Zimbabwe is the first church to accept some the African practices and

instruments including the horn (*hwamanda*), traditional drum (*ngoma*) and hand shakers (*hosho*) in its church services. The ensemble performed two songs one a Christmas Carol and the other a traditional song entitled *Uripo* both accompanied by *mbira*. The ensemble attracted the audience because of its ability to involve the audience in singing and dancing.

After Chimukoko's group the next group was Zvirimudeze. Zvirimude is a brain child of this PhD study as previously alluded to. After Zvirimudeze ensemble another solo performer, Ms Sharon Masoka (Figure 6.1 Photograph 15) who is a music lecturer at Seke Teachers' College played *nhemamusasa* piece. Sharon Masoka is a lecturer of music and teaches *mbira* to student teachers who in turn will teach the instrument to children in schools. It is unfortunate that when the student teachers graduate they are posted to schools which do not have *mbiras*. However, the presence of lecturers from colleges and teachers from schools, during the Mbira Symposium is to give them an opportunity to share ideas on ways of supplying schools with *mbira* and changing the mind sets of some of the Headmasters who do not support music let alone *mbira*.

The ensemble that followed was Zimbabwe Mbira Ensemble. (Figure 6.1 Photograph 16) The name of this ensemble was derived from our greatest shrine called Great Zimbabwe found in Masvingo. The term Zimbabwe means the house of stones. It had nine young performers who were very vibrant and creative. The leader of the ensemble confirmed that the ensemble was formed with the aim of generating income so that members can earn a living out of performance. Their music comprised both traditional and contemporary songs. Some of the songs addressed social problems that affect the community. The first song they performed was *Handina mwana anoita rombe* (I do not allow my child to be a destitute). The song is accompanied by *chipembere/nhemakonde* piece. *Chipembere* is one of the old *mbira* pieces that were handed over as part of the cultural heritage of *mbira* to the Shona.



Senga Primary School



Cecil John Rhodes Primary



United College of Music



Mhembero Mbira Ensemble



MSU Mbira Ensemble



Thornhill High school



Mrs Camen Mutengo



Chimukoko Mbira Ensemble



Figure 6.1 Performances during the 2012 Symposium. All photographs were taken by author except (Photograph 14) which was taken by Shadreck Dzingai on 19 October 2012.

The second song was *Sahwira unobve pi?* (Where do you come from my friend?). The ensemble's various choreographed styles made their performance colorful and kept the audience on the edge of their chairs. They also had a very vibrant dancer who also entertained the audience with his acrobatic dances.

Dzimbabwe was followed by Mhembero Mbira ensemble. (Figure 6.1 Photograph 4 and 12) This ensemble was founded by Irene Chigamba who is a renowned *mbira* player and dancer whose performance continues to retain traditional styles. Irene comes from an *mbira* playing family. Her father Tute Chigamba is also a great *mbira* player who contributed to the growth of Irene's *mbira* expertise. Normally it is an African practice that a particular talent (*shave*) can be inherited from the forefathers such that we can trace the inheritance hierarchy. For example in our family we can trace the talent of music and *mbira* playing from our great grandfather called Jambwa as shown below:

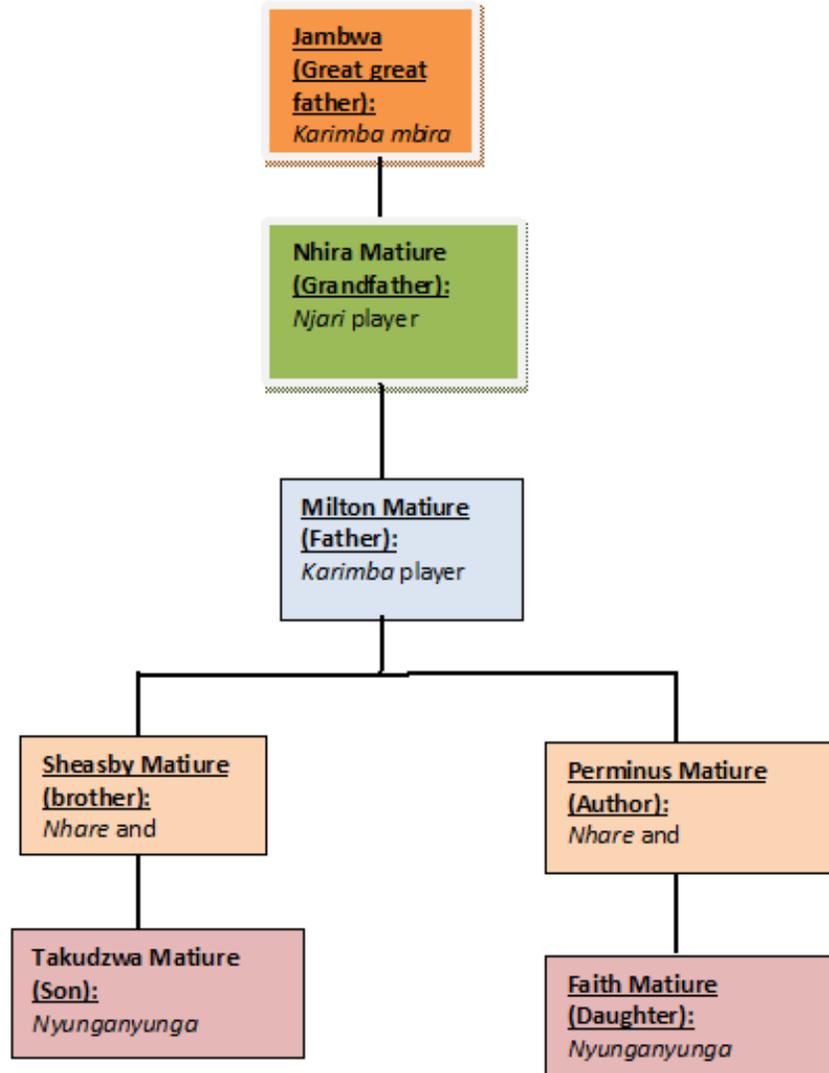


Figure 6.2 Flow diagram showing inheritance of talent of mbira in Matiure family

The same can be found in families like Chigamba, Maraire, Mujuru and many others. The ensemble performed *nyamaropa* a piece which is believed to be the oldest piece. What impressed the participants was that she played this piece in an original style and sung using traditional yodeling style (*huro*) which reminded the participants about indigenous *mbira* and its songs in their original form. It is also the aim of this study to preserve *mbira* pieces in their original form and one way of doing it is through performance of such pieces during shows.

The ensemble that followed Mhembero was the Department of Music and Musicology Mbira Ensemble. (Figure 6.11 Photograph 5) The ensemble was comprised of students from the

department. As a university we are making concerted efforts to preserve the cultural legacy of *mbira* by teaching the instrument under the course “Performance Practice”. The ensemble performed the song *Gomo raMasare* (Masare's mountain).

