

**UNDERSTANDING FORM AND TECHNIQUE: ANDREW TRACEY'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE OF LAMELLOPHONE (*MBIRA*) MUSIC OF  
SOUTHERN AFRICA.**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the  
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by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis interrogates Andrew Tracey's career as an ethnomusicologist and the significance of his research and publications on lamellophone (*mbira*) music of the Shona/Sena in Zimbabwe and Mozambique to subsequent scholarship of lamellophones throughout southern Africa.

Through a survey of authors who have cited Tracey's publications, this study assess how his use of the pulse notation transcription method and his theory of form and harmonic structure in *mbira* music, which he terms 'the system of the *mbira*' (A. Tracey, 1989) have influenced and contributed to the work of ethnomusicologists, musicologists and composers. Further this research evaluates the impact on subsequent publications by other scholars of Tracey's technical analysis of *mbira* music. Organizing and indexing Andrew Tracey's field collection in the ILAM archive gave direct knowledge of the scope of his work.

The thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter contains a general introduction to the thesis and outlines the goals of the research. Chapter Two presents a biographical sketch of Andrew Tracey. A general introduction to the lamellophone (*mbira*) family of musical instruments in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa is presented in Chapter Three, which also addresses the social function of lamellophone music. Chapter Four gives a summary of Andrew Tracey's research on the Shona *mbira* (his publications, recordings, films etc), and it analyzes his theory - "The system of the *mbira*" - in which he defines the form and structure of *mbira* music. Chapter Five examines the impact of Andrew Tracey's research and publications on *mbira* music to subsequent scholarship and makes an analysis and evaluation of the significance of his contribution to the body of knowledge of the instrument and its music.

In addition I relate my personal experiences with *mbira* music as a Shona person and *mbira* player and give my opinions on Tracey's and subsequent scholars' theories on *mbira* music. Chapter Six concludes with a summary of outcomes of this research. Basing on the analyses of presented data, it is deduced that, despite a few shortcomings, Andrew Tracey's research on *mbira* music is crucial for it laid the groundwork for subsequent *mbira* scholarship.

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## DEDICATION

With fond memories of my father Gwanzura Gwenzi Gumboreshumba whom I loved dearly.

*Mwendamberi, mvura yadzongwa matangakunwa*

*“Puvu! Tsepete”*

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Introduction

This research examines Andrew Tracey's career as an ethnomusicologist and the significance of his research and publications on lamellophone music of the Shona and Sena ethnic clusters of Zimbabwe and Mozambique respectively to subsequent scholarship on this music throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The Shona in Zimbabwe use the umbrella term *mbira* to refer to their lamellophones. Some of the Shona language designations for the range of *mbira* in Zimbabwe are: *njari*, *mbira dzavadzimu/nhare*, *mbira dzavaNdau*, *karimba/nyunganyunga* and *matepe/madebe dza mhondoro /hera*. The Shona and Sena in Mozambique refer to their lamellophones as *nsansi/sansi* and their specific names are *mana embudzi*, *timbila*, *hera*, *njari*, *karimba*, *mbira dzavaNdau njari huru* and *nyonganyonga/marimba*<sup>1</sup> (A. Tracey 1972).

My father, Gwanzura Gwenzi Gumboreshumba was Andrew Tracey's first *mbira dzavadzimu* teacher. He provided the five songs Andrew Tracey transcribed and used to produce his widely influential instructional booklet, *How to Play the Mbira dzavadzimu* (ILAM, 1970). I recall from my childhood Andrew Tracey's frequent visits to our home village in Mhondoro Chivero district, one and half hours' drive south-west of Harare, in Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe. I always wondered why he, a white person (*murungu*), was so interested in learning to play *mbira*, committing his time and traveling all the way from South Africa. I did not know about research, neither did I know or could I understand that there was something called ethnomusicology. Only much later when I enrolled for music studies at the Zimbabwe College of Music taking a course called Introduction to Ethnomusicology did I clearly come to understand what Andrew was doing, why he was doing it and that ethnomusicological research is important.

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<sup>1</sup> *Karimba/nyunganyunga and nyonganyonga/marimba* refers to the two different types of *mbira*, from Zimbabwe and Mozambique respectively that are each known by both names.

In conversation with my supervisor, it was brought to my attention that no previous research on Andrew Tracey's contribution to knowledge of lamellophone music generally, and Shona/Sena *mbira/sansi* music specifically, has been done. As a Shona person and a *mbira* player, I eagerly undertook the research for what I stood to learn about my heritage. It afforded me the opportunity to immerse myself in Tracey's work and to get to the crux of what he aimed to achieve in his research and publications.

My research indicates that Tracey's contribution is significant to the growing body of publications and creative projects inspired by *mbira* music. His work has been cited in such prestigious publications as the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001), the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Volume 1, Africa* (1998), as well as books and articles by renowned ethnomusicologists such as Gerhard Kubik, (1999) and Paul Berliner, (1978). Much of his work has been published in the journal *African Music*.

### **Research Goals**

The following goals of this research have been identified: 1) to analyze Andrew Tracey's scholarly research and publications on lamellophone music of the Shona/Sena in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, to include published articles and a booklet, films on *mbira* music and his field tape collection that comprise audio cassettes, reel to reel tapes and video tapes in relation to subsequent research on the topic and the theories it has generated; 2) to evaluate the impact on subsequent publications by other scholars of Tracey's technical analysis of the structure and form of *mbira* music, his transcription technique and his theory of 'the system of the *mbira*' as articulated in the following publications: "Three Tunes for *Mbira dzavadzimu*" (1963); "How to Play the *Mbira dzavadzimu*" (1970); "The *Matepe Mbira* Music of Rhodesia" (1970) ; "The System of the *Mbira*" (1989).

### **Research Methods, Procedures and Techniques**

In its current state, the Andrew Tracey collection of field recordings is inaccessible to researchers. Thus, as my initial step, with Andrew Tracey's assistance, I organized and indexed his collection in the ILAM archive. This gave me direct knowledge of the scope

of his work. This work of indexing Tracey's field recordings was essential preparation for planned cataloguing and preservation of the collection and its conversion from analog to digital format.

My primary research methods were archival and library research and extensive interviews with Andrew Tracey and selected scholars. I conducted extensive face-to-face interviews with Andrew Tracey and e-mail interviews with composer Kevin Volans and the scholars of *mbira* who have drawn on Tracey's work. The interviews were done to ascertain the selected scholars' opinions on the significance of Tracey's work to their own *mbira* scholarship. Scholars I contacted are Gerhard Kubik (University of Vienna, Austria), Klaus-Peter Brenner (University of Gottingen, Germany), Paul Berliner (Duke University, USA), Claire Jones (Boston University, USA), Martin Scherzinger (Rochester and New York Universities, USA), Christopher Ballantine (University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa), Gerd Grupe (Universitat fur Musik und darstellende Kunst in Graz, Germany) and Christine Lucia (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa). Their views and opinions on the significance of Tracey's work are discussed in Chapter Four.

Library research has involved careful reading and analysis of both Tracey's publications on lamellophones of Southern Africa and the Shona *mbira* (1961-1989) and the publications of the various authors who have cited his work. An analysis of Tracey's archived field recordings and instructional materials to include the films he produced on *mbira* music was also undertaken. Importantly, also analyzed was Tracey's method of transcribing *mbira* music, which he devised. It was evaluated for its effectiveness in comparison with *mbira* transcription methods of subsequent scholars.

### **Literature Review**

There is a substantial body of literature on African lamellophones in general and on *mbira* music specific to Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Earliest written sources are those by explorers and later by missionaries which date back to the sixteenth century. Dos Santos (1586), Thomas Baines (1869), Carl Mauch in "The Journals of Carl Mauch 1869-

1872”, David Livingstone (1865, 1875), Kirby (1953) in his book “The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa” and Hugh Tracey (1961) informed me about the earliest known sources on *mbira*.

Hugh Tracey’s articles in *African Music* (1961, 1969a, 1969b) informed me on the various *mbira* types of Zimbabwe, their geographical location and the social function of the music. Through these sources I was also introduced to Hugh Tracey’s work on scales found on African instruments and the cents<sup>2</sup> system which I later encountered in Andrew Tracey’s work.

Hugh Tracey’s article “The *Mbira* Class of African Instruments in Rhodesia” (1961) opened my eyes on the limitations that arise in trying to find a single African generic term for the lamellophones. This is further explained by Gerhard Kubik (1964, 1965, 1999). Kubik (1999) is extensively cited in Chapter Three. I found Kubik’s exhaustive article on lamellophones (1999) very useful for it addresses many aspects similar to those that I discuss in my thesis. These include such aspects as terminology, typology, tunings, performers, intercultural concepts and playing techniques.

Contextualized studies on *mbira* music consulted include Paul Berliner (1978), Thomas Turino (1998) and Francis Bebey, (1975) to a lesser extent. Most useful is Paul Berliner’s detailed account of the intricacy of Shona *mbira* music in its society. I borrowed heavily from Berliner on the social function of *mbira* music in Chapter Three. The analytic description of *mbira* music by Nketia (1979) which cites Andrew Tracey (1961, 1969, and 1970) was useful when I engaged with Andrew Tracey’s theory of ‘the system of the *mbira*’ which is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Four.

Gerd Grupe (1998) has also analyzed Shona *mbira* music drawing on the work of Andrew Tracey, Paul Berliner, Gerhard Kubik and Klaus-Peter Brenner. His analysis of

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<sup>2</sup> Cent-a logarithmic unit of measure used for musical intervals. 1 cent is one hundredth of a semitone. Alexander J. Ellis proposed that as there are 12 semitones in the octave (in the western system), each should be considered to have 100 cents, giving 1200 cents to the octave.

the music was helpful in my own analysis of Andrew Tracey's work. Grupe brings up crucial arguments about the nature of *mbira* music and shows how analyses of African music based on western concepts fall short of fully representing the music. Dutiro and Howard (2007), Brusila (2003), Otternberg (1996), Kubik (1999), Nketia (1979), Grupe (1998), Berliner (1978) are examples of subsequent scholarship on lamellophone music that cited Andrew Tracey's work extensively. Their work helped me in my goal to determine the significance of Tracey's contribution to the knowledge of lamellophone music in Southern Africa. [Http://www.nscottrobinson.com/mbiraplayers.php](http://www.nscottrobinson.com/mbiraplayers.php), accessed 20/05/08 and <http://www.zimfest.org/97overview.html>, accessed 26/05/08 and various other websites also offer general information on *mbira* music, particularly of Zimbabwe. However, my main sources were the published material on *mbira* music.

### **Thesis Format**

Chapter One serves as an introduction to the research that produced the data for this thesis. A biographical sketch of Andrew Tracey's life and work comprises Chapter Two. A general introduction to the lamellophone (*mbira*) family of musical instruments in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa is presented in Chapter Three. Chapter Three also addresses the social function of lamellophone music. Chapter Four presents a summary of Andrew Tracey's research on the Shona *mbira* (his publications, recordings, films etc), plus it analyzes his theory which he calls "The System of the *Mbira*". In this theory he defines the form and structure of *mbira* music. Chapter Five examines the impact of Andrew Tracey's research and publications on *mbira* music to subsequent scholarship, and makes an analysis and evaluation of the significance of his contribution to the body of knowledge of the instrument and its music. Chapter Six concludes with a summary of outcomes of this research.

## Chapter 2

### Andrew Tracey- A Brief Biography



FIGURE 1A. Andrew Tracey in 1973.  
(Photo courtesy of ILAM)

#### **Family Background and Education**

Andrew Norman Travers Tracey was born on 5 May 1936 in Durban, South Africa, to Hugh Tracey and Ursula Campbell. He lived in South Africa for the first 10 years of his life where he attended Durban Preparatory High School until Standard Four. When his parents divorced in 1947, he moved to England with his mother and his younger brother Paul (b. 1939). They lived with their maternal grandmother, who had a farm in Somerset. In England, Andrew attended Rose Hill School until the age of 13 and completed his school years at Charterhouse in Surrey, Godalming, south of London.

Andrew Tracey's musical experience began with exposure to his father's musical life as Director of the Durban studio of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, and to his recordings of African, particularly Zulu music. His first instrument, at the age of five, was a plastic Fitchhorn song-flute his father gave him, which he taught himself to play. He had three years of piano lessons at school until he was 13, which he gave up because he did not enjoy studying piano. He decided he wanted a wind instrument, and opted for the clarinet. He did well on the clarinet and played in the school band and in the orchestra. Andrew says that he had a brilliant clarinet teacher at Charterhouse, George Draper, who inspired him greatly (A. Tracey-Interview, 23/10/07).

Andrew indicates that both sides of his family were very musical. His maternal grandmother was an accomplished pianist, and cello player. The other members of the family played violin and cello and other western instruments. His mother liked to listen to music, although she was not a good performer or singer herself. His grandmother hosted classical music weekends, where family members played chamber music such as trios and quintets of Brahms and Mozart. As soon as he was able to handle the parts, Andrew would play clarinet in the Chamber music events.

His father's family were folk singers. Some of them played guitar and banjo and they sang as a family to entertain people. Many of his cousins also performed folk music. He never knew his grandfather on his father's side, but from what everybody in the family told him, he was a multi-talented man and he was musical. He was a doctor and a preacher. His talents came out in all his eleven children, of whom Andrew's father Hugh Tracey was the ninth.

Andrew tells the story of how he began to play guitar when he was 16 years old. He joined a friend called Mark in making home-made radios. They had read a magazine which said "electrify your guitar using only a pair of old RAF headphones". He had the headphones but he had no guitar. So he wrote to his father asking if he could buy him a Gallo guitar. His father sent one for him to the Gallo office in London. He went to collect it and he never even thought about electrifying it with the headphones, he just began to play it (C. Lucia, 2006/2007: 129).

His father also made and sent him special copies on acetate discs of his favourite recent recordings, with his comments and sketches on the outside. These included recordings of the guitarist Jean Bosco Mwenda from the Congo whom he recorded in 1952. Andrew then taught himself to play Mwenda's songs from listening to the recordings. That is how he started to play African music. He only discovered a long time later from his colleague at ILAM Gerhard Kubik (Austrian Ethnomusicologist) that Mwenda and most guitarists in the Congo played with two fingers, thumb and first finger only. Andrew taught himself

with four fingers because that was the way he was learning guitar in the western classical style.

After graduating from Charterhouse he joined the British Army for two years. He was a second lieutenant and he volunteered for the King Shropshire Light Infantry regiment which took him to Kenya for a year. Whilst in Kenya he learnt to speak Swahili. Of his tenure in the British Army Andrew says,

I was in charge of a platoon of 30 men, I never fired even one shot at a Mau Mau. We got close to the Mau Mau but they always escaped because they were very good in the forest, and we English boys were not very clever in the forest (A. Tracey-Interview, 23/10/07).

Andrew learned something about Kenyan guitar music, but mostly he reports that his time in Kenya was very useful to learn to speak Swahili, which helped him with his later study of Shona, and he enjoyed getting to know another part of Africa, and getting to know his partenal aunt Vera who farmed there.

After the army he attended Oxford University from 1957-59. He studied French and German in the first year, and then changed his major to Social Anthropology, which he says was much more useful for his career. In those days Ethnomusicology was not only unheard of at Oxford at that time, but worldwide, so anthropology was more relevant, and allowed him to focus on African music. Thus it was that he completed his BA in Anthropology which later matured into an MA, a degree option unique to Oxford University.

When he left Oxford late in 1959, Andrew returned to Africa, but only after he drove through Europe to the South of France on a motorbike. He then took a boat to Mombasa (Kenya) and completed his journey from Mombasa down to South Africa again on his motorbike. The trip took him 3 months. "I was not in a hurry, I wanted to see things on the way" (A. Tracey-Interview, 23/10/07). Upon his return, on the advice of his father he moved to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe for the six months that followed, and his research on African music began.

## Research in African Music

### Learning to Play *Karimba*.

At the end of 1959 Andrew was offered a job in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, by Robert Sibson who knew Hugh Tracey and his work on African music. Andrew's job was to help establish the Kwanongoma College of Music, of which Sibson was the founder. Andrew was tasked to find traditional musicians who could teach at the new music college. He found, among other musicians, Jege Tapera who played *karimba*. At that time Andrew did not go to Tapera with the intention of learning to play *karimba*, but soon he realized he was not going to understand the music without learning to play it. Thus he asked Tapera if he could teach him to play *karimba* (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

Andrew recalls very well the incident in 1959 when he went to see Tapera for the second time and could not find him for two weeks. When he found him, Tapera told him that he had gone to his rural home in Murehwa to ask his *vadzimu* (ancestors) if they agreed that he should teach a white person to play *mbira*. Fortunately for Andrew, they did agree, so it was then that Tapera started to teach Andrew.

Initially Andrew spoke very little Shona, so he had to speak English, and Jege Tapera did not speak very much English, nor did most of the musicians he spoke to, so he had to do what he could with his little knowledge of Zulu which is similar to Ndebele. Andrew started to learn Shona by singing before he knew the language, because his father taught him the Shona *ngano* (folk tales) and they all have songs. He started to feel the language from story songs, after which he learnt from the people, he worked with the Swahili he had learnt in Kenya which helped him in learning Shona, because Swahili and Shona have much in common. He also bought a "teach yourself Shona" book and a dictionary. He also contacted Professor George Fortune, a linguist at the University of Rhodesia, for some help (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

From his study of the *karimba* with Tapera in 1959-60, Andrew wrote his first article on *mbira* in 1961 published as 'Mbira Music of Jege A. Tapera', *African Music*, 2(4), 44-63. Tapera introduced Andrew to Matewo Zvimba who played *njari mbira*. Andrew tried to

understand *njari*, but at that time he found it too complicated. In Andrew's words, "I did not understand the system of *mbira* which I got to understand later on." The system of the *karimba* is much simpler because it's only half the size of the system on the *njari* and *mbira dzavadzimu* (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07). These 'systems' will be discussed in depth in Chapter Four.

Andrew mentions that Hugh Tracey influenced him to do research on *mbira* music, because he loved *mbira* music from the time of his early research in Southern Rhodesia (1929-1933). However, he never managed to learn to play it himself, and thus encouraged his son to learn to play *mbira*. Hugh Tracey also tried to invent a way of transcribing *mbira* music, but since he had no music training he did not have the background to do this. Andrew says of his father:

He did not tell me to learn to play, he did not say 'you must learn to play', but he wanted me to study. And after I studied with Jege Tapera, I realized that this was going to be my way of learning, I realized this was the only good way of learning to do it yourself then you know what you are doing is right and it is accepted by the people (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

Another early technique Andrew used to learn *karimba* songs was to record them, asking the player to play a bit more slowly, and then try to transcribe them from the recording. Then he would go back to the player to confirm that he was playing the song correctly. Later, with more experience of the different types of *mbira*, he relied almost entirely on transcribing from live performance. It became easier as he learnt more songs, and especially because he soon discovered that there was a system on the *karimba* in that all the songs follow the same progression of chords, the same harmonic system.

He learnt how to sing from imitating the singer's voice on the recording and also from singing along when he played together with his teachers. Sometimes Andrew and Tapera would play for other people and Andrew would see from the reaction of the people that he was on the right track. They were happy to see him play because at that time there was no other white person who was even thinking of playing *mbira*. It was something very unusual, people were very surprised to see a white person learning *mbira* (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

Although it was in the 1960s and the colonial era, Andrew was received very warmly, very enthusiastically. But things changed in the 1970s during the struggle for independence. The colonial government used to target *mbira* players because they knew *mbira* players were playing for the *masvikiro* (mediums of the ancestral spirits) and the *masvikiro* were encouraging the freedom fighters. At times Andrew met some resistance from black people who accused the *mbira* players he worked with of selling their culture to him.

But after Independence things were suddenly different because the Shona people were looking at their own culture, celebrating independence and seeking to reinstate their identity and culture. Andrew used his *mbira* as his passport. When he would sit and play people would be quite surprised, and that would usually open the door for him. However, he still encountered resistance from some Christians who had great trouble accepting what he was doing, because the *mbira* to them was a tool of Satan. However with passage of time the church began to accept *mbira* music and *ngoma* (drums) in the church, with Catholics being the first (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

### ***Mbira dzavadzimu***

Andrew's first *Mbira dzavadzimu* teacher was Gwanzura Gwenzi Gumboreshumba who was working as chief messenger at Anglo-American company in Harare. He first met Gwanzura Gwenzi in Salisbury (Harare) in 1962 during his tour to Zimbabwe with the show *Wait a Minim*. As a result of his research with Gwanzura Gwenzi, Andrew produced two publications, first an article in 1963, 'Three Tunes for '*Mbira dzavadzimu*', *African Music*, 3(2), 23-26. Then in 1970 he published his widely influential instructional booklet, *How to Play the Mbira dzavadzimu* (ILAM, 1970).

For five years from 1964-68 Andrew was away in UK, USA and Australia with the stage show *Wait a Minim*. When he returned he resumed his research on *mbira dzavadzimu* with Gwanzura Gwenzi and other players in Zimbabwe (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

### *Matepe*

Andrew's first two teachers on the *Matepe mbira* of the Sena/Tonga people were Saini Madera and Saini Murira at Mukota in Mutoko, east of Harare (Zimbabwe) near the Mozambican border, whom he met in 1969. He did not sit with them to be taught note by note. He would record them, but most importantly would also transcribe by watching their hands on the instrument, because he found that transcribing *mbira* from the recorded sound alone could lead to mistakes. He would watch them play and ask them to play slowly if they could. However they sometimes could not play it very slowly, because *matepe* is usually played very fast and sometimes when they played slowly they made mistakes. By this time he had developed the system that he used throughout his research.

He would ask the other players like Saini Murira and Garaji to play and he would see how they played together, that way he learnt the other versions of each song because they never played the same version together. With *mbira*, one player must play a different interlocking melody to contrast with the other player. Using the *matepe* made by Kadori which his father had obtained in 1932, he learnt to play about six songs, each in one version, which gave him enough material to play with other players, who would play different versions with him. During this time when he was doing his research on *matepe* at Mukota, he also recorded *ngororombe* (panpipe music) of the Sena/Tonga who lived in that region. Later he recorded and transcribed a number of other *hera/matepe* players in Darwin and in Mozambique (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).



FIGURE 1B. L to R: Hugh Tracey, Curt Wittig, Heather Tracey, Andrew Tracey, a Nyungwe musician and Pinto playing *hera/matepe mbira* on a recording tour near Chioko in Mozambique in 1970. (Photo courtesy of ILAM, Photographer: Kurt Wentzel).