Mawungira Enharira was the second from the last. (Figure 6.1 Photograph 11) The ensemble was founded by Wilfred Mafrika of the Nyamasvisva totem in 2005 in Norton when the original Mbira Dzenharira broke away. The ensemble was formed with the aim of producing, promoting and marketing musical and cultural products. Wilfred Mafrika indicated that Mawungira Enharira means 'echoes from the hills of Nharir' (Interview 19 October 2012). The ensemble has eight members who all live in Harare. The composition of their *mbira* includes the lead *nheketo*, rhythm (*hweva*), sub-rhythm (*duriro*), bass (*nhovapasi*) and another sub-rhythm (*dongonda*). Mawungira Enharira usually performs traditional pieces during contemporary shows.

The last ensemble was Mbira DzeNharira of Norton. This ensemble is the one that I invited during the 2011 Conference discussed before and was invited for the second time. Currently the ensemble of Mbira Dzenharira under the leadership of Tendai Gamadze has broadened its scope by building a Culture Centre in Norton. The Centre covers about 10 000 square meters of land and has a thatch driven gazebo shown in the photography below. Report given by Chaka during an interview indicated that the Centre is meant to be a “traditional venue for all cultural activities in Zimbabwe.” (Interview 19 October 2012) The ensemble also intends to institutionalize the Centre and include lessons on *mbira* making and playing. Ultimately the Centre will go a long way in preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira*.



Figure 6.3 Dandaro shrine at Mbira Dzenharira Culture Center. Photograph taken by researcher in Norton on 7 January 2012.

On this day they performed the song entitled *Ndina kupenda* (I love you) found on their album *Fare fare tindike*. The song is an own composition by the ensemble which is sung both in Shona and Swahili. The ensemble demonstrated maturity in *mbira* music performances in that they were being able to fuse *mbiras* of different types⁴⁵ that is *mbira dzaVadzimu*, *nyunganyunga* and *dongonda*. The text of the song is as follows:

Lead:	<i>Vakomana ndatapirirwa ndatapiriwa</i> <i>Nekuimba kwevasikana vekuma Nyika</i> <i>Dzine shiri dziri kuimbirana</i> <i>Çhokwadi zvionokunda ngoma kurira</i> <i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>	<i>Boys I have enjoyed</i> <i>with how girls from Manyika sing.</i> <i>They are like birds singing to each other</i> <i>This better than music</i> <i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>
Response:	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>
Lead:	<i>Ndakupenda</i>	<i>I love you</i>
Response:	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>
Lead:	<i>Ndinokuda</i>	<i>I love you</i>
Response:	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>
Lead:	<i>I love you</i>	<i>I love you</i>
Response:	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>	<i>Yeeee-ye-ye</i>
Lead:	<i>Naningsiwo</i>	<i>I love you</i>

All the performances during the Mbira Symposium were of high standard. There was evidence of sound preparation before the symposium. The performances were characterized by a variety of instruments that accompanied *mbira* which include traditional drums and hand shakers. Most of

⁴⁵Usually contemporary *mbira* players fuse different types of *mbiras* with the aim of adding value to the resultant sound. These *mbiras* are tuned in such a way that they can play the same pieces.

the groups had costumes that were prepared for the performance. The costumes added value to their performance. The most common pieces that were played were *chemutengura*, *vamudhara* and *nhemamusasa*. This implies that these are probably pieces frequently taught in schools and performed by the majority of *mbira* ensembles in Zimbabwe. All the performances left the audiences calling for more. For all the performances during the symposium refer to DVD 2 Part I-00:43-11:38.

6.4 Preservation of *mbira* through formal teaching

Before the introduction of *mbira* in schools *mbira dzaVadzimu* was highly respected and was played by older people only. The young were not allowed to touch the instrument except those who had received a calling as *mbira* players from ancestors. The rise of nationalism in the 1960s created room for the young Africans to rediscover themselves through music and traditional instruments like *mbira* and the traditional drum (Rhodes 1961). Sheasby Matiure provides a historical perspective of the establishment of schools of music in the then Rhodesia. He observes that "Colleges of academies of music were built, and these were affiliated to the Royal Academy of Music in England" (2008:54). He goes on to give examples of such colleges in the major cities of Zimbabwe. One of them is Rhodesia Academy of Music which is now Kwanongoma College of Music established in 1962 whose focus was on the teaching of music to teachers. The products of this college further taught teachers in teachers' colleges, one of the most successful is Dumisani Mararire who introduced *marimba* and *mbira* in America. Introduction of the teaching of traditional instrument at Kwanongoma was initiated by Robert Simson as a way of reviving traditional music which he felt was becoming extinct (Sheasby Matiure 2008:56). Robert Simson's justification for the need for the teaching of African music in conjunction with other ethnomusicologists like Hugh and Andrew Tracey culminated in the establishment of Kwanongoma. Many teachers were trained to teach African instruments at this institution making it possible for the revival of African music which was Simson's dream. However, since that time the country was faced with black uprisings by ZANU and ZAPU and at the same time the Ian Smith government did not fully support the move of teaching African music like *mbira* music.

The teaching of traditional music in schools was enhanced soon after independence in 1980. Jones (2006:22) acknowledges that "...Zimbabwe achieved majority rule in 1980, when many

educators had begun to encourage the teaching and performance of traditional music and dance.” From that time many schools have embarked on teaching traditional instruments and genres of *mbira*.

The majority of *mbira* teachers in schools, colleges and universities employ different teaching methods to teach *mbira*. They have complemented the traditional rote methods with formal methods that make use of different systems of notation. There are different methods that are used by these teachers as discussed by Perminus Matiure (2008:16). The first one is the traditional method which is oral. An *mbira* student has to listen and imitate the playing technique after observing an experienced *mbira* player playing. This method can also be referred to as 'above the shoulder' method. The students observe from above the shoulder of the skilled *mbira* player. However it is suitable for students who have a natural talent in *mbira* playing and can catch fast.

The second method is apprenticeship method. This involves staying with an *mbira* player and performing in ceremonies. The learner acquires skills as he or she performs with the experienced players. Students learn as they perform. Some people end up playing *mbira* because they were living with a *mbira* player most of their lives. Each time the *mbira* is played, they grasp one or two skills.

The third method is inheritance. Some people are born with innate capabilities of playing *mbira*. These learners have the capacity to play the instrument with very little assistance. They can teach themselves the instrument without getting any help from anyone.

The fourth method comes as a result of inspiration. Some people end up playing *mbira* after they have been inspired by other *mbira* players. For example we have a number of ladies who are now *mbira* players because they were inspired by Chiwoniso Maraire. Mbira Dzenharira have also inspired a lot of groups that are now found in Zimbabwe. Even abroad several foreigners have become *mbira* players because they were inspired by Zimbabweans like Dr Dimusani Maraire, Cosmas Magaya, Ephat Mujuru, and Sekuru Gora just to mention a few.

The last method which is literacy, makes use of notation as an aid to teaching and learning *mbira*. *Mbira* teachers have adopted or come up with different notations which they use to

transcribe and teach *mbira*. For instance staff notation which has already been discussed in Chapter one. The *mbira* piece can be transcribed using computer software like Sibelius. Students will then sight read the piece in the same way they read piano scores. However, the students have to master the notes on the *mbira* as well as the pitch names of the keys.

Staff notation presents the melodic and harmonic contours of the pieces. It also prescribes a time signature to direct the movement. The staff notation is rarely used by *mbira* teachers. Instead they devise their own notations which have flaws especially concerning the aspects of rhythm. The other notation which is also sometimes used is the pulse notation. Pulse notation was also discussed in Chapter one.

The vertical lines represent pulses which are usually numbered from one to twenty-four but without metric sense and phraseal flow. Notes of a piece either fall on a pulse or between two pulses. These pulse lines run across the conventional five lines and four spaces of the western staff. Most of the *mbira* pieces have a total of forty-eight pulses which are infact equivalent to four bars of twelf quaver beats per bar. The notation makes it possible for all the notes to be represented in the way they appear in the piece. However, the transcribed piece represents the basic tune of the piece. *Mbira* players usually improvise by adding their own lines as they play *mbira*.

The other notation that is usually used to teach pieces of *mbira dzaVadzimu* involves the use of letters and numbers. This notation was founded by Pepukai Mudzingwa during his days as an *mbira* teacher at the College of Music in Harare. The notation was further introduced to me by Mandityira in 2003. Mandityira is also an *mbira* teacher at the College of Music in Harare (Figure 1.8). The left top manual is numbered one to six or seven from right to left. The left bottom manual is assigned letters from A to G. Note that the letters A to G have nothing to do with pitch names. The first key on the right manual is assigned the letter X and the right notes are numbered from small 1 to 7 or 8 depending on the number of keys for that *mbira*. The labeling system is shown below:

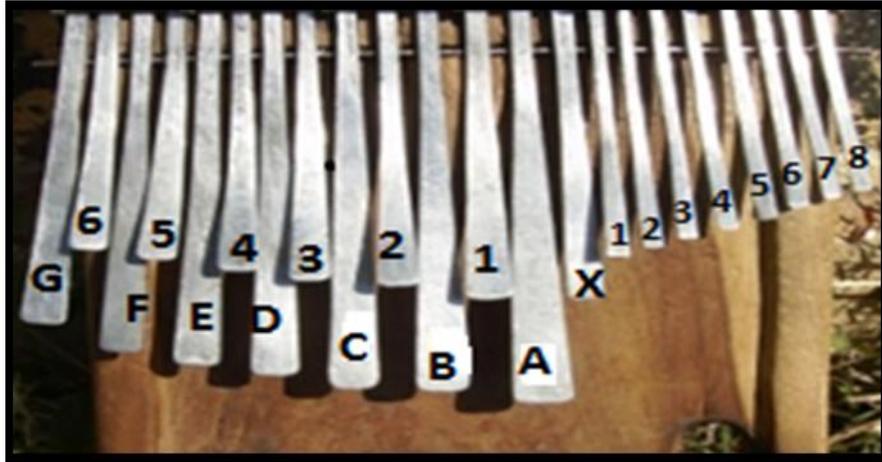


Figure 6.4 Mbira dzaVadzimu labeled with letters and numbers

I then developed it so that it brings in the aspect of pulses. This notation makes use of boxes system similar to pulse notation only that it uses boxes and numbers and moves downwards. Each box is equivalent to one pulse beat and the pulse numbers are in the extreme left column under (p). (L) stands for the left thumb and (R) stands for the right thumb and index finger. The arrows show the direction of play from top to bottom. For example if one is teaching a song like *nhemamusasa* then the notation of the basic pattern of the piece will be as follows:

1			2			3			4		
P	L	R	P	L	R	P	L	R	P	L	R
1	3		1	3		1	2		1	3	
2		1	2		1	2		2	2		1
3	C		3	C		3	D		3	C	
4		4	4		2	4		5	4		3
5	4		5	5		5	5		5	4	
6		1	6		4	6		2	6		1
7	E		7	F		7	F		7	E	
8		4	8		4	8		4	8		3
9	4		9	4		9	4		9	2	
10		2	10		2	10		2	10		1
11	G		11	G		11	G		11	1	
12		4	12		5	12		4	12		

Figure 6.5 Notation for *nhemusasa* piece

Note that the letters have nothing to do with pitch names. The piece has 48 boxes which are 48 pulses in pulse notation. The student will then follow the direction of the arrow by playing 3 then slide down to C and so on. Once the student has mastered the basic pattern then he can work on the right notes *nhetete* which are basically dependent of the basic pattern. This notation is fast and can be used as an aid to rote method.

Another common notation similar to the one above but meant for *nyunganyunga* is Maraire's number notation. The notation works when the *mbira* is numbered from 1 to 15 and the first column is for the left thumb, the middle is for the right index finger and the third is for the right thumb as shown in the basic pattern of *kukaiwa* below:



L	F	R
5		11
1		15
1		13
3		11
1		15
3		11

Figure 6.22 Maraire Number notation system

To date there are a number of schools, colleges and universities that are offering *mbira* as a taught instrument in Zimbabwe. Although these centers are not many, they still play a very important role in preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira* through formal teaching. In Gweru we have the following formal centers that teach *mbira* and the approximate number of students that were taught *mbira* by end of year 2012:

Primary Schools	No.	Secondary Schools	No.	Colleges	No.	Universities	No.
Chikumbiro	60	Thornhill Secondary School	15	Gweru Academy	35	Midlands Sate University	150
Senga Primary	12	Nashville Secondary School	5	Mukoba Teachers' College	200		
Cecil John Rhodes	30	Fletcher High School	10				
		Mkomba High School	40				
3	102	4	70	2	235	1	150

Grand Total: 557

Table 6.1 Institution that teach mbira in Gweru urban

The distribution indicates a very encouraging start which if promoted can end up increasing the number especially in schools. It can be noted that college and university students have the greatest number which is great. These students are the ones who should then teach *mbira* to primary and secondary students as well as anyone who is interested in *mbira*. What usually happens is that when the students are finally deployed in schools, they do not get the chance to teach *mbira* in some of the school, the reason being that there will be no *mbira* instruments in these schools. *Mbira* makers sell their *mbiras* at very high cost. One *mbira* costs about US \$50 which most schools cannot afford. It is the wish of the author that *mbira* makers reduce the price of *mbira* especially to schools that can buy in bulk. This can be done by inviting government to provide sound subsidy for not of *mbira* instruments, but any instrument that need preservation.