## *Njari*

Gwenzi Gwasera was Andrew's first *njari* teacher. He lived in Enkeldoorn (now Chivhu). It was in the early 1970s that Andrew began his research on *njari*. As Andrew puts it, Gwenzi Gwasera played in quite a simple style which was not difficult to learn. He could write his songs down very easily by that time, and was able to hear the music better because he was getting accustomed to hearing how Shona music is structured.

Andrew has an interesting story about his relationship with Gwenzi Gwasera. Gwasera gave him a gift that he said was very important. He gave Andrew a small horn of an animal with medicine in it and he said, "This is medicine for you to learn to play *mbira*", and he also gave him a small gourd which had some things including a coin and said, "You must keep this you will be rich one day." Later Andrew worked with other *njari* players, such as the famous Simon Mashoko near Masvingo and Lazaro Vinyu at Mandie, Mozambique (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

Of his experiences with *mbira* music Andrew explains that it was very exciting for him to find another way of making music which did not depend on Western harmony. He was thrilled. He only discovered the harmonic basis of Shona music very slowly, it started through Jege Tapera's music, and also his father's field recordings of other *kalimba* players which he soon discovered used the same system. He discovered that there was a harmonic system for the *karimba*. When he learnt *mbira dzavadzimu* with Gwanzura Gwenzi Gumboreshumba he discovered that this harmonic system was doubled, it was double the length of the cycle and all the chords follow certain sequence patterns. It was a very exciting moment for him when he came to realize that all the longer songs on *mbira dzavadzimu* have the same chord sequence but starting in a different place. These findings by Andrew will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

For over three decades that he has been in the field, Andrew has seen himself grow in terms of his approach to researching African music. He says that the more instruments one learns, the easier it is to learn more instruments. For instance knowing some of the songs on *mbira* and knowing something about African rhythm he was able to learn

*bangwe* (zither) of Mozambique and Malawi very easily. One thing led to the other and knowing *mbira* rhythms he was able to get to *timbila* more easily (A. Tracey-Interview, 6/11/07).

### ***Wait a Minim***

In January 1962 Andrew and his brother Paul founded *Wait a Minim*, a South African stage show which played for seven years (1962-1968) in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, USA, England, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Andrew was the musical director as well as a performer in this hugely popular and widely known humorous musical review. Their music included a collection of folk songs and folk music from many different countries in the world. They had a wide variety of musical instruments, some fifty in total: African, European, American and Indian. It being the apartheid era, they had an underlying theme of satire about South African politics which was done with very gentle humour, but in a way that audiences understood the humour and loved it (A. Tracey-Interview, 2/04/08).

His father Hugh Tracey gave them advice and helped them make some of the instruments used in the show. Hugh also suggested songs from his recordings. Thus it was that they sang several African songs from Hugh Tracey's field recordings, for instance the Xhosa song *Amasalela* (the cowards) had a big part in the finale of the show. Andrew at this time had also begun his research on African music (with the *karimba* player Jege Tapera in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe), thus they incorporated the *karimba* piece *Ndinosara Nani* as the opening song in their show. Leon Gluckman was the producer of *Wait a Minim* (A. Tracey-Interview, 2/04/08).

As Andrew puts it, their show survived for seven years (1962-1968) "because it was full of variety, done with great energy and great skill". Another appealing factor was Jeremy Taylor's original songs which he wrote and used in the show, especially *Ag Please Daddy* which was a hit and became almost like a national anthem in South Africa among the whites. Four LPs were released from the various stagings of the show. It was in 1966 during the time of the show's tour in United States that Andrew married his South

African girlfriend Heather Beard in New York City. He had met Heather while on tour in London in 1965.

### **The Andrew Tracey Steel Band**

Andrew's first encounter with Steel Band was during their *Wait a Minim* tour in London. He had the opportunity to attend a Steel Band show of the band Les Flambeaux, which was performing at a London restaurant. On hearing the music Andrew says, "right from the first time I heard them I said, 'this is my music, this is going to be my sort of music' and I began to go and listen to them almost every night after our show, for a whole year" (A. Tracey-Interview, 2/04/08).

At one point one of the Les Flambeaux Steel Band guitar pan player fell sick and Andrew asked if he could stand in for him the group accepted. They told him they could not rehearse with him, he had to just play what he could, so he stumbled his way into performing in a Steel Band. It was a small band of 6 players. He performed with the group for two weeks and it gave him the opportunity to experience and feel what it was like to play with a small band.

He bought his first steel pan, the lead/tenor from this band and began playing it in *Wait a Minim*. He began learning how to dance to steel band music and how to enjoy calypso. He gradually continued to acquire instruments for a steel band. When they reached America with *Wait a Minim* in 1966, he bought a "double second"/alto. On their way to New Zealand with the show, Andrew went via Trinidad and bought a "four bass"/bass steel drum.

In 1968, when he returned to South Africa from New Zealand and Australia where *Wait a Minim* played for 6 months, he brought his steel band instruments with him. Andrew formed his first steel band in 1970, and did all the musical arrangements for it himself. It was the first steel band in South Africa and Tracey says, "Now there are many, but they all came out of mine". The steel band players developed their skills to the point that he

had a professional band by 1977, which toured the country extensively, and actually made a living from the income they earned as a band (A. Tracey-Interview, 2/04/08).

Over the years, Andrew improved the instruments in the steel band, partly by going to Trinidad, first in 1967 and a couple more times after, to learn more about steel band in general including standards of performance and pan construction. In the 1980s-90s one of his band members Steve Lawrie, still a teenager began making instruments. Andrew eventually incorporated some of Lawrie's instruments into the band. As for repertoire, he always collected records and CDs from Trinidad and other places. He wrote songs especially for the band, but he also arranged popular and classical music to round out their repertoire.

Andrew Tracey's Steel Band has stood the test of time and played continuously for thirty-seven years. Of course over the years it has had many members leave and new people join. Among other achievements, for over twenty years, the band has participated in the prestigious National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa, an annual event.

### **International Library of African Music-Director**

When Hugh Tracey died in 1977, Andrew Tracey became the Director of the International Library of Music (ILAM). In 1978 Andrew moved ILAM from Roodepoort, where it had been since it was founded by Hugh Tracey in 1954, to Rhodes University. Andrew served as the Director of ILAM and editor of its journal *African Music* from 1977 through 2005. The 1980s were spent getting ILAM established at Rhodes University. During that time he managed to source funds to build the current ILAM building and to commence the process of digitizing all the Library's holdings, which still continues.

In his life and career, Andrew has engaged himself with music in numerous ways. He lectured in the Anthropology, African languages, Drama, and Music departments at Rhodes University. From 1980 to 2004 he was organizer of the series of Symposia on Ethnomusicology and editor of the Proceedings of those Symposia. He has adjudicated at

various local, national and international music/arts competitions such as the annual Eisteddfods and others. Andrew has given numerous lectures at universities, schools and to community groups local and abroad, TV and radio interviews as well as individual tuition in the playing of African musical instruments. He has done workshops on playing (and making) of African instruments, and on transcription of African music.

He also established the Ethnomusicology Programme at Rhodes University by obtaining a grant from the Liberty Life Educational Foundation to fund a three year contract post for a PhD Ethnomusicologist to develop the undergraduate courses that comprise the Ethnomusicology major now offered through the Rhodes University Department of Music and Musicology.

From his field research, Tracey has published articles on African music, mainly in the ILAM journal *African Music* plus two entries in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Andrew's research and fieldwork (1959-2004) cover Shona/Sena *mbira* and panpipe music of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia; Chopi and Tswa *timbila* orchestral xylophone music of Mozambique; Pedi, Venda and Xhosa/Thembu music and instruments in South Africa; Damara and Kavango music and instruments in Namibia. Andrew has made numerous field recordings during his field research. In addition he wrote and produced documentary films with the late Gei Zantzinger, an American ethnographic filmmaker, on Shona *mbira* music and Chopi *timbila* xylophone orchestras of Zimbabwe and Mozambique respectively (1973, 1975, 1977, 1980).

### **African Musical Instruments (AMI)**

Hugh Tracey founded African Musical Instruments (AMI) in 1955 just after he had established ILAM. Andrew says that AMI, the musical instrument factory, started because his father had continuous trouble in finding funding for ILAM. He always had to look for funds from donors and foundations. Andrew Tracey recalls that his father loved *mbira* music and felt that it should be known outside Zimbabwe and all over the world. He thought about the fact that his target group (non Zimbabweans/white people) was not likely to be able to learn *mbira* as it is played in Zimbabwe. Therefore, he developed a

*kalimba* with a western scale which came to be known as the ‘Hugh Tracey *Kalimba*’. In the beginning he made about three hundred test models, experimenting with different factors, e.g. sizes, shapes, thickness of wood, materials for the keys etc. As a result of his encounters with the *karimba* during his numerous research trips, Andrew later designed a 17-note *karimba* for AMI, with an African tuning. (A. Tracey-Interview, 9/11/07).

When Andrew moved ILAM to Grahamstown, he also brought AMI. The company diversified into making several types of *marimbas*, bows, harps, *nyanga* panpipes, rattles, tone blocks and drums. Over the years AMI has grown, with sales doing well on both local and international markets. Andrew’s brother Paul has done a great deal in terms of advertising the company and its products abroad. Andrew is the director of AMI since 1977 to date.

## Chapter 3

### Lamellophones in Africa

Lamellophones are a large family of musical instruments widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. In the Hornbostel/Sachs classification of musical instruments lamellophones are classified as plucked idiophones. Nketia (1979:77) describes lamellophones as consisting of a graduated series of wooden or metal lamellae (strips) arranged on a flat sound board and mounted on a resonator such as a box, a gourd or even a tin. The metal keys are usually made of iron. Rattling pieces of metal or snail shells may be attached to the sound board or to the resonator to increase the ratio of noise to pitch. The instrument may have from one to three manuals, and a single manual may have between five and twenty keys. Some large lamellophones have between thirty-four to forty-five keys.

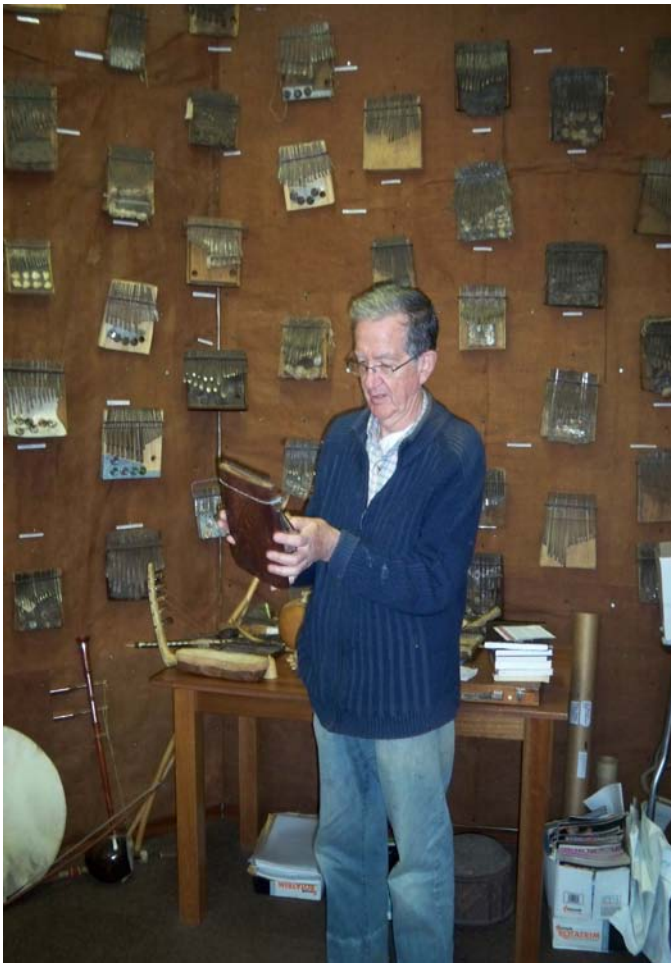


FIGURE 1C. Andrew Tracey in front of various *mbira* types displayed at ILAM. This *mbira* collection by Hugh and Andrew Tracey is from Southern African countries where the two carried out their research on and made numerous recordings of African music. (Photo by Elijah Madiba courtesy of ILAM.)

## Terminology

Until the early 1960s, this class of instruments was generally known as *sansa* or *sansi*, however as Kubik (1999:22) explains, it was a misnomer which originated with David Livingstone's misspelling of the Nyungwe and Manganja terms *nsansi* and *sansi* respectively, which are used in the lower Zambezi/Shire river areas of Mozambique. In an effort to address this problem, Hugh Tracey (1953, 1961) proposed to use *mbira* as a generic term in instrument classification. However the geographical distribution of this term is limited to Zimbabwe and adjacent areas. In 1966 Kubik suggested the use of the term lamellophones as a neutral term for this family of instruments in the major European languages. This would also replace the misnomers such as "thumb piano", "hand piano" etc.

Lamellophones in Africa are known by various names, varying with the language, its phonetics, the geographical area, the type of instrument, local classification systems and social context. For instance the lamellophones of Zimbabwe are called *mbira*, and there are five types of *mbira*, with each *mbira* type found among a specific sub dialect group of the Shona-speaking people, although some do overlap. The Zimbabwean *mbira* and its types will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter. Lamellophones in central Mozambique and southern Malawi are known as *nsansi* or *sansi*; in Zambia *kalimba*; central Tanzania, *ilimba*; Angola and Congo *likembe*; Uganda, *kadongo*; Cameroon, *timbrh*; Nigeria, *agidigbo*.

Kubik (1999:24-27) explains that there are at least four prominent noun stems that are used in the names of Lamellophones in Africa. He highlights that these findings are based on data from fieldwork by Hugh Tracey (1961, 1969, and 1973), Andrew Tracey (1972), Margot Dias (1986), Maurice Djenda, Gerhard Kubik and Moya A. Malamusi (field notes to recordings archived in the Museum fur Volkerkunde, Berlin). Kubik gives a thorough explanation regarding lamellophone names in Africa. For instance, the *-Limba/-Rimba* stem is found in southeast Africa stretching into Tanzania, Angola and the southern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The stem is used for both lamellophones and xylophones. Thus there are the names *limba*, *valimba*, *silimba* and *marimba* referring to

xylophones in Malawi and Namibia. The names *malimba*, *kalimba*, *ilimba* and *marimba madogo* refer to lamellophones in Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania and Namibia respectively.

The *-Mbila/-Mbira* stem is used in lamellophone and xylophone names in Zimbabwe, Zambia, parts of Mozambique and Malawi. For instance in Zimbabwe three lamellophone types incorporate the term *mbira*, *mbira dza vadzimu* (also *mbira dzemidzimu* according to dialect), *mbila deza* and *mbira dza vaNdau*. In Zambia among the Bemba, Bisa, Nsenga and Shila the one-note xylophone is known as *mbila*. In Mozambique, for the Chopi a xylophone key is called *mbila* (plural *timbila*), and in Malawi the Khokola call their log xylophone *mambira*. The Lomwe of northern Mozambique and south eastern Malawi call their xylophone *mambirira*.

The *-Sansi/-Sanji/-Sanzi* stem originated in the Bantu languages of the lower Zambezi area, and was originally concentrated in southeast Africa. However it later spread across central Africa into DRC, Angola and neighbouring countries. This stem is solely for lamellophones, it is not shared with xylophones. In Malawi among the Manyanja and Chewa the name *sansi* is used, while the Nyungwe in Mozambique use the term *nsansi*. Other terms from the stem are *thishanji* (Namibia), *ndandi* (Zambia), *kisanji*, *ocisanji*, *cisanzi* (Angola) and *sanji* in the Central African Republic (CAR).

The *-Kembe* stem is widespread across Central Africa in countries like the Congo and Angola. The *likembe* (plural *makembe*) lamellophone is characterized by a number of organological traits. It has a box-shaped resonator, the iron bridge is U-shaped and consists of from eight to twelve relatively thin, iron lamellae which are attached to the sound board in a V-shaped or VI shaped layout so that the longest deep tuned note is in the middle.

It must be noted however, that there are other lamellophone names which fall outside the four prominent stems. For instance the raffia lamellophone among the Vute in central Cameroon is known as *timbrh*, in north eastern Namibia there is the *Kangombyo*, the term

*kankobele* is widespread in central Zambia and *shitata* is the term used in northern Mozambique.

The following table shows common names for lamellophones in a variety of African languages. (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1999: 23).

FIGURE 2A

Designation	Organological type	Ethnic-linguistic group	Distribution area (country, etc)
<i>mbira or mbila</i>	nonspecific, also for One-note xylophone; lamellophones usually with many lamellae in two ranks	Shona and other peoples in southeast Africa (T.11-15 Bantu)	Zimbabwe central Mozambique
<i>malimba or marimba</i>	nonspecific; also (on the Tanzanian coast) for xylophones	(a) –Dzimba, -Phodzo (b)-Kisi, -Pangwa, -Bena, etc (c) –Zaramo (D.15. N.46, G.67.65.64:33 Bantu)	Mozambique; southern Malawi; coast of Tanzania, southwestern Tanzania
<i>Nsansi or sansi</i>	Nonspecific, but exclusively used for lamellophones; preferably large types with up to 36 lamellae in two ranks, and Gourd resonator	-Nyungwe and other ethnic groups	Central Mozambique; southern Malawi
<i>kalimba</i>	Small specimens (a) with a fan-shaped soundboard (b) with a box resonator; some with mirlton	(a) –Chewa, -Lala, etc. (b) –Tumbuka (N.31b, M.52, N.21a, Bantu)	Malawi; Zambia
<i>ilimba</i>	Box-resonated, large with spider-web mirlton; rattle rings slung round the lamellae; reference lamellae for tuning	-Gogo (G.11, Bantu)	central Tanzania
<i>likembe</i> (pl.ma-)	Box-resonated, specific shape with cut out section at the vibrato hole; mostly 8 to 12 lamellae	many ethnic groups across Central Africa	Congo/Zaire; Republic of Congo; Angola; northwestern Zambia; Central African Republic etc
<i>Kadongo</i> (pl.bu)	Derivative of the <i>likembe</i> ; oval resonator made of sheet iron; vibrato hole; 12 lamellae	-Soga; -Gwere (E.16, e.17, Bantu)	Uganda
<i>cisanzi</i> (pl.vi-)	Generic designation for several lamellophone types; mostly board-or tray-shaped	-Mbwela, -Nkhangala, -Lucazi, and other languages (K. 13, Bantu)	Angola;northwestern Zambia
<i>karombyo</i>	“Caprivi” type; fan-shaped soundboard; two ranks of lamellae	-Subia, -Lozi (K. 42, K.21, Bantu)	Namibia; western Zambia
<i>Mucapata</i> (also	Bell-shaped resonator;	-Cokwe (K.11, Bantu)	Angola, southern

<i>cisaji</i> <i>camucapata</i> (pl.mi-)	specific arrangement of lamellae		Congo/Zaire
<i>mbø ngo</i>	Raffia lamellophone, with raft-shaped soundboard	Tikar (I.A.5, Benue-Congo)	Cameroon
<i>timbrh</i>	Lamellophone with raffia notes, raftor box-shaped resonator; use of black wax for tuning	Vute (I.A.5, Benue-Congo)	Cameroon
<i>agidigbo</i>	Lamellophone with large box; broad lamellae from sheet iron; few lamellae	Yoruba (I.A.4, Kwa)	Nigeria

### Playing Technique

Lamellophone playing technique is described in the literature by various scholars, Berliner (1978), Kubik (1999), Hugh Tracey (1969), and Andrew Tracey (1970) and is consistent across all types of lamellophone in that the keyboard is played on the left side with the left thumb and on the right side with the right thumb. In instances where the lamellophones consist of more than twenty lamellae/keys arranged in two ranks, more than two fingers are used, only thumbs depress their keys downward while all other fingers involved “pluck” them upward. For instance players of the thirty-six note *malimba* in Mozambique use thumbs and index fingers of both hands, the *mbira dzavadzimu* players use both thumbs and the right index finger only. The playing technique of the *sasi* among the Khokola in Malawi involves five fingers; thumbs, index fingers, and the little finger of the left hand.

### Historical Traces, Early Documentation

Written sources on lamellophones begin in the sixteenth century. The first is a famous text by the Portuguese missionary Frei Joao dos Santos (1609) who visited the kingdom of Kiteve, on the Mozambique coast along the Sofala River, in 1586. Santos (quoted in Tracey 1989: 44) wrote:

[The Africans on the East coast have ] a musical instrument, also called *ambira*... it is all made of iron... being composed of narrow flat rods of iron about a palm in length, tempered in the fire so that each has a different sound. There are only nine of these rods, placed together in a row close together, with the ends nailed to a piece of wood like the bridge of a violin, from which they hang over a hollow in the wood, which is shaped like a bowl, above which the other ends of the rods are suspended in the air. The Kaffirs play

upon this instrument by striking the loose ends of the rods with their thumb nails, which they allow to grow long for that purpose, and they strike the keys as lightly as a good player strikes those of a harpsichord. Thus the iron rods being shaken, and the blows resounding above the hollow of the bowl, after the fashion of a Jew's harp, they produce altogether a sweet and gentle harmony of accordant sounds. This instrument is much more musical than that made of gourds [i.e. xylophone], but it is not so loud, and is generally played in the king's palace, for it is very soft and makes but little noise.

The next early source is from the early eighteenth century. It is an illustration of a lamellophone entitled "*Marimba de Cafri*", by Filippo Bonanni in his *Gabinetto Armonico* (1723), a treatise on musical instruments from many cultures. This illustration is thought to be from Africa because *Marimba* is the term used for lamellophones in Mozambique and southern Malawi.

A third source, from the late eighteenth century, is an illustration of an Angolan lamellophone made by an Angolan slave in northern Brazil. It is found in Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira's account of his "philosophical journey to the flagships of Grao-Para, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso and Cuiaba, 1783-1792". This illustration, drawn in great detail, depicts a lamellophone with a V-shaped layout of sixteen spatula-shaped lamellae. The caption reads "*Marimba que uzao os pretos*" (*Marimba that the Blacks use*), (Kubik, 1999:32).

These illustrations add historical depth to African histories of lamellophones. Although there is a scarcity of sources on lamellophones from the sixteenth to eighteenth century, beginning in the early nineteenth century there are more documented accounts about African lamellophones. These include those of David Livingstone (1865, 1875) for the lower Zambezi valley, Carl Mauch (1872) for Zimbabwe, Capello and Ivens (1881) for west-central equatorial Africa, Camille Coquilhat (1888) for the upper Congo River (ibid: 34).