Teaching of not only *mbira dzaVadzimu*, but also other *mbira* species is yet another effective method of preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. Several schools and colleges embarked on the teaching of *mbira* soon after independence. Most of them were teachers' colleges like Seke, Mkoba in Gweru, United College of Education in Bulawayo, Mutare Teachers' College in Mutare and many others. The teachers who were trained in these colleges were supposed to further teach *mbira* to students in schools. Through this study I made an initiative to introduce the *mbira* instrument at Senga Primary School in Gweru. Senga Primary is

one of the schools that are in Senga suburbs half a kilometer away from Midlands State University. The teaching of *mbira* at Senga Primary School was part of this study. I selected 12 students from Grade 3 since I had twelve *mbiras* plus one for the teacher. The teacher arranged the time for me to come and teach once per week, as from the beginning of first term 2012. It was my first time to teach *mbira* to children of that age. I was surprised by the way they were able to master the skills of playing and singing *mbira* songs. It clearly showed that *mbira* is in the blood of Shona people since it is inherited. The students did not take time to master simple basic patterns of simple pieces like *Chemutengure* and *Kukaiwa*. I visited the school to teach the students on Thursdays. Figure 5.34 shows a flow diagram showing how an *mbira* ensemble was established at Senga Primary school.

Photograph 1

Tichaedza Mauraya who donated 13 *mbiras* to Senga Primary school after I persuaded him to do so. Mauraya is no longer making *mbira*. He is now a gold miner. He had *mbiras* that he made in 2009. When I explained my intention of preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira* through formal teaching of *mbira* in schools he then opted to contribute by donating the *mbiras* to a Grade 3 class.

Photograph 2

Part of the *mbiras* donated to Senga Primary School displayed in Muraya's workshop.

Photograph 3

Senga Primary children with their teacher soon after receiving the *mbiras* at the school.

Photograph 4

Part of the children in a lesson of *mbira* which I was teaching.

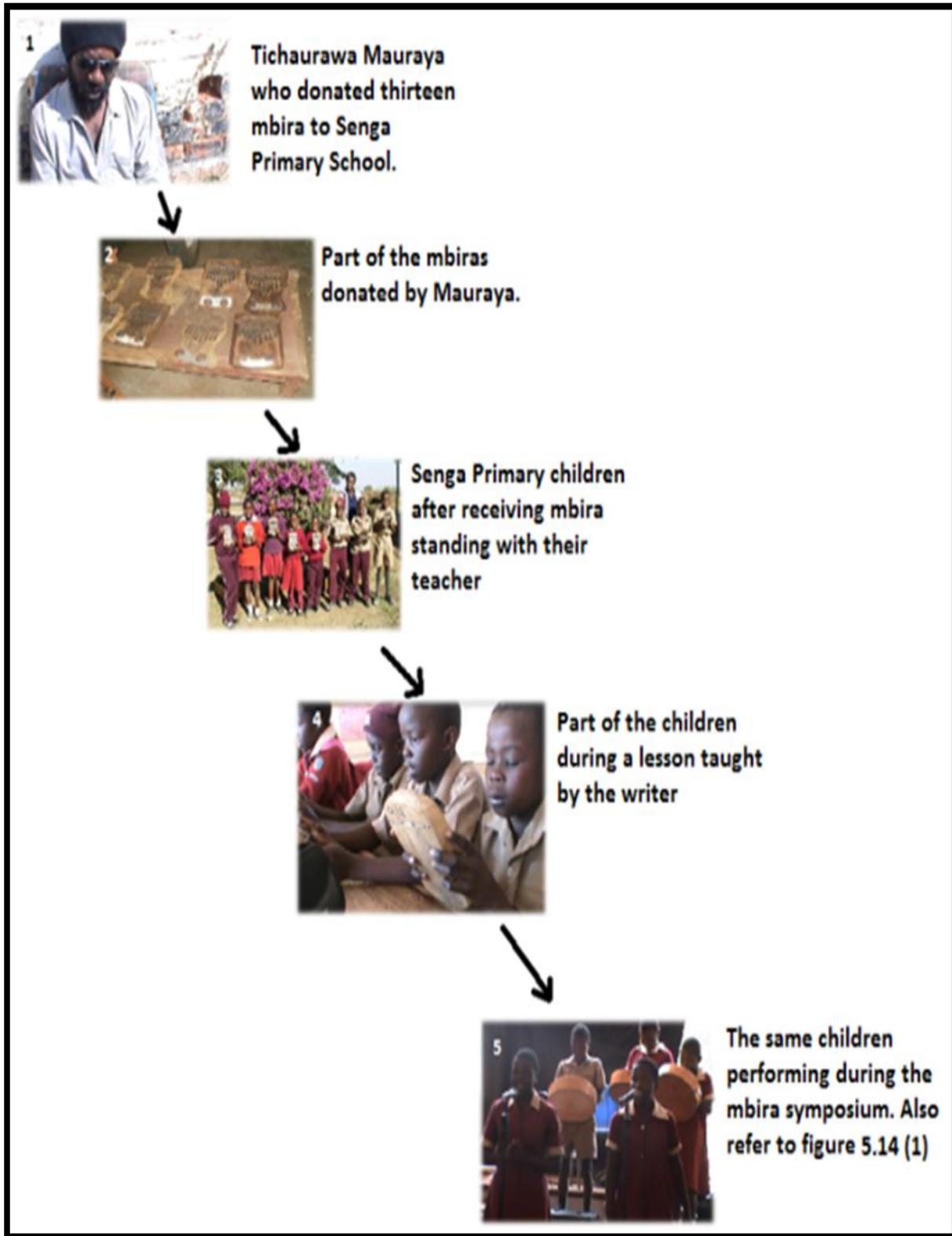


Figure 6.23 Flow chart showing the establishment of a mbira ensemble at Senga Primary. All photographs were taken by autho

Photograph 5

The last photograph shows the children performing on the stage during the *Mbira* Symposium. My experiences in teaching *mbira* at Senga Primary School reflected that children like *mbira* very much and can master the skills of playing the instrument very fast. It is important for the government to encourage headmasters to introduce the teaching of *mbira* in both primary and secondary schools so that the instrument is learned at all levels of education. Such a move will assist in making children appreciate *mbira* music.

6.4.1 Observations during *mbira* lessons at Senga Primary School

As the author taught *mbira* at Senga Primary school, observation guides (Appendix 3) were used to record observable outcomes for each lesson taught. The overall goal was to preserve the cultural legacy of *mbira* in pupils through formal teaching of *mbira*. The aspects which the author aimed to preserve were part of the intangible elements of *mbira*. The aspects embraced indigenous knowledge about the origin and history of *mbira*, the parts of *mbira* and their functions, *mbira* performance as an ensemble, *mbira* pieces and songs, playing techniques, layout of keys on *mbira* and knowledge about ritual objects and the function of *mbira* in the context of *kurova guva* and *dandararo*.

The data collected for each section revealed some very interesting outcomes. The various sections observed assisted the author in establishing the effectiveness of formal teaching of *mbira* in transmitting the legacy of *mbira* to the young generation.

What was observed during the lesson falls under the following headings;

- **Introduction**

I introduced most of the lessons by playing the piece that I intended to teach in that lesson. Once I started playing, pupils stood up and danced to the music. Sometimes I would ask them to sing with me as I played the *mbira*. The approach caught children's attention and enthusiasm. Other introductions involved discussions about the meaning of the text of the song. All the introductions captured pupils' attention and this went a long way in preparing them for the lesson of the day.

- **Effectiveness of teaching methods**

In my teaching I varied my approaches and methods; group tasks, rote method, demonstration and notation method. Usually I would start with simple notation system for the basic pattern then employ other methods later. Notation was used as a guide so that children can easily identify the keys. The lesson progressions were all smooth and structured in such a way that the twelve students' attention was captured throughout the one hour lesson.

- **Participation**

All the lessons were characterized by active participation by the pupils. Each one of them fell in love with their *mbira*. The students participated in naming parts of the *mbira* and explaining their functions, tracing its history, demonstrating chordal and splitting technique of playing *mbira*. Each pupil was given a chance to play the learned technique while others listened.

- **Pupils' attitude**

Pupils' participation indicated that they had a very positive attitude towards *mbira*. Only one of the twelve learners had seen and touched *mbira* before. The rest saw it in the television. It was very encouraging to find Grade 3 pupils appreciating *mbira* to the extent of borrowing them to practise at home. They even went on to teach others in their own spare time. Teaching *mbira* at Senga became a fascinating activity. Every pupil from Grade One up to grade seven wanted to learn the instrument. This was motivated by the participation of the ensemble during the 2012 Mbira Symposium. I gave the school a DVD showing the pupils performing and it was played in the hall for every child to watch. This move changed many pupils' attitude towards not only *mbira* but music as a subject.

- **Conduciveness of teaching environment**

Usually we used the hall and each time I had a lesson the teacher would have problems in chasing away other pupils who peeped through the window to try their chance. I wished the school had more *mbira* so that many pupils would get a chance to learn the instrument. We ended up changing the venue to use the teacher's office since we wanted an environment with fewer disturbances especially when we were preparing for the Symposium.

- **Achievement of set objectives**

Based on the ability of the students to play and sing traditional songs usually performed either during social gatherings or sacred ceremonies at home, and also being able to trace the history of *mbira*, name its parts and identify sacred contexts in which it is performed as well as identifying some of the ritual objects that accompanies it, I can safely say most of my objectives were

achieved and an attempt was made to achieve my broad goal of preserving intangible heritage of *mbira* through formal teaching. However, the approach is not a once off thing. I have to continue recruiting more groups as well as encouraging headmasters to buy *mbira* and *mbira* makers to donate to schools so that more and more pupils learn how to play the instrument. The table below summarizes what was preserved during the lessons:

Aspect preserved	Mode of preservation
<i>Mbira</i> playing techniques	Playing <i>mbira</i>
Songs	Singing with <i>mbira</i> as accompaniment
Knowledge about ritual objects	Discussion
History of <i>mbira</i>	Discussion
Tuning system	Demonstration
<i>Mbira</i> pieces	Performance and discussion
Knowledge on what constitute the cultural legacy of <i>mbira</i>	Discussion
Knowledge on parts of <i>mbira</i>	Demonstration and illustrations
Knowledge about the musical function of <i>mbira</i> during <i>kurova guva</i> and <i>dandaro</i>	Discussion
Knowledge about the non-musical functions of <i>mbira</i> during <i>kurova guva</i> and <i>dandaro</i>	Discussion
Issues of continuity and change in <i>mbira</i>	Discussion

Table 6.2 Aspects preserved in children during *mbira* lessons.

6.5 Conclusion

The Chapter discussed how performance and formal teaching of *mbira* in schools, colleges and universities can be one of the various ways of preserving *mbira* pieces. It was established that when *mbira* pieces are played during *mbira* shows the audience that listens to the pieces are continuously reminded about the pieces and this will help in preserving the pieces in the memories of the audience.

Mbira performances and formal teaching of *mbira* have been considered as ways of transmitting the cultural legacy of *mbira* from the elders to the young generation. The *mbira* shows discussed clearly indicated that many young people are no longer having access to live *mbira* performances in the context of a *bira*. The next Chapter will conclude the whole thesis and will provide some recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The study has established that the *mbira dzaVadzimu* and its hybrids is the core of the Shona spiritual and social hegemonies. *Mbira dzaVadzimu* performs the role of connecting the living and the spiritual world through various Shona rituals or sacred ceremonies conducted to connect supernormally as well as appease the ancestral spirits. The ceremony which is common among the Shona society is *kurova guva*. *Kurova guva* is a traditional ceremony held by the Shona to escort the spirit of a deceased person from the grave to the home.

Kurova guva is an extension of the Shona belief of life after death. For most of the Shona if a member dies his spirit must be invited to join the rest of family members as well as other ancestral spirits dwelling in the spirit world. The spirit of a deceased person has the power to look after the living and this can only be possible if *kurova guva* ceremony has been conducted to escort the spirit from the grave to the home and also to facilitate the union with other ancestral spirits in the spiritual world.

It was also established that the ceremony involves all-night performance and a ritual performed at the grave very early in the morning. During the ceremony and ritual *mbira dzaVadzimu* is performed interchangeably with other traditional songs that are accompanied by traditional drum beating. *Mbira dzaVadzimu* creates a devotional framework during the whole night and also during the ritual on the grave. The belief is that the music of *mbira dzaVadzimu* is played to attract the spirits so that participants can escort the spirit from the grave into the hut. As such *mbira dzaVadzimu* together with other traditional instruments like the traditional drum (*ngoma*) and the hand shakers and also traditional materials used during *kurova guva* play a very important part during *kurova guva* ceremony.

The findings of this study indicated that the majority of the Shona people's perceptions about *kurova guva* have changed due to the advent of Christianity. Most of the churches in Zimbabwe are against traditional values and practices. They are against the belief that the spirit of a deceased person can have the power to protect the living. The majority of people who join the church are no longer willing to conduct *kurova guva*. They consider such practices as unholy.

They declare that when they die no traditional rituals like *kurova guva* should be conducted, but instead a Christian oriented ceremony called unveiling of tomb stone (*dombo*) be conducted. This ceremony is gradually replacing *kurova guva*.