## **Lamellophones of Zimbabwe**

### **Distribution, Historical Background and Social Function**

Southeast Africa is the region which Kubik (1999: 36, 47) describes as having the largest and probably the oldest presence of lamellophones in Africa. It is also well researched thanks to the tireless work of Hugh Tracey from the late 1920s through the 1960s and

continued by his son Andrew Tracey (1961, 1963, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1989) and other researchers, such as Paul Berliner (1975, 1976, 1978, 1980), Margot Dias (1986), Keith Goddard (1996), Robert Kauffman (1969). Research done by Hugh Tracey (1948); Andrew Tracey (1991); and Malamusi (1993) shows that southeast Africa is an area where xylophone and lamellophone technology have achieved levels of sophistication unheard of elsewhere.

All the lamellophones in Zimbabwe are found among the Shona people and are generally referred to as *mbira*. However, various Shona groups generally refer to them according to their specific names, which are *mbira dzavadzimu* or *mbira dzemidzimu*, *njari*, *mbira dza vaNdau*, *karimba* or *nyunganyunga* and *matepe* or *madebe dza mhondoro* or *hera* (Hugh Tracey, 1969: 84-95). Across the whole country the bulk of the indigenous population of Zimbabwe is Shona-speaking. The small percentage of Ndebele-speaking people mostly occupies the western parts of the country, and do not play *mbira*. Historians say that the Shona have always occupied Zimbabwe whilst the Ndebele came north from South Africa during the time of *mfecane* when they fled from Shaka Zulu's<sup>3</sup> reign of terror in about 1821 (Berliner, 1975:20).

There are six basic dialects in the Shona language, and a specific type of *mbira* is found among each group although some do overlap. The dialects are Zezuru, Karanga, Korekore, Manyika, Kalanga and Ndau, and some of these dialects have sub-dialects as well. The Manyika mainly occupy the eastern parts of the country, the Karanga the south, the Zezuru the central parts of the country, the Korekore the north, the Kalanga the west, whilst the Ndau are in the southeast as shown in the map below. Generally people understand one another regardless; however, each dialect (and sub dialect) has its own distinct features which give rise to semantic differences in the language and peculiar intonations in speech (Berliner, 1975: 18).

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<sup>3</sup> Shaka was king of the Zulu tribe of South Africa from 1816 -1828, a monarch who forged the Zulu nation into a fearful war machine until his assassination in 1828 (J.S Bergh and A.P Bergh, 1984: 15).

Although the traditional practices of the Shona have a certain degree of universality, they do offer distinct musical practices specifically identified with people of a particular dialect. For instance *muchongoyo* is a traditional dance of the Manyika, *mhande* a traditional dance of the Karanga etc. All these cultures are rich musically in the sense that in each dialect there is more than one type of musical practice or dance, each for a specific function or traditional ceremony, although some can serve for more than one ceremony type. In Africa in general, as pointed out by Nketia (1979: 217), and also among the Shona, music and dance are not separable elements, unlike in western cultures where music and dance are viewed as two different concepts.

### ***Kalimba and Karimba or Nyunganyunga***

The *kalimba* is a fan-shaped instrument played over a gourd resonator, largely north of the Zambezi River. The *karimba* is the name for the same basic instrument played on the south of Zambezi River, and it has three quite different body shapes. One is the fan-shaped, played in areas near Zambia. Another is the bell-shaped, made of a soft wood hollowed out from the bottom end, typical of most central Mozambique *mbiras*. The third is the flat tray shape used in Zimbabwe, often with a low side wall on the left and right, and with a third wall at the bottom end in the case of the *mbira dzavadzimu*. The *karimba* that is wide spread in educational institutions in Zimbabwe is the one developed at Kwanongoma College of Music in Bulawayo from Jege Tapera's *karimba*, and is commonly known as *nyunganyunga*. In the map below, the *karimba* is shown in brackets under Bulawayo because it is only played at Kwanongoma College of Music and in many schools throughout the country, not by the Ndebele people who are the indigenous people of the region.

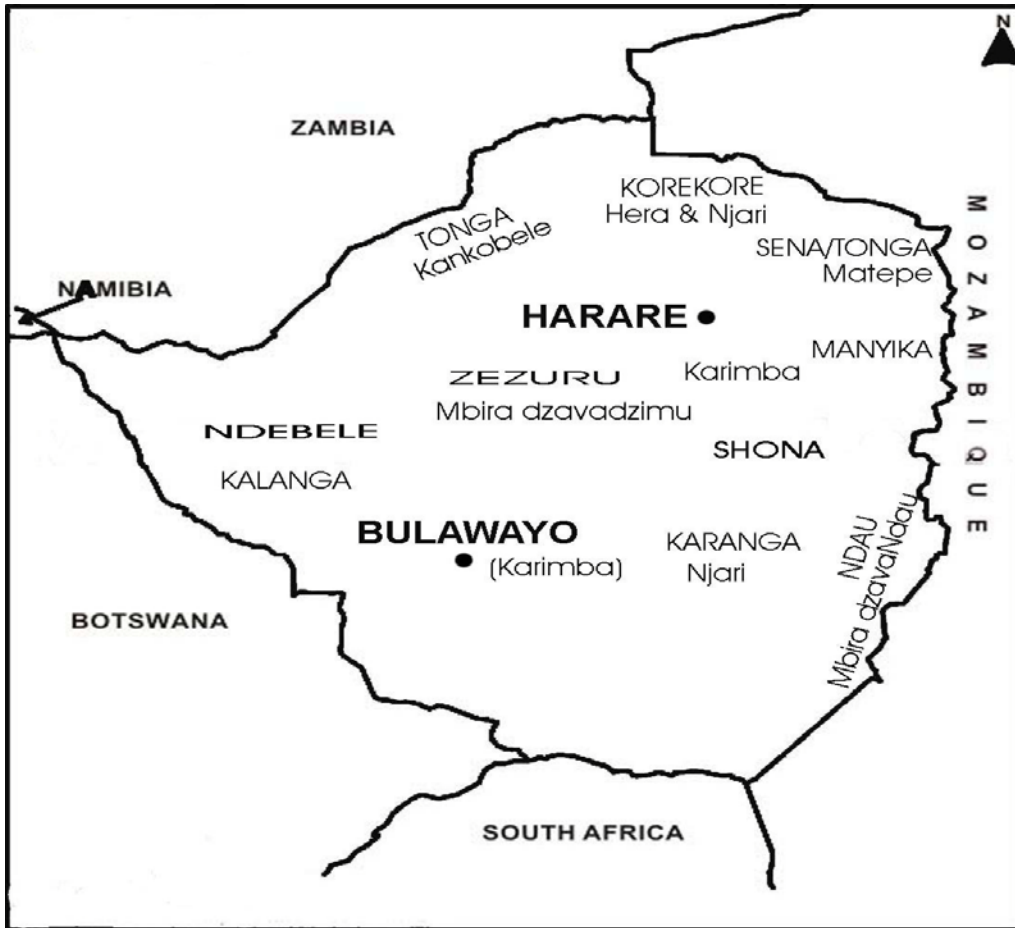
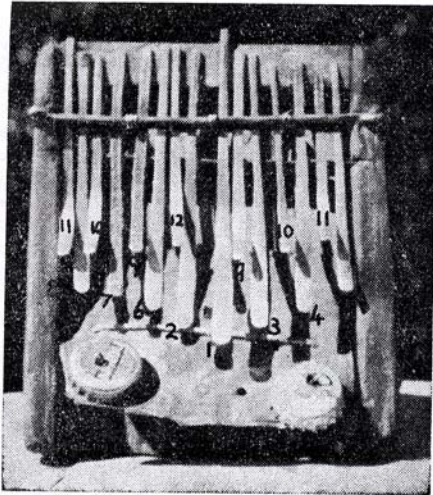


FIGURE 2B. Map showing distribution of Shona ethnic groups/dialects and the geographical location of *mbira* types in relation to the ethnic-groups of the Shona who play them. (Map by author, outline of map of Zimbabwe obtained from <http://mapsofworld.com.zimbabwe/zimbabwe-outline-map.html>, accessed 16/05/08).

The origins of the name *nyunganyunga* are not clear. Oral sources suggest that the name comes from the word Nyungwe, an ethnic group in Mozambique, from which the instrument was introduced to Zimbabwe. Andrew Tracey believes that the name *nyunganyunga* was invented for this particular instrument by Dumisani Maraire, the best known student coming out of Kwanongoma. This probably arose from his childhood at Bocha in the east of Zimbabwe, where the *nyonganyonga* is played widely in Mozambique and Malawi by at least three other peoples.

The instrument is found with varying degrees of complexity in the lower Zambezi valley, from the borders of Zambia and throughout the north eastern corner of Zimbabwe. The

*karimba* consist of eight keys in the lower rank and anywhere from one to six or more keys in the upper rank. In Zambia and Malawi the *chisansi/kasansi* is known as *kalimba*. Thus *kalimba* and *karimba* may be used interchangeably, the only difference being that some dialects use ‘l’ (Zambia) where some use ‘r’ (Shona -Zimbabwe). The Kwanongoma *karimba*, sometimes known as *nyunganyunga* consists of fifteen keys. See fig 3. below.



As Andrew Tracey (1961) explains, it is reasonably certain that the *karimba* is an importation into Zimbabwe, brought into the country from Mozambique, where it is found, among many others, among the Nyungwe people of Tete. In addition, Hugh Tracey (1969), suggests that the *karimba*, which is also found among the Nsenga in Zambia, was brought down by men who came seeking work in Zimbabwe. Andrew Tracey’s first *karimba* teacher Jege Tapera is among those people who brought the *karimba* into

FIGURE 3A. Jege Tapera’s *karimba*.  
(Reproduced from A.Tracey 1961:46)

Zimbabwe. Because *karimba* is an importation from outside the country (Mozambique), it is not confined to or identified with any particular sub-dialect but is found in many places across Zimbabwe.

When Tapera, born in about 1905, was about twenty-five years of age, he made a journey from his home in Mangwende, Murehwa some 200 miles north east to Tete in Mozambique. There he heard being played by the local Sena/Nyungwe people *chisansi* or *kasansi* known as *karimba*. Whilst still in Tete, he learnt two local tunes for the instrument (Chikunda 1 and Chikunda 2). He was also given medicinal charms for successful *mbira* playing. Tapera like others before him, secured a *karimba* for himself at Tete, and brought it to Zimbabwe. *Karimba* music is largely secular or non-ritual and the *karimba* is regarded as a young man’s instrument, unlike larger *mbira* types in Zimbabwe such as *mbira dzavadzimu*, *njari*, *matepe* etc which are ancient and established

instruments associated with calling the ancestors at ritual ceremonies. Andrew Tracey (1970:38) explains one difference between ritual and non-ritual songs that, the *mbira* parts of non-ritual songs seem to arise from sung vocal phrases, whilst the vocal phrases in the ritual songs seem rather to arise from the *mbira* part.

The Kwanongoma College of Music in Bulawayo since its inception in 1961 has been making *karimba* and *marimba*. The late Elliot Ndlovu was among the first to spearhead the making of *karimba* and *marimba* at Kwanongoma. Although over the years more *karimba* makers have emerged, the *karimbas* made by Kwanongoma are still regarded as of the best quality. The *karimba* by Kwanongoma is fixed permanently in a neatly carved and polished round wooden resonator (*deze*). From the 1990s, the teaching of *karimba* has spread into educational institutions across the country, such as schools and teachers' colleges where it has been received quite enthusiastically.



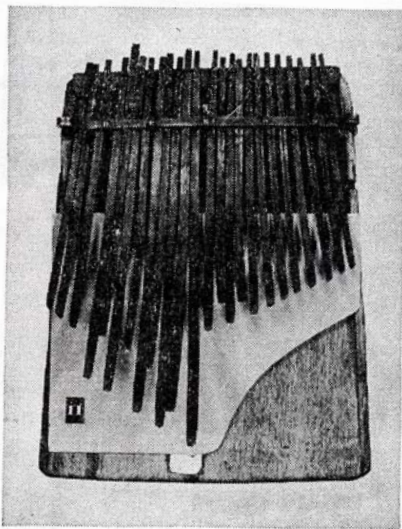
FIGURE 3B. The Kwanongoma *Karimba*  
(Courtesy of ILAM. Photo by Elijah Madiba)

### ***Matepe/Madhebhe (madebe), Hera***

Andrew Tracey (1970:37) says that, *matepe/madhebhe*, and *hera* are related *mbiras*. They are played in the northeastern border of Zimbabwe, including the Mt. Darwin and Mutoko districts, and also in the adjacent part of Mozambique down to the Zambezi at Chicoa and Tete. *Matepe* is mostly found among the Sena/Tonga people of Chief Mukota (now Mudzi district), in the eastern part of Mutoko District. The instrument is also played at Mutoko by some of the Shona/Korekore/Budya people particularly at Charehwa where they call it *madhebhe*.

The same instrument is known as *hera* among the Korekore and Tavara in Mt. Darwin and in all the other parts of Mozambique where it is played among the Tavara, Nyungwe and Tonga, with local variations in construction and number of keys, but little difference in playing technique.

From what Andrew Tracey (1970) gathered from asking many players about sources of the instruments and the songs, the indications are that the instrument originally stemmed from the Korekore.



The origin of songs associated with *matepe* also points towards the Korekore origins. Hugh Tracey (1969) also states that the other designation *madhebhe dza Mhondoro/hera* is said to have originated in the Nyombwe area in Mt. Darwin District. *Matepe* is described as particularly pleasant in tone, and its range covers about three octaves.

FIGURE 4. *Madhebhe dzaMhondoro*.  
(Reproduced from H.Tracey 1969:87)

*Matepe* is associated with the *vadzimu* (ancestral spirits), and in particular with the clan tutelary spirit of each chiefdom and sub-chiefdom, known as *mhondoro* (lion). *Matepe*'s connection with the rites of ancestor worship involve any ritual occasion such as the installation of a chief, praying for rain, beer-party for a sick person or a medium's (*svikiro*) possession ceremony, where it is considered highly desirable that one or more *mbira* players should be present to play the right songs, in honour of the particular *mhondoro* concerned.

## *Njari*

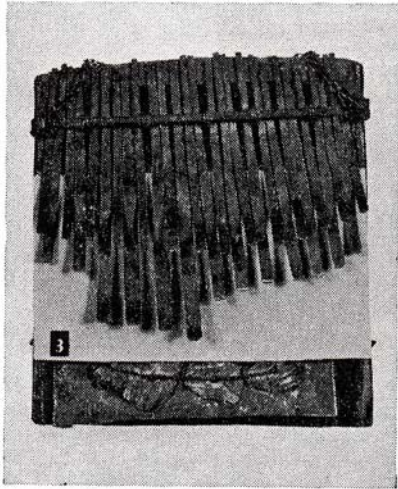


FIGURE 5. *Njari*  
(Reproduced from H.Tracey 1969:87)

Hugh Tracey (1969:79) says that *njari* is acknowledged to have been brought into Zimbabwe from the Nyungwe tribe of the Zambezi Valley approximately 200 to 250 years ago. Although *njari* is found among the Zezuru, Karanga and several groups of the Korekore, in the present day it is mainly concentrated among the Karanga who occupy the southern part of Zimbabwe. *Njari* has three types which are; *njari dzamanjanja*, *njari huru*, and *njari duku*. *Njari* has ritualistic significance for it has connection with the *midzimu* (ancestral spirits). In the early 1930s *njari* was the most common *mbira* throughout the country, however this position is now held by *mbira dzavadzimu*.

In the account of Hugh Tracey (ibid: 87-91), the history of the origins of *njari* is bound with the Njanja sub-tribe. It is said that between 150 and 250 years ago, a party of traders came to Zimbabwe from Mozambique. When they were in Chief Chirwa's area (Buhera District), one of the traders, a man called Muroro fell sick and was left to his fate by his companions who returned to Mozambique. Muroro was nursed back to health by the Chief's daughter and the two later got married. Chirwa did not approve of his daughter's marriage to this foreigner and wanted Muroro to be killed had he not been stopped by the King/Paramount Chief (*Mambo*) at Great Zimbabwe.

Upon Chirwa's death, Muroro notified *Mambo* before Chirwa's own sons did so, which was a serious breach of custom on the part of the Chief's sons. *Mambo* was so incensed

that he gave the inheritance of the Chieftainship of Chirwa to Muroro, who then assumed the name Gambiza and Sinyoro totem (*mutupo*) as he had no African family name, from his mother's family (from the Portuguese senhor). Muroro Gambiza bore two sons Mesama and Gotowi. When Muroro Gambiza sent his two sons to visit his relations in Mozambique, that's when the two met with men playing *njari*. They both learnt to play *njari* and brought the instruments with them on return to Zimbabwe. The Manjanja being blacksmiths of note, they made more *njari* and began to hawk them around the country, hence the name *njari dzemanjanja*. According to Hugh Tracey (1969), by 1900 A.D, the instrument had spread in all directions from Buhera to Murehwa, Rusape, Bikita, Chivi, Chirumanzi and Harare Districts.

### ***Mbira Dzavadzimu or Mbira Huru or Nhare***

Andrew Tracey (1963, 1970) says that, "*mbira dzavadzimu* is the oldest known form of *mbira* to be played by the Shona people of Zimbabwe. *Mbira dzavadzimu* means *mbira* (notes) of the ancestral spirits (*vadzimu*). Parts of ancient *mbiras*, probably of this type, have been found at Great Zimbabwe. Early travelers from the sixteenth century report that Shona Chiefs kept large *mbira* bands; it is the only type of *mbira* that is -or was- played by all the Shona peoples...Everywhere it is associated with the veneration of the spirits". Carl Mauch was the first to describe the instrument accurately, in 1872 and the present-day instrument is substantially identical to the one he described.

Hugh Tracey (1969), points out that in the 1930s *mbira dzavadzimu* suffered a severe decline. Among the Karanga the instrument appears to have died out almost completely, and *njari* has become dominant. However, the instrument has experienced a vibrant revival among the Zezuru since the war of independence in the 1970s. This revival was further enhanced, in the USA in particular, by Paul Berliner (1975) who, from his extensive research on the *mbira dzavadzimu* in Zimbabwe published a thorough representation of the instrument and its music in his book *The Soul of Mbira*.

In the time of the liberation struggle, the people wanted to identify with their own music, their own culture and needed (spiritual) guidance on how to conquer the enemy. *Mbira*



(*dzavadzimu*) because of its association with the spiritual world provided the avenue. *Mbira* music thus was largely part of the entertainment during the all night gatherings (*mapungwe*) which boosted the morale of both the masses and the freedom fighters. The music had a political significance as it promoted a feeling of solidarity among the people and strengthened the traditional values of their culture (Pongweni: 1982; Turino: 2000; Berliner: 1975).

FIGURE 6. *Mbira dzavadzimu*  
(Reproduced from A. Tracey 1963:23)

*Mbira dzavadzimu* is played primarily to assist in religious ceremonies for the ancestral spirits (*vadzimu*). It is closely related to the *matepe* or *hera* or *madhebehe* which is also played for the *vadzimu* by the Korekore and Sena/Tonga in the northeast of the country and by the Tavara and Nyungwe of Mozambique, (Tracey 1972). Berliner (ibid: xiii) describes *mbira (dzavadzimu)* music as “an intricate polyphonic music which epitomizes the beauty and subtlety of the music of African melodic instruments”. *Mbira dzavadzimu* is regarded as a sacred instrument that plays a crucial role in Zezuru traditional ceremonies such as *mapira* and *kurova guva* which will be discussed later in this chapter. The *mbira* music bridges the world of the living and the world of the spirits. It is believed that it is *mbira music* that draws the spirits down to earth to possess mediums. The music engages the participants in the ceremony to meditate and stimulates their tireless participation in the dancing, clapping and singing which accompanies the *mbira* music throughout the evening, Berliner (1975: 190).

It is through their various traditional ceremonies that the Shona ‘speak’ to God (*Mwari*) through their long gone ancestors (*madzitateguru*), especially the *mhondoro* (clan spirits) and *vadzimu* (family spirits). Ritual ceremonies are prompted by certain vital problems that arise in a family or clan, such as sickness, death, drought, famine etc. The

ceremonies do not address only such negative situations, some ceremonies are for giving thanks (*mapira ekutenda*) rain making (*mukwerera/mafuwe*), and installation of chiefs. In general traditional ceremonies among the Shona are known as *mapira* (singular-*bira*) (Berliner: 1978; Bourdillon: 1990; Thram 1999).

Spirit possession is an integral part of the *bira*, because when the spirit (*mudzimu* or *mhondoro*) possesses its medium, people consult it for advice, guidance, and to air their grievances and desires. A *bira* affords its participants the opportunity to be involved with the past; that is, the way of the ancestors, traditional Shona values, and historical events, thereby creating a feeling of solidarity as they ritually unite with the spiritual world (Berliner 1978: 190).

### **The Spread of *Mbira* Internationally**

People from all over the world have flocked to Zimbabwe, many from the USA (researchers, scholars, artists) to learn more about *mbira*. Similarly Zimbabwean *mbira* players have popularized the instrument by performing abroad, to the extent that Zimbabwe is known as the 'land of *mbira*'. In addition to Hugh and Andrew Tracey, the other early ethnomusicologist who made *mbira* known to the outside world was Paul Berliner through his highly engaging book on the Zimbabwean *mbira*, *The Soul of Mbira*.

Dr A. Dumisani Maraire (1944-1999), was one of the first Zimbabweans to introduce *mbira* to North America. He is famous for his teaching of the 15-key *nyunga-nyunga/karimba mbira* at The University of Washington from 1968- 1972, and continued to live in Seattle until 1982 and from 1986 to 1990, teaching hundreds of people to play Zimbabwean music, (<http://www.zimfest.org/97overview.html>, accessed 26/05/08). His daughter Chiwoniso Maraire carries on his work, playing Zimbabwean music on *karimba*. Her performance career has been successful both in Zimbabwe and abroad. She has contemporised Shona music, she mixes elements of hip hop and mixes Shona and English lyrics in her performances.

In the 1970s Stella Chiweshe was one of the first female *mbira dzavadzimu* artists to perform outside Zimbabwe. Partly based in Germany, over the course of her 35 year

career she has toured the world and has gained an international reputation. Her daughter Virginia Mukweshu, now resident in Berlin, Germany, is also a *mbira* performer and has toured worldwide with her mother Stella and on her own performing *mbira* music. Stella Chiweshe and her daughter Virginia Mukweshu are related to this author. The author's father comes after Stella's mother. Other artists who have promoted *mbira* abroad include the late Ephant Mujuru, Cosmas Magaya, Chartwell Dutiro, Benita Tarupiwa, Beaula Dyoko, Chaka Chawasarira, as well as non-Zimbabweans such as Erica Azim, Chris Berry and Claire Jones. International events such as the Zimbabwean Music Festival (Zimfest), the largest annual gathering in North America of students, teachers, performers and fans of Zimbabwean music has also largely promoted *mbira* music on the international scene (<http://www.nscottrobinson.com/mbiraplayers.php>, accessed 20/05/08).

## Chapter 4

### Andrew Tracey's Research on *Mbira* Music – a Survey of His Publications

This chapter examines in detail Andrew Tracey's research on *mbira* music. The films he produced and his publications will be analyzed to evaluate how his findings are significant to the body of knowledge of *mbira* music in particular and other lamellophones in general. His theory 'The system of the *mbira*' which defines the form and structure of *mbira* music will be discussed in depth. Prior to that discussion, in what follows is a brief overview of Tracey's films and certain of his print publications.

#### Films

In the 1970s, Andrew Tracey worked in collaboration with Gei Zantzinger (1936-2007), an American Ethnographic filmmaker and produced nine films on the *mbira* music of Zimbabwe and the Chopi *timbila* xylophone music of Mozambique. The films are as follows:

Chopi Timbila Xylophone Orchestra Films:

(1) *Mgodo wa Mbanguzi*. Mozambique, 1973.

(2) *Mgodo wa Mkandeni*. Mozambique, 1973.

These two are films on Chopi *timbila* xylophone music filmed in Mbanguzi and Mkandeni villages respectively in southern Mozambique. These real-time films are the first filmed record of complete *mgodo* performances in their natural settings, capturing the last of the large scale, well rehearsed, chiefship-sponsored Chopi orchestras before Independence and the turbulence that followed (A. Tracey-Interview, 4/06/08 and Constant Springs Productions (CPS) Catalog).

(3) *The Chopi Timbila Dance, an Analysis of the Xylophone Orchestra Dance of the Chopi of Mozambique*. Transvaal, South Africa, 1980.

Andrew Tracey and Venancio Mbande, composer and master of Chopi music explain and demonstrate the intricacies of *timbila* xylophone music. The performances are by an 11 piece orchestra with 14 dancers. The film reveals the cyclical structure of Chopi music,

showing the tonal ranges and the role of each xylophone in the orchestra and as well shows the counter-rhythms produced by the dancers.

(4) *Mbira: Technique of Mbira dzavadzimu*. Zimbabwe, 1975.

This film offers a detailed analysis of *mbira dzavadzimu* techniques. It features the famous *mbira* player the late Ephant Mujuru and is explained by Andrew Tracey. The film uses close-ups, animation and other cinematic techniques to demonstrate *mbira* tonal range, song structure, harmony, chord movement and variations, and the cross-rhythmic interplay of the right and left hands. It also shows different styles of playing a song and the interweaving of two *mbiras* in duet.

(5) *Mbira: Mbira dzavadzimu, Religion at the Family Level*. Zimbabwe, 1975.

The film features Gwanzura Gwenzi Gumboreshumba (the author's father), an accomplished Zezuru *mbira* player. It shows how the life Gwanzura coexists in the traditional and modern worlds. The film shows Gwanzura working in the city for a large Western corporation (Anglo-American) as chief messenger. At his rural homestead in Mhondoro Chivero, he is the family head who hosts a *bira*. The film captures the various stages and liturgical components of the *bira* ceremony which culminates in the arrival of spirits late at night. Gwanzura's sister Francisca is the family medium for the great-grandfather Kaodza, she gets possessed by the spirit and the family confers with him. This scene shows how ancestors continue to interact with the living. The now-famous *mbira* diva Stella Chiweshe, daughter to Francisca, is possessed by a snake spirit and slithers out the door.

(6) *Mbira: Mbira dzavadzimu, Urban and Rural Ceremonies*, Zimbabwe, 1975.

A compelling portrait of another Shona *mbira* musician, the late Hakurotwi Mude, who lives in both the traditional and modern worlds. In the city, Mude does upholstery work for cars, but as a leader of a professional group of *mbira* players, he performs in many contexts to invoke the spirits when they are needed. Mude, a spirit medium himself, gets possessed by the spirit in one of the scenes. At his home in Mhondoro, Mude and his

group plays *mbira* at a ritual sacrifice at a funeral. The film captures a sense of spirit and place in the use of music for significant Shona activities and highlights the major vocal styles that Mude uses.

(7) *Mbira: Mbira dzavadzimu, Dambatsoko, an Old Cult Centre*. Zimbabwe, 1975.

The film features Muchatera and his grandson Ephat Mujuru. It focuses on the traditional cult center of Dambatsoko and its leader, the late Muchatera Mujuru, the medium for Chaminuka, the principal rain spirit of the Shona. Muchatera leads a spirit possession ceremony at the *banya* large ceremonial house, a blood sacrifice to placate the spirit of a wronged brother, prayers for peace at the *mutoro* prayer house, and a commemorative ritual at the *rushanga* tree shrine. All the ceremonies are accompanied by *mbira* players.

(8) *Mbira: Njari, Karanga Songs in Christian Ceremonies*. Zimbabwe, 1975.

The film features the famed *njari* player, the late Simon Mashoko, who adapted *mbira* music for use in Christian ceremonies. Mashoko's role as a performer of *shave* spirit songs for Karanga beer parties is contrasted with his role as a rural Catholic deacon, conducting catechism classes and Sunday services. His performance of *shave* and *vadzimu* songs that use Shona New Testament as text shows the blending of differing traditions and compatibility of *mbira* music with a new religious context. Mashoko and his son play a duet of a *njari* and a *mbira dzavadzimu* respectively.

(9) *Mbira: Matepe dzamhondoro, a Musical Healing Party*. Zimbabwe, 1975.

*Matepe dzamhondoro* is featured in this film. Accompanied by four *matepe* led by Saini Murira and a *jenje* drum, two spirit mediums sing and dance and then re-enact the healing of a sick woman.

The films, *Mbira: Technique of Mbira dzavadzimu* (1975, Zimbabwe) and *Mgodo wa Mbanguzi, Mgodo wa Mkandeni* (1973, Mozambique), were Award winners at the Grahamstown Film Festival held at the National Arts Festival in 1977.

## **Publications Overview**

Andrew Tracey has published 28 articles on various aspects on African music, as evidenced on the Bibliography for this thesis. Eight of these publications are on *mbira* music. In addition he authored the influential instructional booklet *How to Play the Mbira dzavadzimu* (1970), published by ILAM. Eight of his articles were published in the journal *African Music* whilst one article in each case was published in The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, the Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments and in the journals *Zambezia*, *Pelea*, and *African Insight*. He wrote an entry ‘African Musical Instruments’ in the *Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa*. Four of his articles also appear in the bound proceedings entitled, for example, 1980 *Symposium on Ethnomusicology*. Each issue consists of papers presented at the various Symposiums on Ethnomusicology (1980-2004), which were founded and organized by Andrew Tracey, as discussed in Chapter Two. Two of the articles are on Chopi *timbila* and Sena *valimba* xylophones. He has also written on the Nyungwe *nyanga* panpipes of Mozambique as well as on xylophone making in general.

## **Published Mbira Articles**

Andrew Tracey’s publications address the various components of the music of the five *mbira* types found in Zimbabwe; *mbira dzavadzimu*, *njari*, *karimba*, *mbira dzavaNdau* and *matepe/ hera*. With each *mbira* type, he introduces the physical characteristics of the instrument thoroughly to the reader, by explaining the layout of the keys, their relationships in terms of pitch, and also the scale of the tuning in cents. (Andrew Tracey: 1961; 1963; 1969; 1970; 1970; 1972; 1974; 1987; 1989). He also addresses the historical background of each *mbira* type as well as its distribution within the country. The history of the instrument, reconstructed from a comparison of all the tuning layouts of the members of the *mbira* family, provides vital information on the origins of *mbira* and shows how some *mbira* types have spread from one region to the other across ethnic groups within a country and beyond its borders. The articles also provide information on the social use of *mbira* in the lives of the performers and their community, although this is a topic that Andrew does not dwell on in depth. His focus and main interest is in the

analysis of the music itself. As a result of his analysis of *mbira* music, he discovered what he terms ‘the system of the *mbira*’, the major focus of this research. (Tracey: 1989). A significant contribution exists in Tracey’s numerous transcriptions of *mbira* music. He describes and illustrates thoroughly the chordal sequence of *mbira* music through references to his transcriptions. In his transcriptions he uses a pulse notation system. Based on the transcription method of his predecessor A.M Jones, he developed pulse notation into a more usable system. Although he uses the five lines of western notation staff, he does not use western clefs because “they tie the music to a certain pitch” (A. Tracey-Interview, 22/11/07).



FIGURE 7. “Kana Mano” on *matepe*. An example of Tracey's transcription without the use of the western clefs. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1970b: 61).

Tracey explains that he transcribes the music in the tuning of the particular instruments. He says that if necessary, he invents a clef for a particular instrument. For instance when transcribing Chopi *timbila* music he uses what he terms a ‘*timbila* clef’ which actually looks like a xylophone.

In his publications Andrew also provides instructions/illustrations on how to construct *mbira*, drawn from his wide experience with various *mbira* players and makers in Zimbabwe and other countries. On this subject, he also makes reference to earlier work

on *mbira* by his father Hugh Tracey. He discusses some of the practical physical principles involved in making and tuning *mbira* and provides illustrations. In addition the playing technique of each *mbira* type is explained elaborately (Andrew Tracey, 1961, 1969, 1970a, 1970b).

### **A Prototype African *Mbira*?**

In Andrew Tracey's (1972) article "The Original African *Mbira*?", he presents the possibility that all the *mbira* of Africa originated from one particular *mbira* type. Utilizing the experience and analysis he had done on various *mbira* types, he illustrates why he finds the *kalimba* to be the likely prototype for all the other *mbira* types of the lower Zambezi Valley. He traces the links, illustrates and analyses each of the selected *mbira* types against the *kalimba*, and gives examples for analysis from Zimbabwe (*mbira dzavadzimu*, *njari*, *karimba*, *mbira dzavaNdau*, *njari huru*, *matepe/hera*), Mozambique (*mana embudzi*, *nyonganyonga*) and South Africa (*mbila deza*).

In his illustrations below, Andrew shows diagrammatically the eight notes which form the basic *kalimba* core. These notes are found in all *mbira* types of the lower Zambezi Valley, and the diagrams also show the positions of and the changes to this basic *kalimba* core on all the other *mbira*.

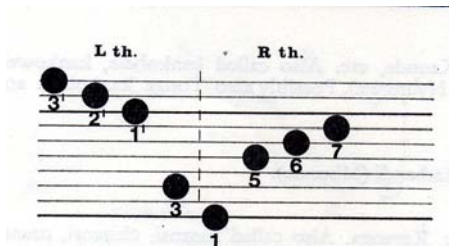


FIGURE 8. The basic *kalimba* core.  
(Reproduced from A. Tracey 1972: 88).

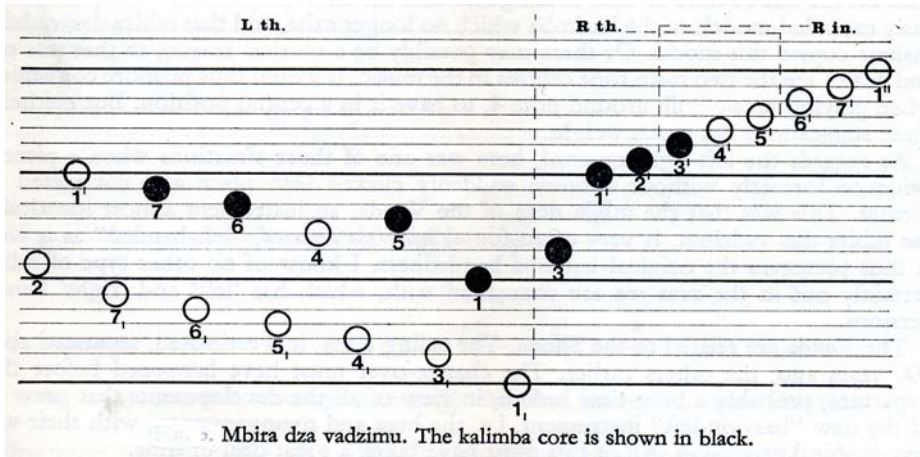


FIGURE 9. The kalimba core as found on *mbira dzavadzimu*. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1972: 91).

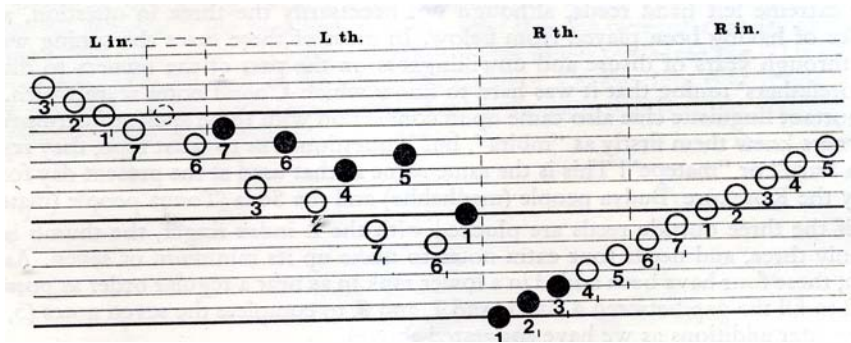


FIGURE 10. *Nyonganyonga* (Mozambique), the dotted note is found occasionally in larger instruments. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1972: 96).

Despite his results which seem to prove the theory that the *kalimba* is the 'mother' of all *mbira* in this region, Andrew does not argue the theory aggressively but humbly suggests the *kalimba* is a suitable "candidate for the honour" (Andrew Tracey, 1972: 104).

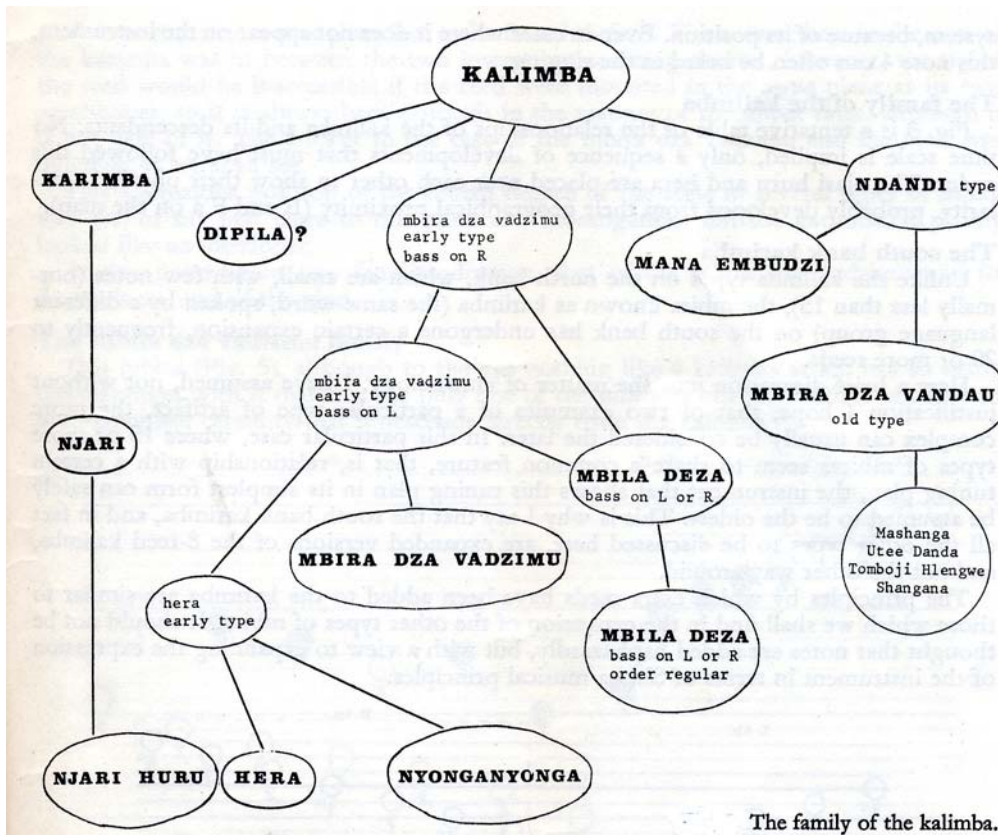


FIGURE 11. The diagram shows the proposed relationships of the *kalimba* and its descendants. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1972: 89).

### How to Play the *Mbira dzavadzimu*

The instructional booklet is intended to help *mbira dzavadzimu* learners. It gives basic fingerings for five Zezuru songs on this *mbira*, which Tracey transcribed from the playing of Gwanzura Gwenzi Gumboreshumba (teacher and father of this author) his first *mbira dzavadzimu* teacher. The five songs are *Nyamaropa*, *Nhemamusasa*, *Mudande*, *Taireva* and *Chakwi*. Tracey gives a historical background of the instrument, and that it was first reported about by the early travelers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He also describes the distribution of this *mbira*, and points out that it is mainly found among the Zezuru, where it is played primarily to assist in religious ceremonies of the *vadzimu* (ancestral spirits). Tracey explains clearly how the instrument is held when playing, which fingers play which *mbira* keys and how to prop the *mbira* inside the *deze* (calabash). He identifies the five octave pairs found on the left hand side of the *mbira* and the right hand harmonies

and makes an illustration to show these octaves on the instrument. Tracey points out that from his observation all the *Zeze* *mbira* songs are exactly the same length of 48 pulses and that these pulses are spaced regularly along the line at equal intervals. He explains that there are no western time signatures given because there is no one way of interpreting or feeling the rhythm.

Tracey emphasizes the need for perfect rhythm and correct tempo. He expounds that like most African music, *mbira* music depends on exact rhythmic relationships within its parts and between the players, and hence one will not be playing the music at all if the rhythm is wrong. He explains how rattles, drums, dancing and singing blend in to the *mbira* music during a performance. Tracey provides a table which shows the pitches of the *mbira* notes and their tuning in cents. He explains how to tune the *mbira* keys by sharpening and flattening them. To flatten a key, it is tapped gently from the top and to sharpen, the key is pushed or tapped upwards. Tracey also highlights the kaleidophonic nature of *mbira* music. Tracey then provides the transcriptions of the five aforementioned songs and some of their variations, and explains how the *kushaura* (lead part) and *kutsinhira* (second [or third] part) parts complement one another (Andrew Tracey, 1970).

### **Values in African Music**

In this article, Andrew Tracey (1994) shifts his focus from the specifics of *mbira* to explore the broader context of music performance in Africa. Although his references and examples in this presentation are drawn from his experience with *mbira*, *timbila* and *nyanga* panpipe music etc, he presents the facts as universal to all African music. Andrew elucidates on the aspects that feature as crucial elements in the performance of African music, and he describes these aspects as the aesthetics in African music, something of its deeper essence.

Andrew's inspiration to write this article came primarily from his own experiences with African music and from the influence of his father's understanding of the role African music in social life. Hugh Tracey (1948:4) says, in his description of Chopi musicians' performances, that their music-making is a unifying force which brings oneness among

the people, that often dissolves community dissention, as they work together to produce the music. Andrew's explanation of the values in African music seeks to promote a better understanding of how the group participation in music is the key to how music brings people together in unifying ways that are built into the nature of how people make music together in Africa. Being Shona, as I reflect on my own personal experiences with Shona traditional music, I find both Hugh and Andrew Tracey's understanding of how music 'works' among African people to accurately reflect my own experience.

Andrew explains and exemplifies the abstract qualities of African music. He does not discuss the 'whats' and 'hows' of African music here, but focuses on the 'whys' of it; that is, he qualifies or brings forth the reasons why the music is put together the way it is and why it is enjoyable (A. Tracey, 1994: 269). He emphasizes that music in African society is created for a purpose. Each music type serves a particular function, and becomes a vehicle of expression of basic values of humanity such as cooperation, the importance of solidarity, respect, generosity, mutual goodwill etc.

Of participation and cooperation Andrew observes that from a young age, the African child initially learns music informally by observation and attending music performances. They internalize as they hear and see the music around them as performed by adults. The child is allowed to fumble on the instrument and sing or dance before being formally taught to do so. Thereby the child is groomed to learn to participate with others, thus emphasizing the value of cooperation. Most importantly music is learnt by doing it rather than by talking about it or analyzing it. This shows the difference between African and Western music learning approaches (ibid: 273).

Another important aspect in African music is how the performers give energy. Display of energy or lack thereof attains satisfaction/praise or disapproval/grumbling respectively both from fellow participants and the audience because it affects everyone involved. This does not incite competition or domination at all, but rather it serves to keep the performance alive. It is also important for players to maintain accuracy in whatever they do as they perform their individual parts, because any departure from accuracy affects the

rest of the performers. This is so because performance of African music is team work where there is distribution of roles. Each performer has a part which needs to be complemented by the other performers to make it whole/complete. An example from my own experiences as a *mbira* performer and from what I have noticed when I attend *mapira* ceremonies follows. If the drummer or rattle player does not play at the correct tempo with the *mbira* players, it is noticeable by anyone and everyone. The other performers indicate immediately to the individual whose rhythm is 'off' that he/she must correct it and play accurately or he/she is substituted on the spot.

Another integral part of performance is how to move to the music. The movement in response to the music has to be correct, for it is only the correct movement which makes the music sound, look and feel right (Ibid: 277). Regularity and alternation of hands, feet or both is important in performance and must be rhythmically correct. Andrew explains the idea of difference or contrast in African music, that it is as essential as other aspects like cooperation. The call and response form of African songs as found in the lead (*kushaura*) and the *kutsinhira* (responsive interlocking parts) of *mbira* melodies are an example of this contrast. This creates a situation where several 'things' happen at once but are coordinated into a whole.

Repetition is a common element in the form of all African music. Andrew says, "this fact is intensely frustrating to outsiders, Westerners in particular...there is no need to justify this form in anybody's terms...it simply exists" (Ibid: 284). He explains that repetition allows deeper levels of rhythmic relationships, which actually enhances the appreciation.

### **The System of the *Mbira***

Andrew Tracey's (1989) article '*The System of the mbira*' is a theory based on his analysis of *mbira* music. He explains that 'the system of the *mbira*' rests on a harmonic system in which chords follow each other in a predetermined way and move in certain fixed ways, either up a third or up a fourth. He argues that it is a system which starts from a musical principle, not a speech principle, which is a fairly rare phenomenon in Africa, for many African compositions are thought to start from speech tone. He elaborates that it

is a system which can create music and does not depend on song lyrics to give speech tone.

Tracey first identifies some common factors which are easily observable especially on all the large *mbiras* with 20 or more keys. He says that most of these large *mbiras* have heptatonic scales with a few being hexatonic. All have some duplicated notes on the left and right side and a V-shaped note array which has the longest notes in the centre, with the exception of the a few such as *mbira dzavaNdau* and *mana embudzi* which have low notes on the left side rising to high pitched ones on the right. Tracey also points out that nearly all the large *mbiras* have some irregularity in the arrangement of the notes in the scale. He also mentions that *mbira* music repertoire is largely ancient and is said to belong to the ancestral spirits, although on some *mbira* such as *njari* there is a group of songs associated with *mashavi* or souls which are non-ancestral spirits.