The changes in perceptions about *mbira* have resulted in the reduction of the frequency of conducting *kurova guva* ceremonies in the Shona societies. Since *mbira dzaVadzimu* was performed during *kurova guva* ceremonies, the reduction of the frequency of these ceremonies led to the decline of the sacred use of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in sacred ceremonies like *kurova guva*. The decline was also as a result of the influence of technology and rural to urban migration. The study established that there are very few *mbira* players and makers left in most of the rural societies of Zimbabwe. Some *mbira* players have stopped playing the instrument because they also joined the church which shuns playing of traditional instruments. Others migrated to towns and overseas where they play the instrument for commercial purposes. Those *mbira* players who remained in Hwedza have limited space to play the instrument. The sacred value of *mbira dzaVadzimu* has always been enshrined in its role during sacred ceremonies. The reduction of such ceremonies has a bearing on the sustenance of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

The study also established that *mbira dzaVadzimu* has adopted a new status that is informed by technology and contemporary trends. It was also discovered that *mbira dzaVadzimu* is now performed during *matandaro* shows usually conducted in night clubs, hotels and restaurants where participants pay money to be entertained. The role of *mbira dzaVadzimu* has become more secular than sacred.

The changes on *mbira* have impacted on the sacredness of not only *mbira dzaVadzimu* the instrument, but also on everything material that is part of the indigenous cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. It is from these premises that the study culminated in efforts meant to preserve the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* by archiving it. Two archiving systems were adopted by this study. The first archiving system involved preservation of tangible material culture that is part of the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*. Tangible materials were collected together with information concerning their role during *kurova guva* ceremony and *dandaro* practices. The materials were then deposited in an archive at Midlands State University in the Department of Music and Musicology. The materials were classified under traditional materials, photographs

and videos. Archiving of the tangible materials concerning the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* created a data base or library of indigenous knowledge which can be accessed by students for scholarly studies. The archive will also act as a resource of traditional materials that can be accessed by the community members.

The second type of archiving system adopted involves preservation of intangible elements of the *mbira dzaVadzimu*. This archiving system was referred to as a 'living archive'. The archiving system involved preserving knowledge about *mbira*, playing skills and *mbira* pieces in people especially the young as they collaborate during gatherings. A *Mbira* Conference, *Mbira* symposium and some *Mbira* shows were organized to create an opportunity for the young to be sensitized and to learn from experienced *mbira* players. These *mbira* players were drawn from those who perform modern songs and those who are still performing traditional pieces. The participants who included primary and secondary school pupils, university and college students and community members benefited from performances by different ensembles and presentations by *mbira* researchers. The *mbira* conference, *mbira* symposium and *mbira* shows became an archiving system that went a long way in preserving intangible aspects of the cultural legacy of *mbira* in the memories of the participants.

In line with the idea of preserving the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in living entities, the study found out that formal teaching of *mbira* in schools was yet another effective method of preserving cultural legacies. The study introduced the idea of encouraging *mbira* makers to donate *mbira*, whether *dzaVadzimu* or any hybrid of it which can play pieces usually played on *mbira dzaVadzimu*. I established an *mbira* ensemble at Senga Primary school with children of ages ranging from ten to thirteen years. The school had no *mbira* so I persuaded Tichaedza Mauraya an *mbira* maker to donate some of his *mbiras* to the school. The outcome of this activity was that many children from the same school showed some interest in playing *mbira*. The same ensemble from the school performed during the *Mbira* Symposium. Thus it can be concluded that formal teaching of *mbira dzaVadzimu* in schools and colleges can go a long way in preserving both the cultural legacy of *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

The study contributed to applied ethnomusicology scholarship in that it employed a number of activities which are practical in nature. It also acted as a starting point for a continuous project of

preserving *mbira dzaVadzimu* and other musical instruments. The approach generated valuable knowledge base that can be accessed by scholars when they read this thesis and also when they visit the archive that was established through this study.

It is therefore recommended that further study can be carried out in order to preserve other traditional instruments other than *mbira dzaVadzimu*, its hybrids and material cultures associated with it. It is also recommended that more and more *mbira* programs that are designed to preserve *mbira dzaVadzimu* and other instruments be organized at a much bigger scale. More *mbira* makers should donate or sell *mbira* to school so that more primary and secondary schools embark on the teaching of *mbira dzaVadzimu* as a way of preserving the Shona *mbira dzaVadzimu*.

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Evelyn Masona, culture bearer, Hwedza.
Lydia Jambwa, culture bearer, Hwedza.
Emily Jambwa, culture bearer, Hwedza
Muhwati, Protagonist. Muhwati village, Hwedza.
Bwerazuva Antony. Elder, Gweru
Lazalus Mutsago, culture bearer, spirit medium, Hwedza
Denford Mukaka, culture bearer, Hwedza

Mbira makers

Moyo Almon. *Mbira* maker and player, Gweru.
Tichaedza Mauraya, *mbira* maker, Gweru.
Maxon Wadharwa, *mbira* maker, Hwedza.
Masimba, culture bearer, Chemhanza Mission, Hwedza.
Phinias, Jealous, Prophet, Muhwati village.
Nyahwedekwe, Cecilia. Spirit medium and diviner. Mawire village, Hwedza District.
Sub Chief Munzverengi. Traditional chief. Svosve village, Hwedza District.

Mbira players

Philip Chimukuyu, *mbira* player, Gweru
Mujuru, Samuel. *Mbira* player and maker. Mujuru village, Rusape.
Zambuko, Cosmas. *Mbira* player. Mawire village, Hwedza District.
Gwama, Reminias. *Mbira* player. Rapako village. Hwedza District.
Abraham Zharare, *mbira* player, Chingwa village, Hwedza District.
Kudzirai Chidzambwa, *mbira* player, Chingwa Village, Hwedza.

Pastors

Reverend Rukarwa, Hwedza.
Reverend Samuel Basera, Hwedza.

Associations

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Archivists

Tracy Andrew. Archivist, *mbira* player, researcher, *mbira* maker. Grahams town.
Antony Seeger. Archivist and ethnomusicologist
Mutombeni Sam. Archivist. Gweru.

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APPENDIX 1

Name of event: 2011 Mbira Conference

Name of Sponsor: MSU Research Board

Place and date: Great Hall (MSU)

Your name (optional):.....

Your email (optional):.....

Your gender

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
------	--------------------------

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------	--------------------------

Tick the most appropriate

Items	Very Weak	Weak	Good	Very Good
Relevance of the theme				
Appropriateness of events (Program)				
Level of standard of content				
Quality of performances and presentations				
Information concerning <i>mbira</i> in the Diaspora				
Experience about <i>mbira</i> playing and making				
Time allocation for performance				
Knowledge about <i>mbira</i>				
Knowledge about <i>mbira</i> construction				
Frequency of mapira shows				
Gender balance for mbira player in your ensemble				
The ability for the activities to preserve <i>mbira</i>				
Relevance of displays				
Degree of innovativeness				
	No	Yes	Not sure	
Did you enjoy the symposium?				
Did you enjoy the presentations?				
Did you enjoy the performances?				
Did you enjoy the displays?				
Was the symposium successful?				