Although Tracey's theory of 'the system of the *mbira*' applies to all *mbira* music, he largely made his analysis using the Shona *mbira* types, *mbira dzavadzimu*, *njari*, *karimba*, and *matepe/ hera*, as well as *ngororombe* and *nyanga* panpipes, *bangwe* zither and *valimba* xylophone. He explains that it deserves to be called a 'system' for the reason that instrumentalists, particularly *mbira* players have an independent system of their own, a set of organizing principles which can be used to generate music. As mentioned earlier, unlike most other African music, this happens independently of language. It is a system arising from Shona preferences regarding harmonic sound and movement (Andrew Tracey, 1989).

When Tracey began to learn to play the *karimba*, he noticed that the chords played consist of two notes, four different chords are used in almost any given song and the chords are always played in the same sequence. He found that many other Shona and Venda songs even unaccompanied by the *karimba* were based on the same sequence. Tracey observed that in instances where the sequence is not so clearly defined, there is an oscillation in every cycle between the tone centre, let's call it C, to the note above, D, back to C, then to the third below, A. This means that D and A in alternation provide

harmonic or melodic contrast with the tonal centre, C. He points out that this type of oscillation is not only found in Shona songs but exists widely in Southern Africa in heptatonic, hexatonic and pentatonic scale systems.

Tracey says that the oscillation explained above is present even in urban music. The two most common chord sequences are I IV I V and I I IV V. He gives an example that, although for instance the Western chords for instance in C, would stress the notes C, F and G, the urban musicians often use D in the G chord and both A and D in the F chord. This shows that the musicians draw from their experience of constructing melodies in the traditional way. Similarly, Kubik (2007: 31) says that “ Each of the three chords, once learned from other guitarists with a more western conceptualisation, seem to have lost their western functional implications; they have been reinterpreted in that they are only nominally regarded as C, F and G”.

Andrew speculates that, back in the history of *mbira* music there was what he terms the original chord system which consisted of fewer chords and shorter cycles, similar to what is now played on the *karimba*. Then this changed at some point (probably during the time of the Great Zimbabwe kingdoms: 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> century) into much more elaborate system of chords which are double the length of the shorter cycle. Andrew thinks that this was as a result of the deep engagement in cultural practices that took place at Great Zimbabwe, for it is quite evident that all spiritual ritual songs have longer chord sequences whilst non-ritual/secular songs on *karimba* for instance have shorter chord sequences and shorter cycles.

He says that distant traces of the short chord sequences can still be found in Malawi, in Zambia, among the Venda in South Africa, among the Chopi in Mozambique and to some extent in Namibia. The development into longer chordal sequences and longer musical cycles, he says is exclusive to the central Shona in Zimbabwe and the Sena in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The film *Mbira: the Technique of the Mbira dzavadzimu* (1975, Zimbabwe), which Andrew produced together with the late Gei Zantzinger briefly graphically illustrate this theory.

Tracey expounds on the longer chordal sequences on what he terms the ‘big ritual Shona *mbiras*’ which are *mbira dzavadzimu*, *njari* and *matepe*. He explains that some sections of the songs on these ‘big’ *mbiras* use the same short sequence from *karimba*, but that is only in one half of the song, while new chords are added in the other half. The songs have a 12-chord sequence which uses all but one of the seven chords potentially available, in a 48- pulse cycle divided into four quarters. For example, CEG CEA CFA DFA. The ‘chord’ in Tracey’s analysis consists of the root and the fourth below or the fifth above. He comments that the fourth is probably the most consonant interval to Shona *mbira* players followed closely by the fifth. He notices that the third is used sparingly especially when it is the only available alternative.

The second half of the musical cycle has the same sequence as the first half but transposed a fourth higher, for instance FAD FAC in the second half is a fourth higher than CEG CEA of the first half and C acts as a pivot chord at both ends for it is common in both halves, and each half is hexatonic. Tracey points out that the above sequence is one of the most popular in *mbira* songs although there are other long sequences used. Fig.12 below shows the chord sequence of ‘*Chakwi*’ a song on played on *mbira dzavadzimu* (Zimbabwe) whose sequence is shared by a song ‘*Sambatero*’ on *nyonganyonga* (Mozambique). This shows how this system of the *mbira* is not confined to the Shona. Tracey says that in fact these harmonic sequences are all one and the same sequence, except they start at different points in one overall, universal Shona sequence. Fig.13 shows another sequence shared on *matepe* and *mbira huru/mbira dzavadzimu*.

Tracey highlights some of the reasons why it is not easy to recognize the universal sequence in each of its representations. Firstly there are different *mbira* tunings and songs or sequences played in different keys on the *mbira* can make them sound different.

Another factor is that all *mbira* sequences, cyclical by nature, feel quite different when they are started at different points. The starting point referred to here can be the listener’s perception of a starting point, which can be determined by rhythmic alignment with other parts, entry points of other parts such as singing or the point at which the player starts to play.

Without being a critical or rather an attentive listener, many outsiders to Shona *mbira* music are quick to say that Shona *mbira* songs sound the same. Tracey explains that this emanates from the fact that “all songs share one system, but the differences between them come from a subtle appreciation of chords standing in different relationships, and the kinds of harmonic and melodic subtleties each can give you” (Andrew Tracey, 1989: 51).

The image displays two systems of musical notation, each consisting of two staves. The first system, representing 'Chakwi', has chord labels C, E, A, C, F, and A positioned above the staves. The second system, representing 'Sambatero', has chord labels D, F, B, D, F, and A positioned above the staves. The notation includes notes on the staves and vertical lines indicating the timing of the chords.

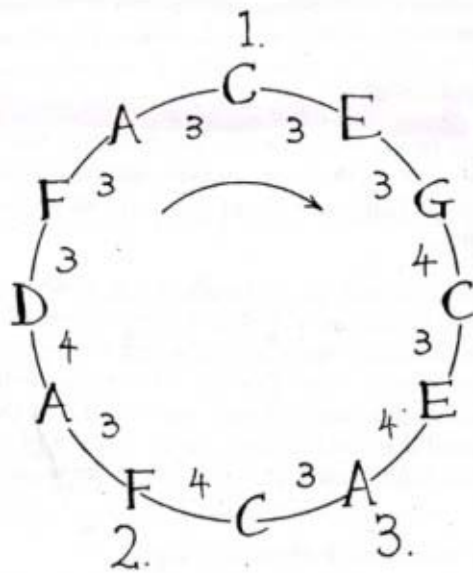
FIGURE 12. Transcription shows the chord progression (longer chord sequence) of “Chakwi” (*mbira dzavadzimu*) CD #7, “Sambatero” (*nyonganyonga*) CD #8. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1989: 50).



FIGURE 13. Above is another example of the longer chord sequence on “Mudande”, (*mbira dzavadzimu*) cd #5, and “Marume ashora mambo” (*matepe*) cd #6, (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1989: 50).

With reference to Fig. 14 below, Tracey came up with one common sequence from his analysis of the nature of *mbira* music, which applies to the majority of *mbira* songs, but which can commonly be perceived as starting from three particular starting points in the cycle, resulting in three most used sequences which he calls the “C standard, F standard and A standard”. One should note that these sequences may be played in all seven keys on the *mbira*, thus a particular song’s sequence can be described as “A standard in D”, or “C standard in F”. These three sequences give the listener a different way of hearing and responding to the harmonic /melodic movement of the cycle.

Tracey concludes that this is a highly generative and versatile system. Besides the three starting points, each sequence has its own character, yet it is also possible to play each sequence in all seven keys. The *hera/matepe mbira* employs more of these elements than most *mbira*. This unique approach to harmony gives potential for modern Shona composers, says Tracey.



The Shona chord sequence.

1. CEG CEA CFA DFA (i.e. 334 343 434 333)
2. FAD FAC EGC EAC (i.e. 343 333 343 434)
3. ACF ADF ACE GCE (i.e. 343 433 333 434)

FIGURE 14. Diagram shows the Shona chord sequence, showing three common points for perceiving the start of the cycle. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1989: 52).

## Chapter 5

### Andrew Tracey's Contribution to Knowledge of Lamellophone Music

This chapter examines the impact of Andrew Tracey's research and publications on *mbira* music to subsequent scholarship by making an analysis and evaluation of the significance of his contribution to the body of knowledge of the instrument and its music. Through email interviews with various scholars who cited Andrew Tracey's publications on *mbira* music and analysis of their publications, I have gathered information which demonstrates the extent of the significance of his research on *mbira* music to certain ethnomusicologists, musicologists, and *mbira* scholars in general.

My methodology involved email interviews with the following ethnomusicologists: Gerhard Kubik (University of Vienna, Austria), Klaus-Peter Brenner (University of Gottingen, Germany), Gerd Grupe (Universitat fur Musik und darstellende Kunst in Graz, Austria) Paul Berliner (Duke University, USA) and Claire Jones (University of Boston, USA), musicologists: Martin Scherzinger (Rochester and New York Universities, USA), Christopher Ballantine (University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa), and Christine Lucia (University of the Witwatersrand-South Africa). From these scholars' publications on *mbira* music, and their responses to my standard set of questions regarding Tracey's work, I have been able to access the significance of Tracey's research to the wider *mbira* scholarship community. Their views and opinions taken from their responses to my questions comprise the data of this research presented in this chapter. Following are the standard questions I asked of each scholar:

1. How significant were Andrew Tracey's publications to you in your own research and publications?
2. What is your opinion of his pulse notation transcription method?
3. Do you have any comments or critique on where Andrew Tracey's research fits in relation to the existing body of research on *mbira*?
4. Tracey, A. 1989. "The System of the *Mbira*". In *Papers Presented at the Seventh Symposium on Ethnomusicology*, Andrew Tracey, ed. 43-55. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, Rhodes University.

In the above article, Andrew Tracey's theory on his analysis of *mbira* music is that it is based on a harmonic system in which chords follow each other in a predetermined way and mostly move in certain fixed ways up a third or fourth. He argues that it is a system which starts from a musical principle, not a speech principle, which is a fairly rare phenomenon in Africa, for many African compositions are thought to start from speech tone.

What do you make of his analysis, based on your personal experiences with *mbira* music?

5. On another topic all together, what is your opinion on the issue of appropriation of the music in relation to the Tracey legacy? This question is crucial given various published critiques of Hugh Tracey, in relation to his commercial endeavours, especially his creation/invention of the Hugh Tracey *Kalimba* which has been manufactured and marketed by the Tracey family company, African Musical Instruments (AMI) since the 1960s.

#### **Data Drawn from Interviews with and Publications by the Selected Scholars**

Data from the selected scholars who have done original research on *mbira* music shall be presented in the following order: Gerhard Kubik, Klaus-Peter Brenner, Gerd Grupe, Paul Berliner and Claire Jones. This section will be concluded with data gathered from three musicologists Martin Scherzinger, Christopher Ballantine and Christine Lucia. I begin with a discussion of renowned composer Kevin Volans' use of Andrew Tracey's transcriptions.

#### **Kevin Volans: "Mbira" and "White Man Sleeps"**

Kevin Volans is a composer whose two compositions "*White Man Sleeps*" and "*Mbira*" (#4 and #2 on thesis CD) were inspired by Andrew Tracey's transcriptions. Volans acknowledges that Andrew Tracey's transcriptions were very significant for him in his above mentioned compositions which he wrote in 1980 and 1982. He says that the pulse notation used by Tracey in his transcriptions "seems well suited for the music" and the analysis of the harmonic structure of *mbira* music is very convincing (K. Volans-email interview, 26/11/08).

The following information regarding Volans' use of Andrew Tracey's transcriptions is relevant to my analysis of the extent of Andrew Tracey's contribution. On his CD entitled

*Cover Him with Grass: In Memoriam Bruce Chatwin* (1990), Kevin Volans' pieces "Mbira" and "White Man Sleeps" are influenced by the *mbira* and *nyanga* panpipe music from Andrew Tracey's transcriptions found in his booklet and articles "Three Tunes for 'Mbira dzaVadzimu'" (1963), *How to Play the Mbira (dzavadzimu)* (1970) and "The Nyanga Panpipe Dance" (1971) respectively. Notably, for his title "White Man Sleeps", Volans used Tracey's translation of the phrase *nzungu agona* (white man sleeps) which is from the Sena/Nyungwe<sup>4</sup> dialect of the *Nyanga* panpipe players from Mozambique. *Nzungu agona*, as explained by Tracey in his 1971 article, is a section of the *Nyanga* panpipe dance whereby the panpipes stop playing temporarily and only the sound of the dancing is heard "so as not to wake the white man" (Tracey, 1971: 82). This information is vital for the fact that if it were not for these transcriptions of *mbira* and *nyanga* music by Tracey, Volans' compositions mentioned above would not have existed because Tracey's transcriptions are the basis of the two compositions.

For his composition "Mbira", Volans directly reproduced the song *Nyamaropa* (# 1 on thesis CD) as found in Andrew Tracey's (1963, 1970) transcriptions and arranged it for two harpsichords and rattles. The harpsichords were tuned to the average *mbira dzavadzimu* scale as described by Andrew Tracey in the booklet *How to Play the Mbira (dzavadzimu)* (1970). In his re-arrangement of the song, at times he (Volans) just picked or selected the melody of *Nyamaropa* as played by the right or left hand. To create variety in his composition he switches between different versions of *Nyamaropa* and towards the end he sets the music to a very fast tempo.

For the piece "White Man Sleeps", Volans scripted different combinations of *Nyanga* (# 3 on thesis CD) panpipe parts, at times one, two, three or more. He arranged this music for two harpsichords, viola da gamba and percussion. At selected points Volans sets the music to be played at half the original tempo. For this composition the instruments are Western tuned. In Scherzinger's opinion, Volans' incorporation of African music in his compositions is one of the cases Western composers do this to try and "draw attention to

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<sup>4</sup> Nyungwe is a sub-dialect of Sena. Other sub-dialects of Sena are Barwe, Gorongozi, Man'anja and Tonga.

some of the characteristics of African music by putting them in a different medium, in other words putting them in Western context to see what kind of values the music had that were maybe not hearable when you heard them on the original instrument” (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

On another issue, in my personal communication with Tracey regarding Volans’ compositions, I learned that Volans used Tracey’s transcriptions without seeking prior permission and without giving adequate recognition to their source. This brings up the issue of appropriation, not only of Tracey’s transcriptions, but also of the original music they represent. Considering the wide success and popularity Volans’ music has enjoyed and the fact that it has brought him monetary gain; the question arises, how have the original composers (performers) been exploited?

### **Gerhard Kubik: Nsenga/Shona Harmonic Patterns and the San Heritage in Southern Africa**

The most renowned of the scholars, whose publications have assisted me greatly to assess Tracey’s contribution, is Professor Gerhard Kubik. A music ethnologist, Kubik is Professor of Cultural Anthropology at the University of Vienna (Austria). For nearly half a century (since 1959), he has published extensively on the music, dance and oral traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora. His numerous books and articles are based on his field research in 18 African countries, as well as Venezuela, Brazil and the South of the United States of America. Kubik has compiled the largest collection of recordings of indigenous African music in the world (26 000 recordings), many of which are housed in the Vienna Phonogrammarchiv. He is perhaps the most broadly knowledgeable and prolific of scholars on the music traditions of Africa and the Black Diaspora with over 300 articles and books to his credit. (Eyre, B.: 2007 [online] ; Unpublished letter from G. Kubik to Prof. Diane Thram, 07/08/08).

Kubik has written widely on lamellophones. Of special mention is his seminal article, “African and African-American Lamellophones” in *Turn up the Volume: A Celebration of African Music* (1999). It is notable that in his publications on lamellophones, Kubik

substantially cited Andrew Tracey. Kubik's book *Theory of African Music* (1994) and his articles (1960, 1962, 1964a, 1964b, 1965a, 1965b, 1972, 1980, 1988, 1994, 1999) on lamellophones and other related topics significantly informed this research.

The most crucial opinion given to me by Kubik (G. Kubik-email interview, 03/03/08) about Andrew Tracey's achievement is that regarding the significance of Tracey's discovery of "The basic kalimba core" and the genealogical table in his 1972 article "The Original African Mbira?" Kubik remarks that the aforementioned were major discoveries by Andrew Tracey. In Chapter Three, in Section 2 of his book *Theory of African Music vol.1* (1994: 210-248), Kubik writes about the Nsenga/Shona Harmonic Patterns and the San Heritage in Southern Africa. He argues that the present tonal-harmonic system of the Nsenga, Lala, Shona and others in Zimbabwe, Zambia and neighbouring areas exhibit traits of a San heritage. To put forward his argument Kubik borrows heavily from Andrew Tracey's "The System of the Mbira" (1989) and "The Original African Mbira" (1972) articles" He also uses material from A.M Jones (1959), together with his own analysis of the !Kung' (in south-eastern Angola) bow music. In the following paragraphs I highlight briefly what Kubik's article entails in order to show how crucial Tracey's contribution is regarding this finding by Kubik.

Kubik (1994: 214) points out that the harmonic system in the musics of Southern and Central Africa (Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe) is distinctively different from tonal-harmonic systems in other parts of Africa. He explains that the geographical occurrences of these tonal-harmonic systems are a result of how the musical practices of the people in this area have had influence on one another. Thus it becomes his aim to trace the likely source (s) of this unique phenomenon. He comes to his conclusion by drawing up a model in which he analyses and compares the !Kung' (San) bow music harmonics (See figs. 15-17 below), the Nsenga "Harmonic Cliché" (fig. 18) and the Shona *mbira* music "harmonic particle" (fig. 19). In !Kung singing, fourths, fifths and octaves are the characteristic sounds besides polyphony.

The bows presented in Kubik’s model are in three different tunings. The three !Kung braced bows are tuned so that the interval between the two segments of the string is respectively a whole tone, a minor third and a major third. He assumes that if the musicians were well versed with the tonalities from the three bow tunings, they would be able to integrate them into one system resulting in the Nsenga and Shona music harmonic progressions in existence today.

Having analyzed the !Kung’ harmonic system, Kubik next presents the harmonic structure of Nsenga music, as analyzed by A.M Jones (1959b), which has a “harmonic cliché” which consists of one fourth, one fifth and one octave. Thus through the use of the fourth, fifth and the octave, Kubik argues that the harmonic progressions that arise from !Kung’ bow tuning and Jones’s Nsenga “harmonic cliché” are identical. Thereby he shows Nsenga music has its roots in musical bow harmonics of the !Kung (Kubik 1994: 225).

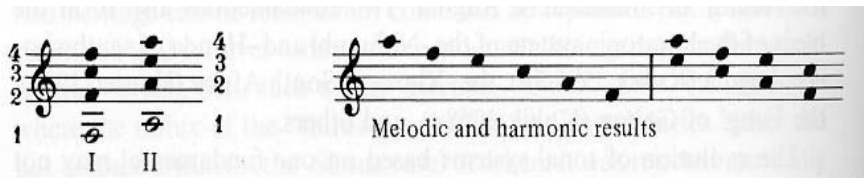


FIGURE 15. Musical bow tuning at an interval of ca. 400 cents (tuning a). (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 218).

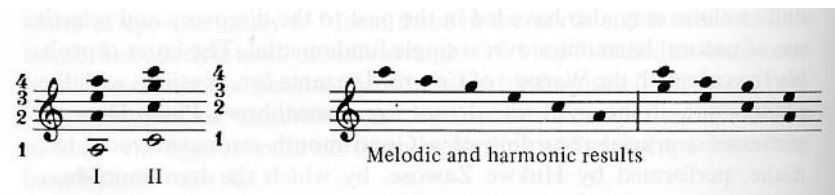


FIGURE 16. Musical bow tuning at an interval of ca. 300 cents (tuning b). (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 218).

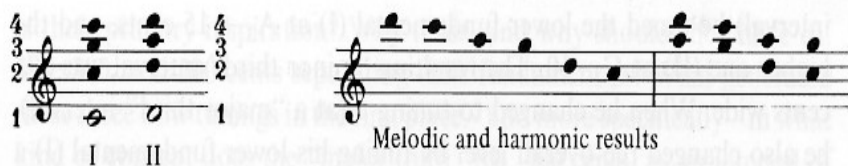


FIGURE 17. Musical bow tuning at an interval of ca. 200 cents (tuning c). (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 219).

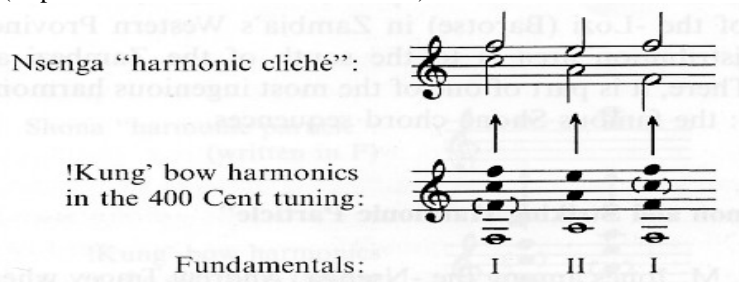


FIGURE 18. A.M Jones’s Nsenga “harmonic cliché” and its roots in musical bow harmonics. (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 225).

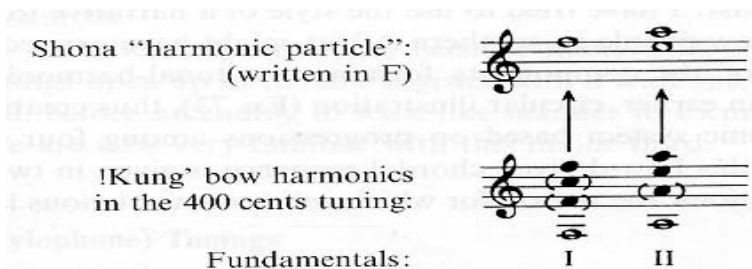


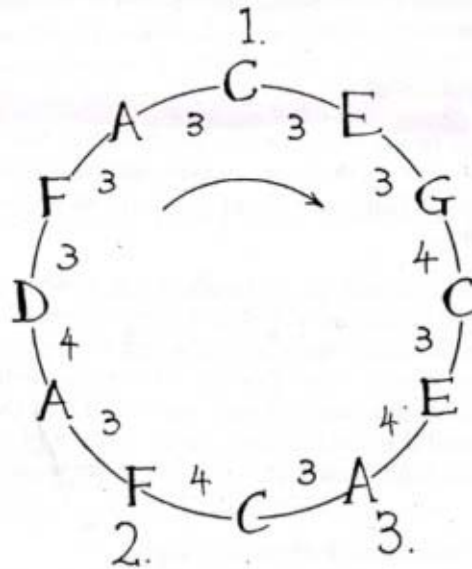
FIGURE 19. Comparison of Shona “harmonic particle” with !Kung bow harmonics. (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 227).