Do you think symposia can a better method of preserving <i>mbira</i> ?				
--	--	--	--	--

Present your views in the spaces below

1. Where else have you attended a *mbira* show?.....
2. Comment on your love of *mbira*.....
.....
.....
3. What did you like most about the symposium?.....
.....
.....
4. What did you dislike about the symposium?.....
.....
.....
5. What suggestions do you give about the preservation of *mbira*.....
.....
.....
6. Comment on the position of *mbira* in the contemporary music industry.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire for Participants

Name of event: 2012 Mbira Symposium

Name of Sponsor: MSU Research Board

Place and date: Great Hall (MSU) 19 October 2012

Your name (optional):.....

Your email (optional):.....

Your gender

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
------	--------------------------

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------	--------------------------

What is your primary role (circle only one)

Student	Mbira lover	Researcher	Mbira player	Exhibitor
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Overall Event Evaluation

Where applicable	No(1)	A Little(2)	Some/ Slightly(3)	Most /Partialy(4)	All/ A lot(5)
Do you have previous experience of <i>mbira</i> music?					
Was the theme of the symposium clear?					
Was the content suitable?					

Did you learn anything new?					
Were the events of the symposium effective in preserving <i>mbira</i> ?					
Did you enjoy the performances?					
Was the content in pamphlets and booklets informative?					
Was the symposium well organized?					
Has the symposium changed your perception of <i>mbira</i> ?					
Have you understood what is meant by dandaro concept?					
Were the exhibitions meaningful?					
Do think it is necessary to archive <i>mbira</i> through the activities done during the symposium?					
Do you wish to share your experiences with others?					

2. Where did you first attend a *mbira* performance?

In Rural areas	In town	Today during this symposium

3. What did you enjoy best?

Performances	Paper presentations	Exhibitions	Paintings

4. What was the least useful activity?

Performances	Paper presentations	Exhibitions	Paintings	Non

5. Did the symposium meet original expectations or enable any unexpected outcomes? If so, briefly state what these are including.

6. Indicate if we omitted any areas that you would have liked included in preservation of *mbira* ?

7. Indicate which aspect (eg organization, materials, content, methods, facilitation) of this symposium which could have been done better and suggest ways of improvement?

8. Do you wish to attend 2013 symposium?

No	Not sure	Yes

APPENDIX 3

Observation Guide for Mbira Teaching

Location: Senga Primary School

Date:.....

Time:.....

Grade:.....

School:.....

Activity:.....

Tick where applicable and comment

KEY :

1. Unacceptably Weak
2. Weak
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Outstanding

DESCRIPTION	1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS
Introduction: Effectiveness in arousing interest in children						
Appropriateness of pieces to be taught						
Variety of activities						
Mastering of playing <i>mbira</i> techniques						
Mastering of background information about <i>mbira</i>						
Children's participation						
Children's enjoyment during the lesson						
Children's creativity in playing the given piece						
Effectiveness of methods in preserving <i>mbira</i> pieces						
Appreciation of <i>mbira</i> as a traditional instrument						
Conclusion						

APPENDIX 4

Interview Guide

2011 Mbira Conference / 2012 Mbira Symposium/Mbira performance

Topic: Archiving the Cultural legacy of Shona *Mbira DzaVadzimu* in the context of *Kurova Guva* and *Dandaro* practices

The interview made use of semi-structured questions which were asked in no particular order.

This guide provides the aspects and questions included in the interview which were presented in two sections.

Section 1

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Experience in *mbira* playing

Section 2

- Have you attended any function similar to the one conducted today?
- What was the most interesting part?
- How effective was the approach in preserving the of *mbira*?
- Which part of the of *mbira* was preserved most?
- What suggestions do you give for the approach to be more effective?
- What makes you want to attend the same function next time?

APPENDIX 5

DVD 1

Film paper edit

Topic: Archiving the Cultural legacy of Shona *Mbira DzaVadzimu* in the context of *Kurova Guva* and *Dandaro* practices

Title of Film: *Kurova guva* ceremony

Running time: 19:45 minutes

Event	Duration	Event	Duration
Introduction	00:00 – 00:17	Song <i>Vana vangu vakura</i>	08:50 – 09:20
PART I		Interview	09:21 – 09:37
Interview with Chinyanga Muhwati	00:18 – 03:54	Going back to the home	09:39 – 09:58
Ritual of presenting the ox	03:55 – 04:28	Welcoming the spirit	09:59 – 10:40
Killing and skinning the ox	04:29 – 04:33	Interview on The influence of the church	10:42 – 12:31
Cooking the meat	04:35 – 04:38	PART II	
Interview on the proceedings of <i>kurova guva</i>	04:40 – 04:58	Views of the Christian church by Pastor Basera	13:33 – 14:31
The song <i>Horomba</i>	04:59 – 06:07	PART III	
		The ceremony of inheritance (<i>Nhaka</i>)	14:28 – 16:20
		Interview	
The song <i>Mudzimu wangu baba</i>	06:09 – 06:24	The ritual of <i>Zita</i>	16:22 – 18:11
Interview on the ritual of escorting the spirit	06:26 – 06:44	Taking the heir in the hut	18:13 – 18:29
Going to the grave	06:45 – 07:44	Greeting the successor	18:30 – 19:08
Ritual on the grave	07:45 – 08:49	Acknowledgements	19:09 – 19:45
Song <i>Vashe vashe</i>			

APPENDIX 6

DVD 2

Topic: Archiving the Cultural legacy of Shona *Mbira DzaVadzimu* in the context of *Kurova Guva* and *Dandaro* practices

Film paper edit

Title of Film: Preserving the of *Mbira* through Performance

Running time: 21:56 minutes

Event	Duration	Event	Duration
Introduction	00:00 – 00:42	Maungira Enharira (<i>Ndakanga ndabayiwa</i>)	08:58 – 10:21
PART I Senga Primary School (<i>Chirombowe</i>)	00:43 – 01:12	Mbira Dzenharira (<i>Ndina kupenda</i>)	10:21 – 11:38
Cecil John Rhodes Primary School (<i>Vamudhara</i>)	01:13 – 01:33	PART II Hwedza Mbira Show	11:39
Thornhill High School (<i>Nhemamusasa</i>)	01:35 – 01:57	Zambuko Mbira Ensemble	11:39 – 12:50
United College of Education (UCE) (<i>Vamudhara</i>)	01:59 – 02:18	Zvirimudeze Mbira Ensemble (Hwedza)	12:51 – 13:40
Ras Diva (<i>Dangurangu</i>)	02:19 – 02:41	Zvirimudeze Mbira Ensemble (Gweru)	13:41 – 15:03
Mrs C Mutengo	02:42 – 03:06	PART III Mbira Show Gweru Maungira Enharira	15:04 15:27 – 16:42
Chimukoko Mbira Ensemble (<i>Zin'anga</i>)	03:08 – 03:41	Mbira Dzenharira	16:43 – 18:09
Miss Sharon Masoka (<i>Nhemamusasa</i>)	03:42 – 04:00	Mhembero Mbira Ensemble	18:12 – 19:00
Dzimbahwe Mbira Ensemble	04:01 – 05:39	Dzimbahwe Mbira Ensemble	19:03 – 20:16
Midlands State University Mbira Ensemble (<i>Nhemamusasa</i>)	06:27 – 06:48	Maungira Enharira	20:18 – 20:28
Zvirimudeze Mbira Ensemble (<i>Mhondoro</i>)	06:50 – 08:57	Acknowledgements	20:29 – 20:50