In his analysis, Kubik (ibid: 226) cites “a common and striking harmonic particle” (Tracey, 1989: 45, 50) in the *mbira* music of the Shona and Sena of Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as revealed by Andrew Tracey (1961, 1989), the latter publication being Tracey’s article “The System of the Mbira”. This significant finding by Tracey about the harmonic structure of *mbira* music is explained elaborately in this thesis in Chapter Four (pp43-49). To recap briefly, Tracey’s theory presents the fact that,

‘the system of the *mbira*’ rests on a harmonic structure in which chords follow each other in a predetermined way and move in certain fixed ways, either up a third or up a fourth. The chords played consist of two notes. Four different chords are used in almost any given song and the chords are always played in the same sequence. Many other Shona, Sena and Venda songs, even those unaccompanied by *mbira*, are based on the same sequence. The songs have a 12-chord sequence which uses all but one of the seven chords potentially available, in a 48- pulse

cycle which is divided into four quarters of 12 pulses each (Tracey, 1989). Also see fig. 20 below.

Kubik’s merger of the Nsenga “Harmonic Cliché”, Tracey’s “harmonic particle” and the !Kung’ bow harmonics shows how these three are one and the same structure, (Kubik *ibid*). This is but one example which demonstrates how subsequent scholars have drawn on and expanded on the work of Andrew Tracey to build their own meaningful research.



The Shona chord sequence.

1. CEG CEA CFA DFA (i.e. 334 343 434 333)
2. FAD FAC EGC EAC (i.e. 343 333 343 434)
3. ACF ADF ACE GCE (i.e. 343 433 333 434)

FIGURE 20. Shows the Shona chord sequence. (Reproduced from A. Tracey 1989: 52).

Kubik (*ibid*: 233) further affirms his argument with yet another of Tracey’s findings published in “The Original African Mbira” (1972). Kubik regards Tracey’s ‘basic *kalimba* core’ as a remarkable discovery. A brief summary of Tracey’s article follows, to highlight Kubik’s point. Tracey investigates in order to establish whether all Shona/Sena *mbira*-type lamellophones in the Zimbabwe/Lower Zambezi culture area and in Zambia

descend from one prototype *mbira*. In his efforts to trace whether the tunings of the *mbira* are historically interrelated, Tracey determines that the eight notes which form what he terms the “basic *kalimba* core” are found in almost all *mbira* types of this culture area. This is despite the divergences and variations in the tunings of these *mbiras*. Tracey illustrates diagrammatically the eight notes which form the basic *kalimba* core and locates their positions on the various *mbira* types and also provides a genealogical table which shows this interrelatedness. (See figs. 8-11 in Chapter 4).

It is from this grounding in Tracey’s finding that Kubik (1994: 233-239) then builds up his theory of the Nsenga/Shona harmonic patterns by way of probing further to find out why the “basic *kalimba*” has eight notes and why the notes are arranged the way they are. He first highlights that this “basic *kalimba*” exist in the form of the eight-note *kankobe* of the Lala people in Zambia (cf. Jones 1949; Davidson 1970). He expounds that the layout or array of the eight-note *kankobe* unlocks the concept behind this tuning. This array clearly shows the harmonic structure of the music because the thumbs are restricted to right and left hand playing areas whose boundaries cannot be overstepped.

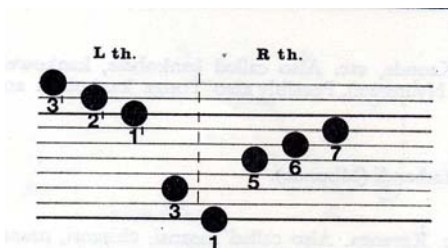


FIGURE 21. The basic *kalimba* core.  
(Reproduced from A. Tracey 1972: 88).

On the *kankobe*, *kalimba* and many other lamellophone types, the unwritten harmonic rule is that only lamellae representing harmonics of the same fundamental may be sounded together which shows the four bichords used on the *kalimba* and their structure, thereby showing the logic behind the whole layout. Kubik’s analysis reveals that the harmonic system is in bichords (two simultaneous sounds), thus each thumb must have access to four notes in order to make the system complete. He further explains that the layout presents itself in such a manner that the four fundamentals of the system and their selected harmonics is represented two-fold, once in the left thumb and once in the right

thumb playing area which explains why the basic *kalimba* must have eight notes, (Kubik *ibid*: 235).

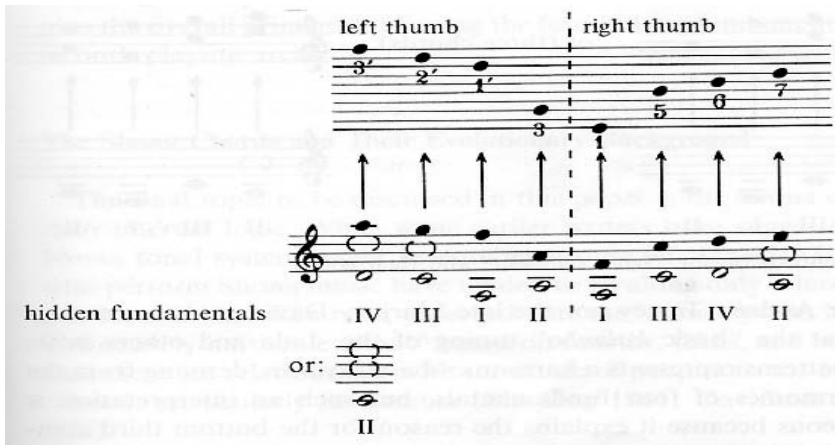


FIGURE 22. The hidden roots of the *kankobele* or “basic *kalimba*” core. (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 233).

Kubik (*ibid*: 236) discusses the Shona chords and their internal logic. He cites Tracey (1961) as the basis of his argument and says that the Shona chord system proves that it’s a closed system, a “universe in itself” for the reason that although it is based on progressions of four bichords, their relationships remain constant. He asks the following questions:

- Why in the Shona chords do fourths and fifths follow each other in precisely the inversions they do?
- Why must there be four chords?
- Why most times there are no thirds?

Kubik takes it upon himself to find out possible reasons for the structure found in the ‘kalimba core’ Kubik (*ibid.*) provides the illustration below (fig.23) which shows Shona chords side by side with the four chords of the !Kung musical bow merger.

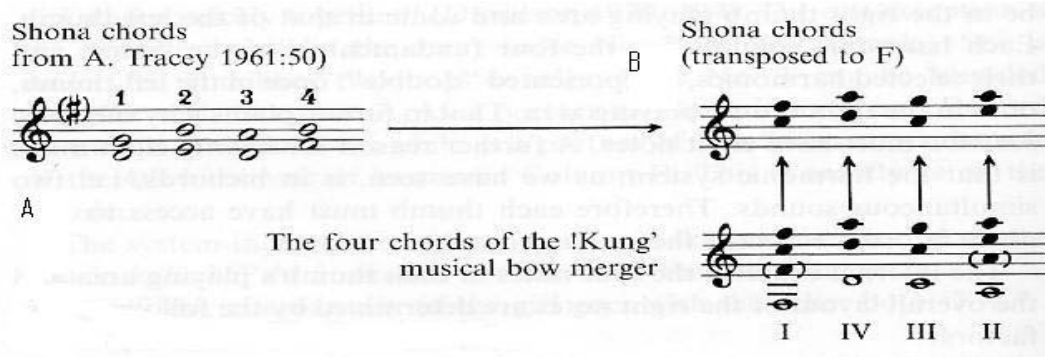


FIGURE 23. The Shona chords and their roots.  
(Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 236).

The illustration above provides the answers to Kubik's questions listed above. Summarily the outcome of Kubik's analysis presents that the simultaneous sounds in the harmonic progression may appear in inversions which are strictly determined by what harmonics of one of the four roots they represent. Fifths are the objectified harmonics 2 and 3, fourths represent harmonics 3 and 4 and octaves represent harmonics 2 and 4 of any of the hidden fundamentals. He comments that this system is effectively visualized in the tuning layouts of *mbira* instruments. Furthermore this harmonic system reveals that it is independent of the type of instrument used and operates in the same manner in vocal music.

In concluding his chapter, Kubik (ibid) makes an analysis of the Shona heptatonic system. Once again it is yet another of Tracey's *mbira* articles which gives Kubik the footing for his theory. Tracey (1970b: 37-61) in his article on one of the lamellophones in Zimbabwe, the *matepe*, gives a description of the prevalent heptatonic chord sequence in Shona music. Kubik then juxtaposes the "standard" Shona chord sequence with the harmonic columns of his !Kung musical bow merger model as shown below.

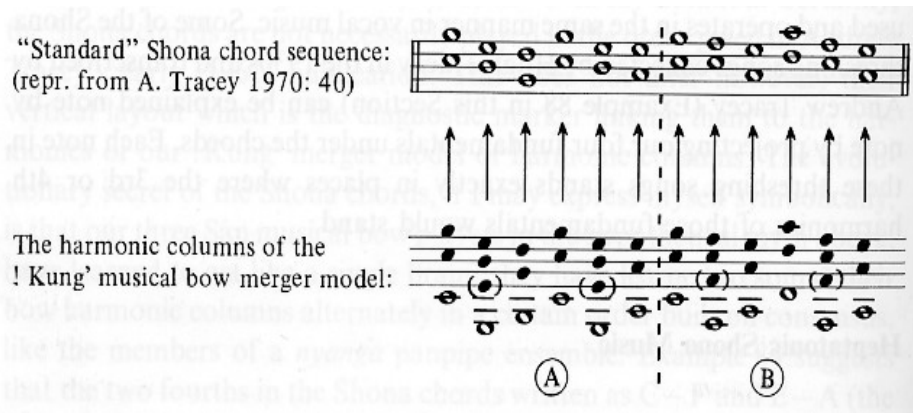


FIGURE 24. The standard Shona chord sequence and its logic. (Reproduced from G. Kubik 1994: 238).

Thus from this comparison Kubik (ibid: 238) draws the conclusion that, the “standard “ Shona chord sequence can be understood better if one realizes that its cycle is in two parts. According to Kubik, it’s also important to note that although the total chord sequence appears to be heptatonic (seven notes), that each of its two sections, A and B, taken by itself, is still hexatonic (six notes). Kubik acknowledges that this connection with the San heritage is very remote and that it is probably a strange idea to Shona contemporaries.

As Kubik rightly says that Shona contemporaries might find it a strange idea, as a Shona person I personally find this idea far-fetched. From my knowledge of the historical relationship of the contact of the Shona and the San, and from what I have gathered from oral history growing up in a rural village, the two did not have much in common, there was very little contact between them, and they had quite different cultural practices. This makes it very unlikely to me that the musical system of the Shona might have its roots in the San bow music.

### **Klaus-Peter Brenner: Chipendani und Mbira**

Klaus-Peter Brenner is curator of the musical instruments collection at the University of Gottingen in Germany. He also teaches courses in general organology and ethnomusicology at the University. Brenner has conducted field work in southwest Turkey, northeast Zimbabwe (Shona), and southern Uganda (Mbuti, Soga). He has also

carried out study trips to Taiwan and north Thailand. His non-western music practice includes performance of the *Gyil* (Ghana), *Chipendani* and *Mbira* (Zimbabwe), and *Amadinda* (Uganda)

(<http://www.dandemutande.com/Catalog/?cat=Books&subcat=Music&artist=BrennerKlausPeter#ChipendaniUndMbira>, accessed 13/08/07).

The data on Brenner presented in this thesis was obtained from the email interview (K. Brenner-email interview, 17/10/08) and the English summary of his book in German *Chipendani und Mbira* (1997). Brenner acknowledges that Andrew Tracey's publications have been the starting point of his own research (K. Brenner-email interview, 17/10/08). He also highlights that the pulse notation transcription method has been widely accepted in ethnomusicology as suitable in the transcription of African music. He argues that Tracey's pioneering research on *mbira* music is one whose "ground breaking achievements laid the foundations" for research on the subject.

Brenner, (K. Brenner-email interview, 17/10/08), makes special mention of the following three publications of Tracey and briefly explains the significance of each: "The Original African *Mbira*?" (1972), "The Family of the *Mbira*", (1974) and "The System of the *Mbira*", (1989). Like Kubik, Brenner thinks that Tracey's (1972) discovery of the 'basic *kalimba* core' is a milestone in *mbira* music research. He says that, this "most intelligent and convincing reconstruction of genealogical relationships" of the various *mbira* types' tuning plans is remarkable. This finding by Tracey is explained elaborately in Chapter Four (pp 38-40). To recap briefly, Tracey's analysis of the arrangement of notes in the keyboard of all the *mbira* types of the Shona (Zimbabwe), Sena (Mozambique), the Pedi and Venda (South Africa), led him to the discovery that the arrangement of the keys on the eight-note *kalimba* is contained in all these *mbira* types, hence he coined the phrase the 'the basic *kalimba* core'.

Of Tracey's article "The Family of the *Mbira*", (1974), Brenner remarks that it was another significant discovery of Tracey's which revealed the consistent tuning plans and defined the relationships of the different *mbira* types. The data presented in this article by

Tracey is an extension of the finding in his earlier publication, “The Original African *Mbira*?” (1972). Tracey explains that the tuning plans are instituted/created by the musical needs of the people. He closely examines each *mbira*’s tuning plan in relation to one another and to the *kalimba* and deduces that all *mbira* types in this area (Zimbabwe and Mozambique) can be connected with varying degrees of conviction to the eight-note *kalimba* “which seems to occupy the position nearest the centre” (Tracey, 1974:4).

Brenner says of Tracey’s article “The System of the *Mbira*” (1989) that, Tracey’s analysis of the harmonic structure of *mbira* music was a significant finding. He especially mentions to be of important value the discovery of the six-step and twelve-step standard chord progression of the *kalimba* and *mbira dzavadzimu* (and other ‘big’ *mbiras*) respectively. He commends Tracey’s discovery of the ‘kaleidophonic’ nature of *mbira* music and also finds it fascinating that the harmonic progressions of *mbira* music can be transposed to all seven notes on the *mbira* (K. Brenner-email interview, 17/10/08). With regards to Tracey’s articles, Brenner says that it’s a pity that Tracey did not compile all his work on *mbira* music into a concise book.

In his book *Chipendani und Mbira* (1997), Brenner presents a hypothesis in which he examines how the harmonic progression of Shona music (including *mbira* music) might have been influenced by and evolved from the harmonic progression of *chipendani* (mouth bow) music. Brenner acknowledges that Andrew Tracey (1972, 1974) and Gerhard Kubik’s (1987, 1988) publications provided the most significant basis for his research. In this discussion I will mainly concentrate on Brenner’s hypothesis as it relates to Andrew Tracey’s publications.

The hypotheses by Brenner (1997) and Kubik (1994) share something in common. Both assume that the musical bow (Kubik-!Kung bow in Angola and Brenner-*chipendani* mouth bow in Zimbabwe) is the likely source of the harmonic structure of the Shona *mbira* music). Brenner (1997: 370) believes that it is due to the strong impact of the *chipendani* mouth bow’s tonal-harmonic system, that the hexatonic (six notes) tuning-plan which Tracey calls the ‘basic *kalimba* core’ became generally accepted on the

*mbira*. He speculates that the tonal-harmonic system of the *chipendani* was transferred to the *kalimba*. Brenner argues that the expectations of sound progressions on the *chipendani* also affected the way *mbira* is played. Brenner uses an ethnomathematical approach in which his mathematical argument is that possibly two versions of the six step progressions on two *zvipendani* (plural for *chipendani*), tuned a fourth apart could have led to the discovery of the twelve-step standard-progression found on *karimba* music. He speculates that this development then later evolved into the heptatonic (seven notes) tuning-plan on *mbira dzavadzimu*, *matepe*, *njari* and, *nyonga-nyonga*.

Brenner further justifies his assertion of the development of *mbira* music harmonic progressions from *chipendani* by elaborating that, as a result of the “heptonization” (use of seven notes) of the *karimba* and the scale-wise addition of keys on the *mbira* (as seen on the right-hand manual of the *mbira dzavadzimu*), the musicians found at their disposal completely new possibilities of structural variations (Brenner 1997: 371). He further argues that, it is known that in the past *chipendani* was an instrument played by young Shona males to entertain them whilst herding cattle, whereas large *mbira* types are adult instruments. Therefore according to Brenner, *mbira* musicians of the past “must usually have strongly been molded by the *chipendani*’s tonal-harmonic system in their youth before eventually turning to the *mbira*” (Brenner, 1997:373).

According to Brenner, this kind of approach shows the extent to which African music is not solely about function and meaning but also gives a cognitive representation of a cultural knowledge embodied in the musical practices of specific societies. He argues that his ethnomathematical approach is applicable not only to Shona music but to other African musics. This construction of Brenner’s theory from Andrew Tracey’s discovery of the ‘basic *kalimba* core’ and the harmonic progressions of *mbira* music clearly shows how Tracey’s research has over the years acted as a springboard for other scholars to explore this phenomenon of *mbira* music.

While I find this hypothesis by Brenner very intriguing, I still believe that the harmonic system of Shona *mbira* music is grounded in Shona cultural aesthetics and its appeal to

the Shona people. In my opinion, the fact that the harmonic system is more complex than bow music (!Kung bow-Gerhard Kubik and *chipendani* bow-Brenner) does not necessarily imply that therefore the music evolved from the simpler harmonic structure of the bow. The idea of an ‘evolutional’ process in the development of *mbira* music from bow harmonics can be seen as undermining and defying the possibility of an ability by Shona musicians to create the ‘complex’ music that they have created for the *mbira*.

### **Gerd Grupe: The Art of Mbira Playing; Harmonic Progressions and their Cognitive Dimension**

Gerd Grupe is Professor of Music Technology at the Universitat für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Graz, Austria. Grupe earned his Ph.D. in 1990 with a dissertation on the traditional music (*kumina*) of Jamaica. In 1996 he earned a Habilitation mit einer Arbeit with his research on the *mbira* lamellophone music of the Shona in Zimbabwe. He has practical experience with *mbira*, *amadinda* xylophone and gamelan (Javanese ensemble). His special interests include Afro-American music, Africa south of the Sahara, Indonesia, and indigenous music theory (<http://www.dandemutande.org/Catalog/?cat=Books&subcat=&artist=HamptonWalt&nav=prev>, accessed 13/08/07).

Grupe says that Andrew Tracey’s publications are a landmark in understanding *mbira* music. With regard to the pulse notation transcription method that is used by Tracey, Grupe says that Tracey and a few other pioneers of scholarship in African musics like Gerhard Kubik have demonstrated the usefulness of visualizing or representing, the temporal structure of African music as being based on a grid of smallest units. Grupe further explains that although the appearance differs with various authors (including his own), the basic concept remains valid. He says that it can be employed meaningfully in cases of systematic inflection of impacts (micro-timing), as can be found in *djembe* drumming as shown in the work of Rainer Polak (1998).

In reference to the origin of harmonic progressions (chord sequences) in Shona music, Grupe says that he finds the hypothesis by Klaus-Peter Brenner (1997) very convincing.

Brenner contends that the chord sequences may be derived from the way a *chipendani* (mouth bow) is played employing certain harmonics. Brenner's hypothesis will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter (G. Grupe-email interview, 14/08/08).

Grupe (2004) in his book *Die Kunst des mbira-Spiels* (The Art of Mbira Playing) discusses in detail Tracey's achievements. Based on his own experiences with *mbira*, Grupe complements and extends Tracey's work (1970a; 1989) by using it as the point of departure as he seeks to find answers to additional questions that arise from the nature and structure of *mbira* music. He clearly points out from the beginning that, in spite of such a comprehensive book on *mbira* music as Berliner's (1978), and several publications by Andrew Tracey (1961, 1963, 1969, 1970a, 1970b, 1972, 1974, 1987, 1989), and other scholars, much still stands to be investigated about *mbira* music. Grupe highlights that adopting the role of a student during his research on *mbira* helped to yield him excellent results in regards to the cognitive concepts of his teachers. His position as student also gave him firsthand experience of the non-auditive aspects of *mbira* playing, namely the way in which motional patterns form an integral part of the art of playing *mbira* (Grupe 2004: 1<sup>5</sup>).

Grupe (2004:) acknowledges that Andrew Tracey was the first scholar to shed light on the structure of *mbira* music when he published the concept of a "standard Shona chord sequence" which forms the basis of many pieces.(1970a, 1989). He comments that, "the harmonic ambiguity of the progressions in relation to their (hypothetical) tonal centers incited Tracey to speak of the "kaleidophonic nature" of *mbira* music" (Grupe 2004: 1-2). On this note Grupe comments that, surprisingly subsequent scholars such as Kauffman (1970), Kaemmer (1975) and even Berliner (1978, 1981) have achieved little progress when comparing their findings to Tracey's analyses. He then mentions that new insights have come from Gehard Kubik (1988) and more recently Brenner (1997), who both attempt to trace and link the Shona chord sequence as having its roots in the musical bow. Grupe, (2004:2).

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<sup>5</sup> The page numbers used in this document for Gerd Grupe's 1998 article and 2004 book do not tally with the published versions. They correspond with the English summaries of these publications I received directly from Grupe, who emailed them to me as PDF files.

As Grupe (ibid: 3-4) makes further analysis of the chord progressions shown by Tracey, he discovers that a comparison of the tonal material of adjacent chords with respect to their three chord notes apparently shows that they share certain notes while always some notes are excluded at a certain point in the sequence. Grupe calls this trait ‘the rule of exclusion’, which is valid for all the ‘transpositions’, but warns that this should not be interpreted as completely prohibiting the use of non-chord tones. At this point Grupe then remarks that the notion of a strict ‘harmonic rhythm’ (Berliner: 1978) becomes questionable because of the affinities between adjacent chords. He argues that rather the principle of a harmonic ambiguity of chord tones is an essential structural feature of *mbira* music where each chord forms sort of a tonal ‘gravitational center’ which becomes fuzzy towards its ‘borders’ because a given tone may be interpreted as belonging to either of two adjacent chords , Grupe (ibid: 4).

Grupe (ibid.) addresses the significance of motional-rhythmic patterns during *mbira* playing and their effect on the structure of the music. He says that there are basically two different types of these patterns. Some support the beat whilst others tend to mask or veil it especially when the tonal arrangement of notes is built on binary or quaternary figurations which contrast to the basic ternary subdivision of the beat. These may be materialized by rattle accompaniment or may be merely in the mind of the musician and form a mental grid reference.

Grupe (1998) in his article “Traditional *Mbira* Music of the Shona”, discusses the structure of *mbira* music as has been analyzed by various authors. He also lays bare the questions that arise from these analyses and how they create a base for future cognitively oriented research on the structure of *mbira* music. Grupe states that Andrew Tracey is among the early researchers on *mbira* music in the twentieth century alongside his father Hugh Tracey and later Kauffman (1970), Kaemmer (1975), Paul Berliner (1974, 1978, 1981). He highlights that as different authors covered a broad spectrum of aspects of *mbira* music, spirit possession, instrumental tunings, song texts etc, it was Andrew Tracey (1970) who pioneered in harmonic analyses of *mbira* music, (Grupe, 1998: 3).

Grupe (ibid) also addresses the aspect of the tonal dimension of *mbira* music. To begin with, he highlights that Andrew Tracey (1961: 48) in his analysis came up with an average scale that he considered equidistant. He described that the *mbira* players have a distinctive, well defined scale, although there exist slight variants in different parts of the country. Grupe then points out that this opinion has been questioned by other scholars like Kauffman (1970: 86), Berliner (1981: 63), Kubik (1988), and Brenner (1997) who argue that there is a great range of pitch tolerance in the instruments. It is also noted that Tracey (1989: 51) has also modified his original notion as he explains that the tuning of *mbira* is not really equi-spaced although it often shows those tendencies (Grupe, 1998: 4).

### **Paul Berliner: The Soul of Mbira: Music and Traditions of the Shona People of Zimbabwe.**

Paul Berliner is Arts and Science Professor of Music at the John Hope Franklin Center for International and Interdisciplinary studies, and jointly, the Music Department at Duke University, U.S.A. Berliner is an ethnomusicologist, best known for specializing in Shona *mbira* Music as well as Jazz and other improvisational systems. It is for his popular book on the Zimbabwean *mbira*, *The Soul of Mbira: Music and Traditions of the Shona People of Zimbabwe* (1978), for which he received the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award, that Berliner is best known. His other book, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (1994), received The Society of Ethnomusicology's Alan Merriam Prize for Outstanding Book in Ethnomusicology (Eyre, B.: 2006 [online]).

Berliner's book on *mbira* music provides the complete cultural context of the Shona *mbira* and an intimate, precise account of the music. A few of the many favourable remarks that have been given about *The Soul of Mbira* show how well it has been received as a model of ethnomusicological thinking and investigation. Chernoff, J. ( n.d. [online]), remarks that "this book is probably the best ethnography ever written about an African musical tradition ...I know no other instrument with the range of the *mbira*, and the book is equal to the instrument". David Reck (n.d. [online]), comments that the book

“illustrates the fact that Shona *mbira* music in its beauty, subtlety and virtuosity demands the same respect that we might hold for any other classical music.”

Berliner’s research on *mbira* in Zimbabwe began in 1971. Andrew Tracey had already begun research on *mbira* in 1959. Inevitably, as is the norm with any scholarly research, prior to his own research, Berliner engaged with Andrew Tracey’s publications on *mbira* as well as other pioneering scholars such as A. M. Jones. He says that, Tracey’s work was influential in his career in a number of ways and explains that Tracey’s early articles on *mbira* provided him with a useful theoretical introduction to Shona *mbira* music. Berliner points out that the booklet by Tracey published in 1970, *How to Play the Mbira dzavadzimu* (based on my father’s teaching), gave him a feeling for performing the repertory before he arrived in Zimbabwe (P. Berliner-email interview, 11/12/07).

In examining Andrew Tracey’s field notes, I noted with interest the comment that he made about Paul Berliner when he met him again in Zimbabwe in 1972 during one of his numerous field trips. He wrote in his notes that he met Paul Berliner at the University of Zimbabwe (then University of Rhodesia) where Berliner was giving a seminar. Tracey wrote, “he (Berliner) is a different person now, he is now more experienced and talks knowledgeably and personally about so many things...he has gone with them to various places to observe the effects of the music in people and learn about the conflicts undergone by mediums and *mbira* players”, (Unpublished field notes, A. Tracey-16 May 1972). As I now reflect on how well Berliner’s book was received, it is interesting to note how Andrew Tracey (as an experienced researcher on the subject [*mbira* music]) had seen the good signs in Berliner, of a promising researcher back in 1972.

In response to my email interview, Berliner highlights that although his main purpose was not a formal analysis of the structures of *mbira* music, he found Tracey’s general theory useful in representing the basic cyclical “harmonic” movements underlying the *mbira* pieces he learned. Berliner explains that, in retrospect, his “application of Tracey’s theory was a bit tentative in places, partly because of the ambiguity of inferring, from melodic structures, precisely where contiguous dyads sharing common tones changed”.

(Berliner-email interview, 11/12/07). Berliner further points out that these harmonic changes in melodic structures in Tracey's theory are well articulated by Gerd Grupe in his article "Traditional Mbira Music of the Shona" (1998), which will be discussed shortly.

In reference to the pulse notation that is used by Tracey, Berliner (ibid) says that he found it to be a useful part of Tracey's method for representing *mbira* music, for in Berliner's words, "it is friendlier than western notation for inviting flexible interpretations of *mbira* patterns and the relationships among them". I am especially grateful to Berliner for informing me about the publications on *mbira* music by Gerd Grupe and Klaus-Peter Brenner. He also suggested to me to closely study the work of these two and see how they complement and extend Tracey's work. Since most of Grupe and Brenner's publications are in German, I have been restricted to use of the English summaries where available.

I now turn to Berliner's analysis of *mbira* music as published in his book *The Soul of Mbira* (1978). Berliner (ibid: 82) made the same findings about the structure of *mbira* music as Andrew Tracey (1961, 1989). In his analysis of the nature of *mbira* music, Berliner highlights that, *mbira* pieces on *mbira dzavadzimu* appear in four phrases of twelve beats each. He points out that songs on the *karimba* consist of two phrases instead of four and the basic progression of the songs is equivalent to that of the first two phrases on the songs on *mbira dzavadzimu*. Similar to what Tracey (1961, 1989) terms the 'standards' which show three major patterns of chord progression in *mbira* music, Berliner explains that although the *mbira* pieces share a common tonal centre, the harmonic patterns sometimes differ in some respects. He gives an example of such a song as *Kuzanga*, in which he explains that whilst it follows a harmonic progression similar to Nhemamusasa, "its sections IV and I centre around the fifth scale degree above the tonal centre.

Berliner points out that the *mbira*'s sound has "a special presence" in that the music is not only heard but one is bound to feel the music as well. He also emphasizes the fact that no

words can fully describe the quality of the music to someone who has not heard the music performed. Similar to what Tracey (1989) terms the ‘kaleidophony’ of *mbira* music, Berliner (1978) describes it as the ‘elusive’ nature of *mbira* music. He explains that a *mbira* song is not a fixed musical structure for new phrases appear in the music as one listens to the ‘inner parts of the piece’, which Tracey terms critical/attentive listening. He elaborates that this unfixed nature of the music provides a platform for variations and extensions by the *mbira* players.

In regard to the notation of *mbira* music Berliner warns that when reading the transcriptions, one must not get the impression that the music is fixed and two-dimensional. Tracey (1989) explains that different *mbira* tunings and songs or sequences played in different keys on the *mbira* can make them sound different. Berliner (1978: 170) gives an elaborate explanation on the same subject. He says that a *mbira* player can sometimes experience a sudden unpleasant effect upon his mind and feelings on hearing a new *mbira* tuning and gets temporarily disoriented. Berliner expounds that in some cases the players respond appreciatively.

Similar to the ‘standards’ of chord progression in Shona *mbira* music explained by Tracey (1970b: 38), Berliner (1978: 74) explains how the same basic pitches are used in a number of *mbira* pieces, although each piece will have a different melodic and rhythmic pattern from the other. The purpose of highlighting these similarities in the findings of Andrew Tracey and Paul Berliner serves to show how the pioneering findings by Tracey have remained true and largely uncontroversial as reflected in the research on *mbira* music by subsequent *mbira* scholarship.

**Claire Jones: Making Music: Musical Instruments of Zimbabwe Past and Present.**

Dr. Claire Jones is an independent scholar, currently employed as an instructor for the Boston University online graduate program in music education and working in applied ethnomusicology projects in Seattle, Washington. She is an experienced teacher and leader of the Zimbabwean *marimba* ensembles Kutamba and Masango as well as Mahonyera *Mbira* Ensemble. She has been studying and performing Shona music since

1976 when she first fell in love with the marimbas and started studying with the late Dr Dumisani Maraire, who taught *mbira* and *marimba* at the University of Washington.

She performed for several years with Dumi and the Maraire Marimba Ensemble both in the United States and in Zimbabwe. While living in Zimbabwe from 1985 to 1990, she played *mbira* with Mhuri yekwa Muchena and authored the book *Making Music: Musical Instruments in Zimbabwe Past and Present* (1992). Jones completed her doctoral dissertation on the modern Zimbabwean *marimba* in 2006 at the University of Washington (C. Jones-email interview, 13/10/08 and [http://www.zoominfo.com/people/Jones\\_Claire\\_32819838.aspx](http://www.zoominfo.com/people/Jones_Claire_32819838.aspx), accessed 7/11/08).

In my email correspondence with Dr Claire Jones (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08), she acknowledges that Andrew and Hugh Tracey's writings were extremely valuable to her as she began to establish the inventory of Zimbabwean music and instruments when she was researching and writing her book *Making Music* in the late 1980s. She comments that during that time the literature was limited to the Traceys' work, Berliners' *Soul of Mbira* (1978) and the dissertations and articles by John Kaemmer (1979) and Robert Kauffman (1968).

With regards to the pulse notation transcription method that Andrew Tracey uses, Jones says that she finds this method a useful and appropriate way of representation of the cyclic patterns found in *mbira* and *marimba* music. Jones says that she has introduced this method in classes and workshops on transcription. She says that the method shows the pulse as the smallest time unit and the notation shows which pitch to sound at what pulses of the cycle. However she points some of the shortcomings of the method in that it does not handle well the aspect of rhythms (in Shona music) that are not precisely symmetrical and scales that do not conform to the Western diatonic scale implied by the five-line stave (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08). Tracey's response to Jones's comment on the scales is that, talking of heptatonic musics, the five-line stave is able to depict heptatonic music very well, as well as being internationally comprehensible.

Jones, like Brenner and Grupe, finds it significant that Andrew Tracey was the first to provide detailed analyses on *mbira* music. She gives special mention to Tracey's (1961) article in which he presented *mbira* music of a seminal individual musician, Jege Tapera. Jones also complements Tracey's publications on *Matepe* and *mbira dzavadzimu* (both in 1970), especially the fact that the articles include instructions on how to make, tune and play the *mbira*. Jones, like Kubik, regards Tracey's "The Original African Mbira" (1972) "as an intriguing but well grounded theory on the relationship and possible evolution of the *mbira* family of instruments. According to Jones, Tracey's analysis of the "System of the Mbira" and Kubik's ruminations on the San bow harmonics and inherent patterns, laid the foundation for the later generation of analysts of *mbira* music such as Klaus-Peter Brenner (1997), Gerd Grupe (1998, 2004) and Martin Scherzinger (2001), (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08).

Jones says that Tracey's analysis of *mbira* music (1970, 1989) confirmed what she was hearing in *mbira* music when she was learning how to play *mbira* in Zimbabwe in the 1980s. She agrees that the large Shona *mbira* share a common harmonic progression that can be played in different modes or keys which Tracey calls the 'standard sequence' (discussed in Chapter Four). She however comments that in her own perception this sequence is less obvious with some songs like "Taireva" or "Bangidza" for they "take on very different modal 'feels' depending on the tuning of the *mbira*" (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08).

Jones has one point of disagreement with regards to Tracey's theory. This concerns the *mbira dzavadzimu* song "Chakwi" which Tracey identifies as 'F standard' (Tracey 1989:52). Jones argues that she hears "Chakwi" as simply a transposition of the basic sequence one step up from "Nyamaropa". However they both agree on the fact that the way one hears a song is largely a matter of each individual's aural perception. This is what Tracey explains as the ambiguity in hearing tonal centers and starting points, which both Jones and Tracey say is part of the beauty of the music. However Jones comments that when Tracey described the 'standards' as representing "typical if not universal ways

of hearing the sequences”, he seems to have contradicted himself on his point regarding the variability of each individual’s aural perception (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08).

On another topic altogether, I sought Jones’ opinion with regards to various published critiques of Hugh Tracey, in relation to his commercial endeavours, especially his creation/invention of the Hugh Tracey *kalimba* which has been manufactured and marketed by the Tracey family company, African Musical Instruments (AMI) since 1955, just a year after he had established ILAM. Jones comments that the issue of appropriation of African music is a complex one. She points to some of the crucial questions that underlie this debate. For instance she asks: “Were there any indigenous notions of ownership of instrument design or song rights predating the arrival of Europeans and their concepts of individual property rights? She argues that although these are purely western concepts they have now spread throughout the world and there should be no reason why indigenous knowledge should be excluded from property laws because it is ‘traditional’ (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08).

Jones says that, on the other hand, sharing these musical practices sustains their existence, and such actions that can be seen as exploitation or appropriation sometimes help make these musical practices known to the world and as a result benefit the indigenous musicians in monetary gains or otherwise. She believes that the non-indigenes have a moral and ethical obligation to give back in some way to the communities whose musical traditions they present and or appropriate. Jones says that it is a fact that the Tracey family has benefitted from the sales of the Hugh Tracey *kalimba* and these sales have also benefited the indigenous African *mbira* musicians in the sense that they have helped to call attention to the unique family of *mbira* instruments and its music. She says that she is not clear though on why Hugh Tracey registered the term *kalimba* as a trademark “even if he did ‘westernize’ the design with a diatonic scale and lack of buzz” (C. Jones-email interview, 29/10/08).

Jones’s acknowledgement of the significance of Andrew Tracey’s work on *mbira* music is yet another example which shows the significance of Tracey’s contribution to the

knowledge of *mbira* music to the wider community of both early and contemporary *mbira* scholars. His work laid the foundations for future *mbira* scholars and his discoveries and analysis were absorbed and examined with enthusiasm by subsequent scholars.

### **Martin Scherzinger: The Shona *Mbira* Song *Nyamaropa*: A Mathematical Perspective**

Martin Scherzinger, BA and BM, University of Witwatersrand, is Associate Professor of Musicology at the Eastman School of Music at University of Rochester (USA). He currently holds a position in the Media Department at New York University and has also worked at Princeton University (USA) as Faculty Mentor for the Mellon Summer Research Fellows. He completed his PhD at Columbia University in 2001. Scherzinger is a musicologist and composer whose research interests include 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century music, African music, the politics of globalization and copyright law. He has published articles and reviews in various journals including *Yearbook for Traditional Music* and *Journal of the American Musicological Society*. Since 2002 he is Contributing Editor for *Open Space* and Associate Editor for *Perspectives of New Music* since 2004. Scherzinger is also an Associate Member of South African Music Rights Organization (SAMRO) since 1997. (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08; <http://www.esm.rochester.edu/faculty/?id=126>, accessed 13/08/07).

In my telephone interview with Martin Scherzinger (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08), he recalls how he first encountered the *mbira*. He narrates that it was during the time when he was involved with a popular music band in Johannesburg as a performing musician. One day one of their band members brought a *mbira* to their practice session. From then on he developed an interest in the instrument. Later he met many *mbira* players in Zimbabwe and in the United States and learnt “how to play this beautiful instrument”. Notably he has had contact with renowned Zimbabwean *mbira* players such as Hakurotwi Mude, Ephat Mujuru, Cosmas Magaya, Beaula Dyoko, Tute Chigamba and Chaka Chawasarira. Scherzinger says that he “gradually became interested in the *mbira* and its music as an intellectual universe that was deeply intriguing from a

mathematical point of view, and that's why it was better for me to learn the mathematics of the music...in the theory department than learning anthropology" (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

In light of his writings on African music including *mbira*, Scherzinger alludes to the fact that his interest and vision is grounded in the idea of producing work that is useful in educational institutions i.e in the classroom setting of teaching (African) music as a living tradition with a theoretical, compositional and formal component. He points out that from the outset, Andrew Tracey's work on *mbira* music has been of significant importance to his own research and publications on *mbira* music.

Scherzinger explains that it's impressive how Tracey made some remarkable observations in his research and suggested a way of understanding the (*mbira*) music that was not very much encouraged by certain ethnomusicological perspectives. He expounds that Tracey had a deep perception and trust in the music which enabled him to make speculative suggestions about how harmony works in *mbira* music. He further explains that Tracey believed there was an "a sort of a system of reasoning" in the *mbira* tradition. It is interesting how this comment from Scherzinger fits well with Tracey's titling of his major article on the analysis of *mbira* music, "The System of the *Mbira*", (1989), (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

With regards to Andrew Tracey's pulse notation transcription method, Scherzinger says that it is a fact that all transcription for any kind of music Western or non-Western is not totally accurate, i.e does not capture the exceptional reality of the live music. However, he thinks that in pulse notation Tracey made a remarkable attempt to try and represent the music (African) on paper. In Scherzinger's opinion, he believes that Western notation with its stave of five lines and four spaces suits or represents *mbira* music better than Western music in the sense that *mbira* music is heptatonic (seven notes/tones) whilst the chromatic scale in Western music has twelve notes which ends up requiring the use of adding sharps and flats, which is kind of ironic in a sense. He also likes how not having to commit to a time signature in the pulse notation method works well especially for

*mbira* music with its multilayered and heterophonic nature (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

Scherzinger believes that another of Tracey's significant contributions in relation to the existing body of research on *mbira* music is the large amount of actual transcription of the *mbira* music that Tracey accomplished. In his publications on *mbira* music, Tracey produced ninety transcriptions. These transcriptions are especially useful to understanding the music and for analysis purposes. Scherzinger is an example of a scholar who used Tracey's transcriptions specifically for purposes of analysis based on music theory.

Scherzinger points out that Tracey's approach did not address the social context, history and politics that surround the (*mbira*) music. He says that such concepts of the music have been attended to well by such authors as Berliner in his book *The Soul of Mbira* and Thomas Turino (2000), who laid out some specific political issues surrounding the music. But, he suggests that this critique must be made with caution, and only if one insists that Tracey should have included these various dimensions, because ultimately every individual scholar has a specific line of focus or orientation that they are more interested in or strive towards when doing research (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08). It is clear that Tracey's research focus is in the teaching of *mbira* music including how to play it.

An analysis of Scherzinger's 2001 publication on *mbira* music "Negotiating the Music Theory/African-Music Nexus: A Political Critique of Ethnomusicological Anti-Formalism and a Strategic Analysis of the Harmonic Patterning of the Shona Mbira Song Nyamaropa" is presented to show how Andrew Tracey's research on *mbira* was the ground work to which Scherzinger's work owes its existence.

Scherzinger's (2001) article is divided into two sections. In the first section he unpacks the historical background of how ethnomusicology emerged as a discipline and how it has evolved over the years. He comments on how ethnomusicologists mainly analyze

African music in terms of its function in the society and how seldom it is analyzed on its own terms.

Scherzinger argues that, African music can also be approached by technically analyzing the music itself. He is concerned with the disparity that exists in the sense that Western music is understood and analyzed in terms of harmony and form, whilst African music is only viewed in relation to its social context. Scherzinger says that although it is crucial to ground African music to the social contexts from which it emanates, however this should not be a rigid assertion for it suggests a deliberate move to exclude African music from the “broader global debate”. In other words, African music should be part and parcel of the ‘global modernity’ package of musical analysis and should not be distanced from the rest and by implication labeled as inscrutable (M. Scherzinger 2001:16, 20).

Scherzinger advocates for a more practical and serious approach to the inclusion of African music in the curriculum in educational institutions. He emphasizes for people to understand that African music has mathematical depth within it. This will help to clear or alter the perspective that Western music is superior. He argues that although this might seem like an outdated stance, the reality on the ground is that Western music is still regarded as superior over other musics including the music of Africa; therefore it’s important to make a case for African music (M. Scherzinger 2001:35, Interview-12/11/08). Scherzinger’s wish is to see the teaching or inclusion of African music in African institutes of learning such as high schools and universities taken as seriously as Western music is in music institutions.

Thus he presents a method of analyzing a *mbira* song in this article meant to be his contribution towards achieving this goal. He remarks that the theoretical mathematical analysis of *mbira* (African) music he presents here intends to show a way “to produce text, analyses and theories that are useful to a new kind of African context for studying music” Scherzinger argues that analysis of the music of Africa has mostly emphasized or focused on “rhythm, timbre and inharmonicities” and very rarely has harmony been given

centre stage. Thus Scherzingers’s analysis of the harmonic patterning of the Shona *mbira* song *Nyamaropa* in Section Two of his article attempts to address this imbalance (M. Scherzinger 2001:24, Interview-12/11/08).

In Section Two Scherzinger analyzes the harmonic patterning of the *mbira* song *Nyamaropa*. He says that he is “really interested in why this music is so elusive, tangible, vivid and at the same time incredibly powerful” (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08). He uproots it from its social context and focuses on the finer mathematics of what constitute or adds up to the *mbira* song *Nyamaropa*. He explains that his analysis of the *mbira* song *Nyamaropa* serves as a platform to present the way of analyzing *mbira* music he suggests in this article. He says that by so doing he is “adopting formal analytic methods for the study of African music; of writing African music theory” (Scherzinger 200: 21).

In his analysis, Scherzinger does not dwell much on rhythm, his main interest is the harmonic structure of the song as he investigates how the harmony is able to work in a kind of “time-transcending way”. He begins by showing two transcriptions of the song *Nyamaropa*. One of the transcriptions is his own and the other one is Andrew Tracey’s (1970). Andrew Tracey’s two publications on *mbira* music (1970, 1989) form the basis of Scherzinger’s harmonic analysis of *Nyamaropa*. He shows the harmonic progression of *Nyamaropa* which he calls the dyad sequence. This harmonic sequence was first explored by Andrew Tracey (1970, 1989). See figure 25 below.

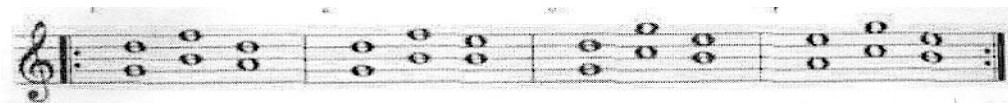


FIGURE 25. A dyad sequence of *Nyamaropa*.  
(Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 55)

In figure 25 above the chord sequence of the song is shown in four distinct phrases which Scherzinger calls measures. The chord progression movement is either up a third or up a fourth from one to the other. The second phrase is the same as the first one except for the

last dyad which is one step up from the dyad in phrase one. Phrase three is the same as the second phrase except for the second dyad which is raised one step. The fourth phrase is much like the third except the first dyad is raised one step. Thus it is noted that in each phrase some things change and some do not. Scherzinger then arranges and rearranges the chordal progression for analysis of the harmonic patterns they formulate. For instance he arranges two cycles of the progression with the last half at the beginning and the first half at the end.