APPENDIX 7

DVD 3

Film Paper edit

Topic: Archiving the Cultural legacy of Shona *Mbira DzaVadzimu* in the context of *Kurova Guva* and *Dandaro* practices

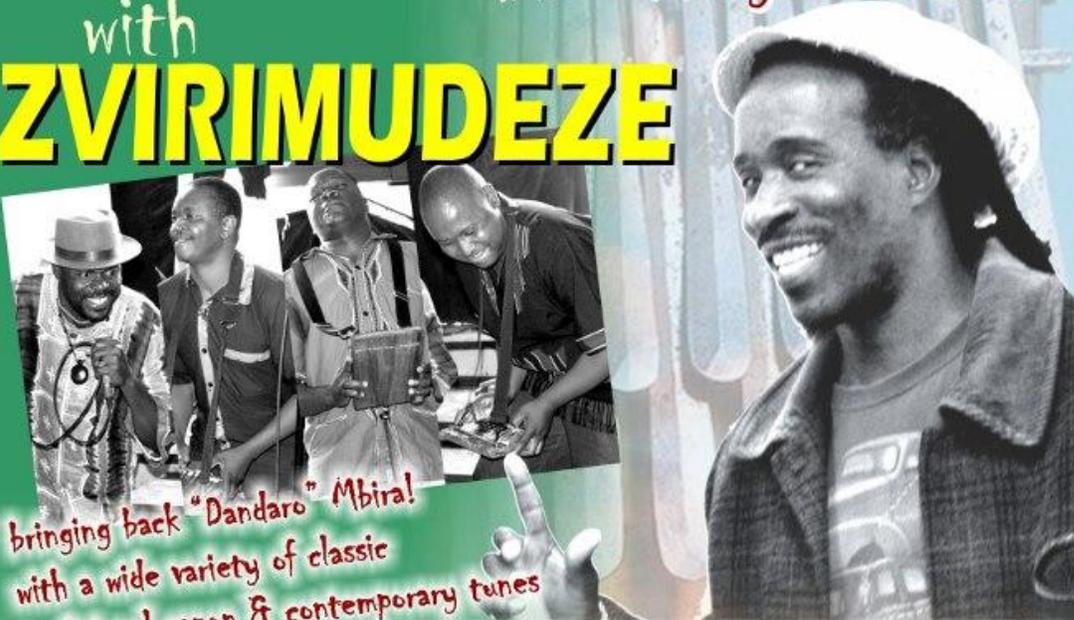
Film Title: Preserving the legacy of *mbira* through paper presentations, workshops and *mbira* pieces.

Running time: 21.00 minutes

Event	Duration	Event	Duration
Introduction	00:00 – 00:23	<i>Mbiriviri</i>	14:04 – 14:19
PART I			
Paper presentation by Claudio Chipendo	00:25 – 01:03	<i>Bvunza mutupo</i>	14:20 – 14:31
Paper presentation by Bayethe Damasane	01:11 – 03:38	<i>Dande</i>	14:32 – 15:01
Paper presentation by Perminus Matiure (Researcher)	03:40 -05:18	<i>Chakwi</i>	15:02 – 15:13
Paper presentation by Dr Nhamo Mhiripiri	05:23 – 07:32	<i>Mandarendare</i>	15:14 – 15:34
Paper presentation by Dr Sheasby Matiure	07:42 – 09:55	<i>Chipindura</i>	15:35 – 15:57
Paper presentation by Godfrey Dube	10:05 – 11:19	<i>Mahororo</i>	15:58 – 16:15
Paper presentation by Cosmas Magaya	11:26 – 12:03	<i>Nyamaropa</i>	16:16 – 16:34
PART II	11:58	<i>Taireva</i>	16:35 – 16:52
<i>Mbira</i> Pieces			
<i>Chipembere</i>	12:10 – 12:31	<i>Chakwi</i>	16:32 – 17:17
<i>Shumba</i>	12:10 – 12:31	<i>Dangurangu</i>	17:18 – 18:06
<i>Nhimutimu</i>	12:49 – 13:10	<i>Nehondo</i>	18:07 – 18:31
<i>Taireva</i>	13:10 – 13:22	<i>Kuzanga</i>	18:32 – 18:47
		PART III	
		Workshop on <i>mbira</i> making	18:48 – 20:48
<i>Nhemamusasa</i>	13:23 – 13:39	Acknowledgements	20:48 – 21:04
<i>Nhemamusasa yepasi</i>	13:51 – 14:19		

NYAMASVISVA ne
**MAWUNGIRA
ENHARIRA**
Mbira - Always Versatile!!

with
ZVIRIMUDEZE



bringing back "Dandaro" Mbira!
with a wide variety of classic
traditional canon & contemporary tunes

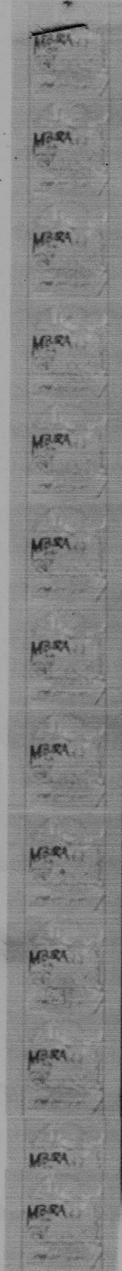
FRI 17 MAY
8pm
cc\$5

BOOK CAFÉ

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APENDIX 9

Mbira Conference flier

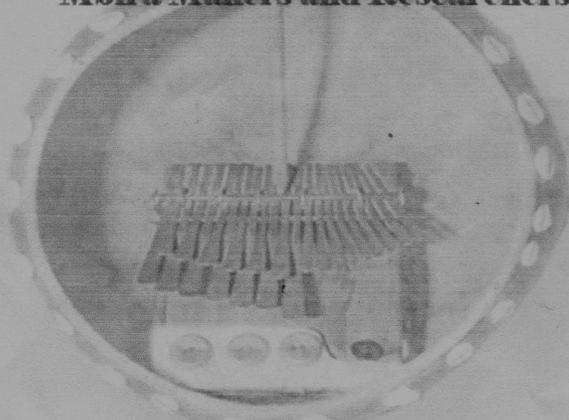


Midlands State University
Music And Musicology Department
Presents

An Annual Mbira Conference

**Theme: Sustaining Mbira Heritage Through Performance
& Research**

Guest Group: Mbira Dzenharira
With other supporting Groups together with
Mbira Makers and Researchers



Date : 31 March 2011 Venue : Great Hall

Time : 0900hrs Admission : Free Free Free

Don't Miss !!!