Scherzinger (2001:58) investigates the harmonic mirroring that occurs in *mbira* music harmonic progressions and explains that no matter what re-arrangements or patterns one might try, whether in reverse order or changing the starting point, it is observed that each group of dyads in a particular phrase or measure is always similar to or repeated in another phrase somewhere in the progression. This harmonic mirroring applies in all *mbira* songs. He thinks that this mirroring is what makes it possible to start playing a *mbira* song from any chosen point. This is because what can be an ending or a beginning phrase in one instance can also occur as a passage in the middle of a given 'measure' or phrase in a cycle. Although Scherzinger does not mention this point, I think that this harmonic mirroring is simply a result of the cyclic nature of the music, so no matter what point is decided upon to be the starting point, all the stages of the cycle will be passed through.

Scherzinger explains that it is a result of one's focus in listening to the dyads' movement or harmonic motions, identifying similarities and differences which causes the same music to be heard in different ways. This is what Tracey termed the kaleidophonic nature of *mbira* music (in Chapter Four). Tracey explained that if one is not a critical listener they quickly jump to the conclusion that all *mbira* music sounds the same, and yet the difference comes from "a subtle appreciation of chords standing in different relationships, and the kinds of harmonic and melodic subtleties each can give you" (Andrew Tracey, 1989: 51).

To illustrate his point on the harmonic patterning in *Nyamaropa* and to clearly show the mirroring that occurs in the progression, Scherzinger presents the transcription of the song in “fractal-like geometric shapes” showing the groupings of the dyads and harmonic shapes formed by the dyads. In figure 26 below, Scherzinger formulates the harmonic shapes from groupings of three-dyad units. Note that as he progresses with his mathematical analysis he further presents groupings of four, five and six-dyad harmonic shapes or units. He presents these shapes on a grid with two axes. He explains that the vertical axis represents equi-heptatonic scale steps. Scale step 1 is pitch class G in notated progression, Scale step 2 is A etc. For instance scale degree 4 is shortened as p.4. The horizontal axis represents a time line of equidistant time spans with four phrases per time span. For example a shape beginning at time-span 4 is referred to as t.4 etc.

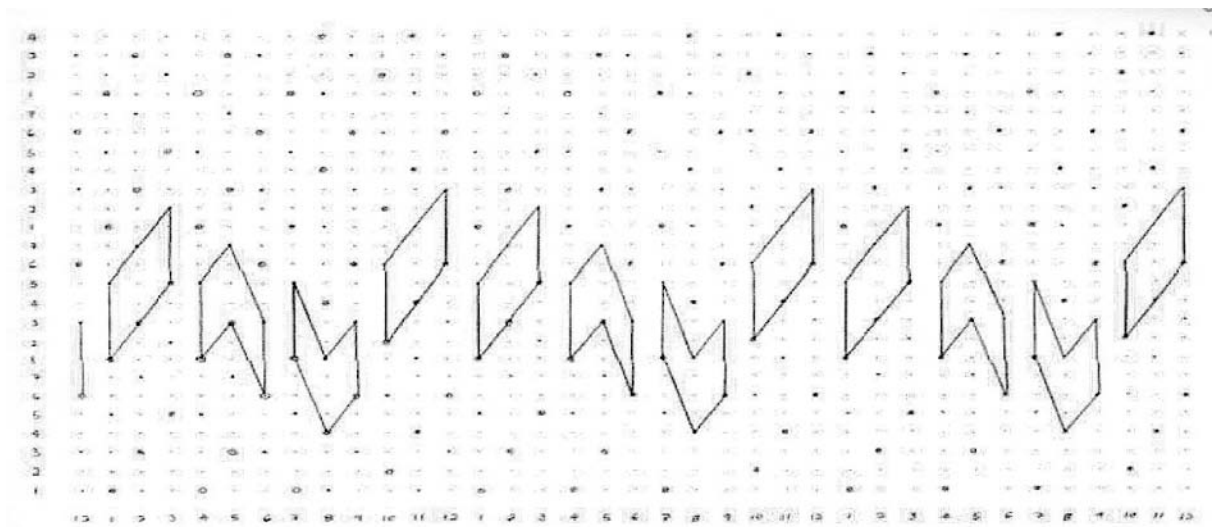


FIGURE 26. Illustrate one example of the kind of hearing that emerges when the progression is differently grouped. (Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 59).

Scherzinger explains that the use of shapes expresses the harmonic movement in greater detail. According to Scherzinger, the horizontal axis represents a time line of equidistant time spans of four pulses per time span and the vertical axis shows equi-heptatonic scale steps. The number 1 on the scale step represents the pitch G, 2 is pitch A etc.

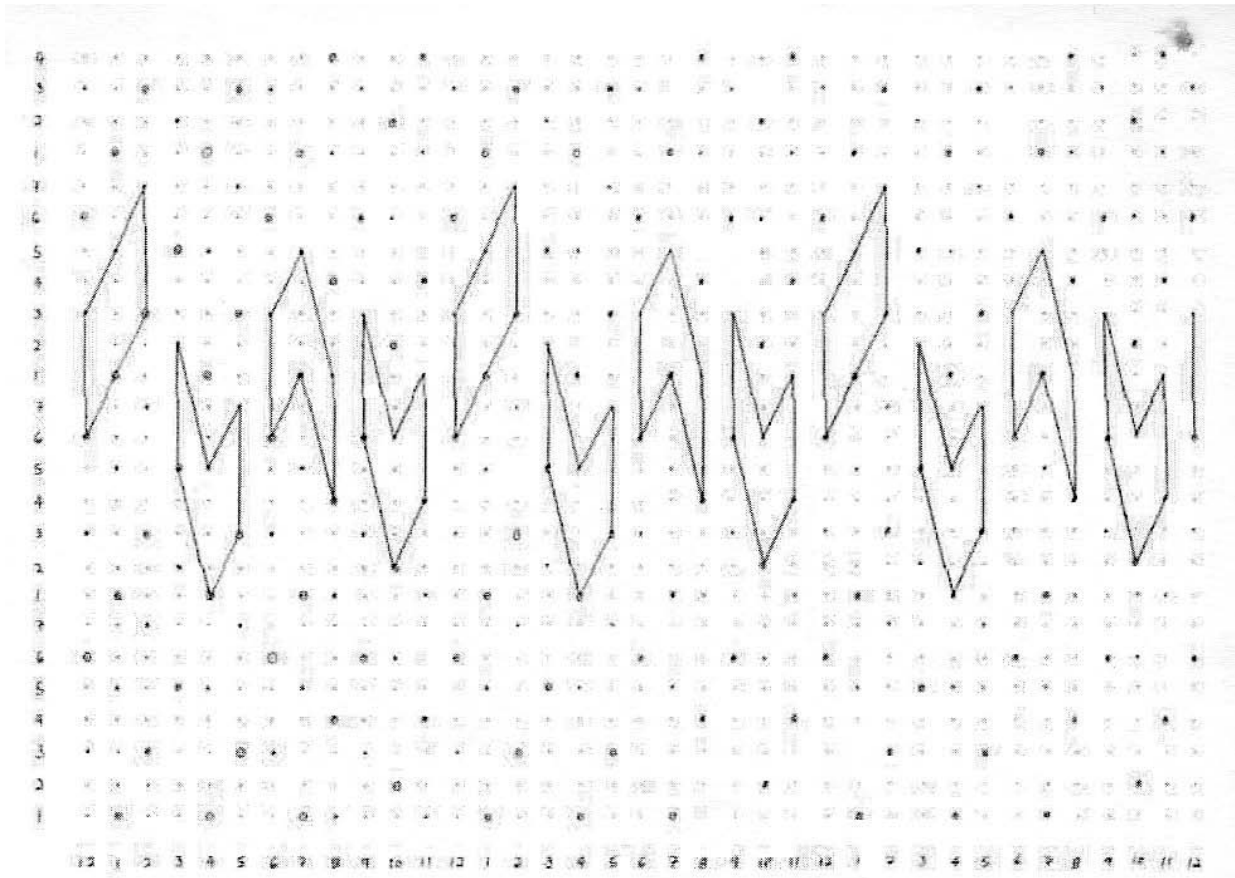


FIGURE 27. Shows a different arrangement or grouping of repetitions etc and the kind of harmonic mirroring it produces. (Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 63).

Scherzinger says that the different variations or “renditions” of a song and the way they are tackled by each particular player also affects the kind of shapes (harmonic) that can be produced. For instance one performer can hold notes of a dyad for a longer or shorter number of pulses modulate the harmonies or give certain pulses prominence over the others. All these factors have effect on the ultimate sound produced although the overall basic progression remains unchanged (Scherzinger 2001:63).

Scherzinger goes on to illustrate other possible ways of hearing the harmonic progression when the harmonic shapes are grouped in shapes of four dyads. An example is given in Figure 28 below.

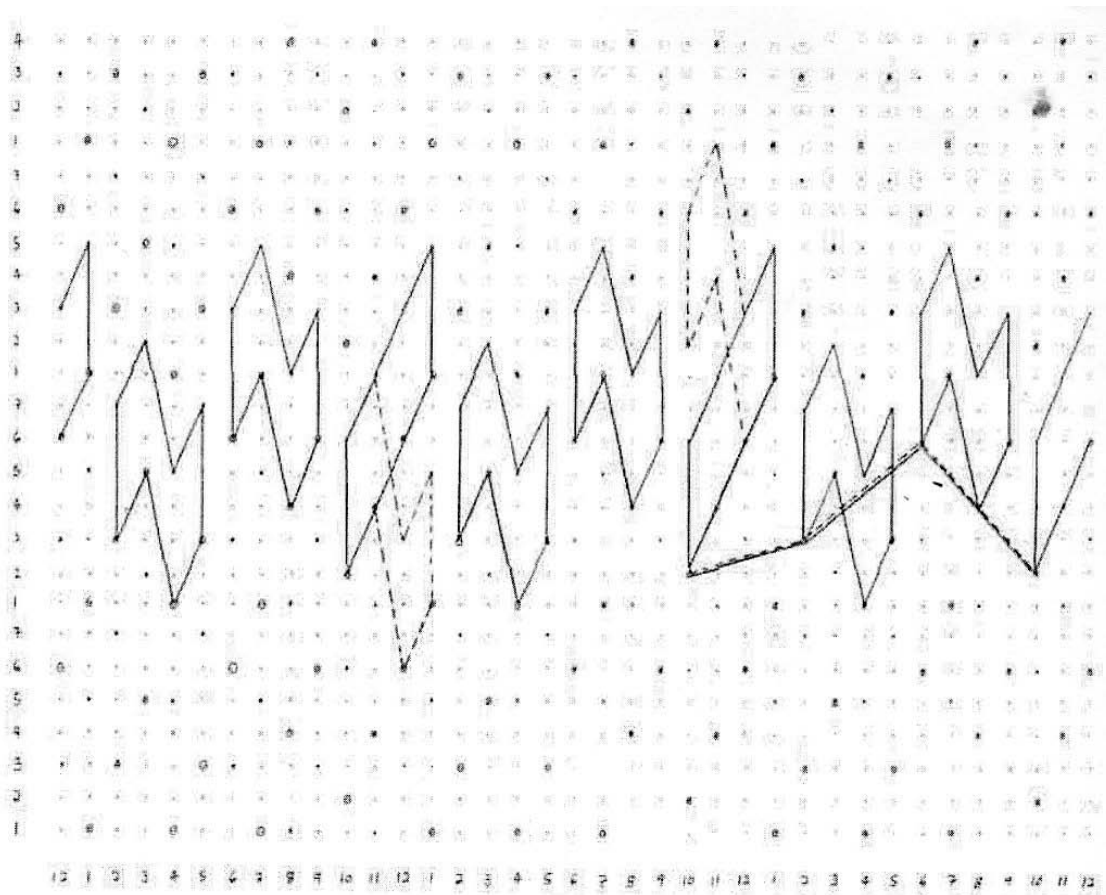


FIGURE 28. Shows harmonic progressions grouped in four-dyad units.  
(Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 70).

In the illustration above the dotted lines represent a “partial or altered inverted cancrizan<sup>6</sup> form of the shape”. The dotted lines are there to show the dyad that would be incorporated to complete the symmetry. In all these illustrations and explanations Scherzinger’s argument is that “the ambiguity about where to stop and where to start is a ‘formal property’ of the music’s harmonic shapes. He explains that the unpredictability in the building of the harmonic patterns urge listening to the harmonies “contrapuntally” as expanding two things at the same time intelligibly as versions of one another. At any given point, it rests with the performer or listener to choose which one or more of the harmonies to focus his/her listening on (Scherzinger 2001:75).

<sup>6</sup> A musical term for a kind of canon in which one line is reversed in time from the other (e.g FABACEAE<=> EAECABAF). (<http://www.reference.com/search?q=Cancrizans>, accessed 27/11/08).

Scherzinger emphasizes that at each point when he suggests a different harmonic grouping, this should and does not bind the listener to only focus on that particular patterning. One can travel (in listening) back and forth through the different patterning, say from two to three, four, five or six dyad groupings and can mix these groupings in many different ways. To illustrate this point, in figure 29 below, Scherzinger presents the harmonic progression of two identical four-dyad shapes one tone apart whose movement “pivots” on identical two-dyad shapes resulting in a “harmonic swaying” (Scherzinger 2001:75).

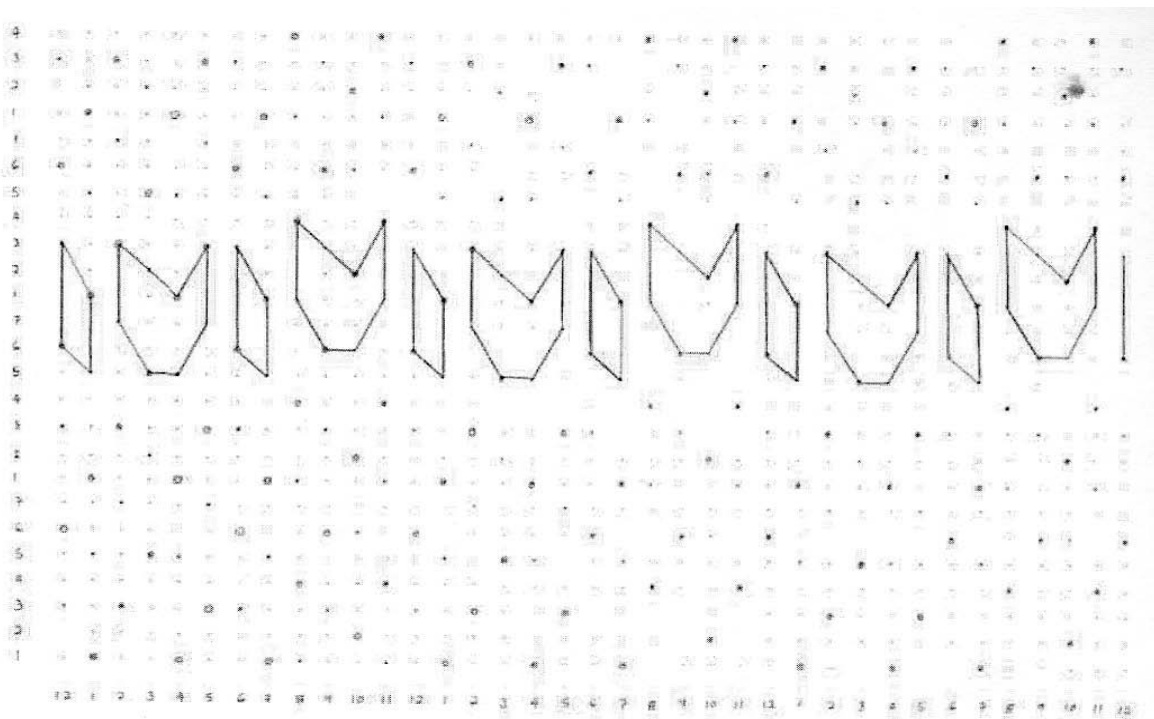


FIGURE 29 shows harmonic progressions grouped in two and four-dyad units. (Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 77).

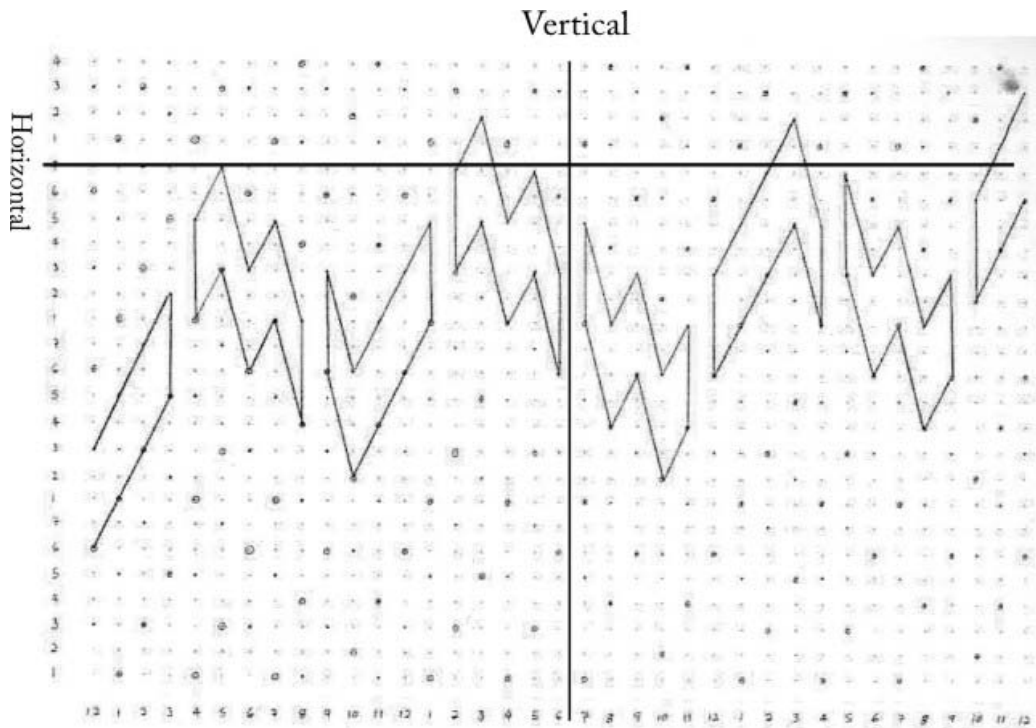


FIGURE 30. Shows harmonic progressions grouped in five-dyad-units.  
(Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 78).

With reference to the illustration shown above, Scherzinger observes that one peculiar feature of this particular grouping of five dyad-units is that “at a certain point, the shapes will reflect themselves around two mirrors”, and that as a result the shapes that follow thereafter are retrograde inversions of the shapes before the two mirrors. He points out the mirrors are situated horizontally at p.7 and vertically between t’s 6 and 7 near the center of the above example.

Figure 31 below is an example of shapes grouped in six dyads. Scherzinger explains that in the illustration below, t.2, t.4 and t.6 shown in solid lines are copies of one another whilst their continuations at t.8, t.10 and t.12 shown in dotted lines loosely resemble the former.

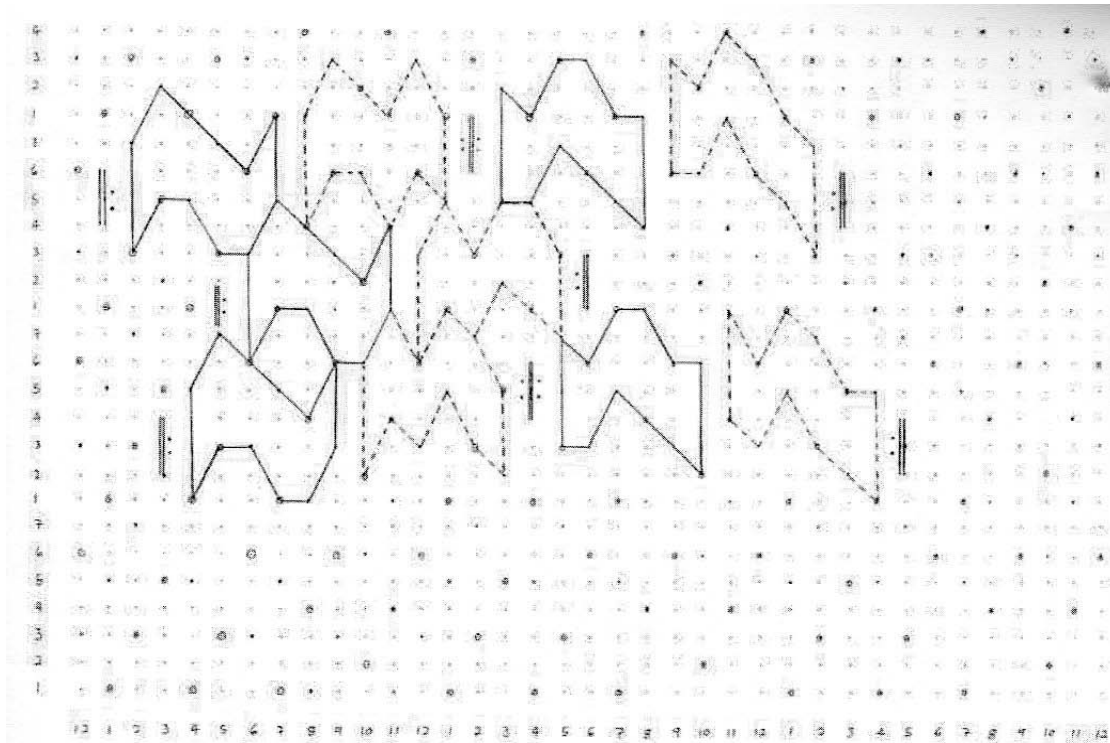


FIGURE 31. An illustration of shapes grouped in six dyads.  
(Reproduced from M. Scherzinger 2001: 81).

By presenting these various harmonic patterning of *Nyamaropa*, Scherzinger suggests different ways of hearing the music. The seemingly endless possible combinations the dyads can make reflect upon the complexity of *mbira* music. Andrew Tracey's (1970, 1989) analysis of *mbira* music aim to show how harmony works in *mbira* music. In the same vein, Scherzinger's analysis expands on Tracey's work and goes further to explore the "mathematical construction" of the song, analyzing how certain kinds of shapes that result from various dyad groupings reflect each other in near symmetries and total symmetries in *mbira* music harmony.

Scherzinger utilizes Andrew Tracey's earlier analysis of *mbira* music as his spring board to greater depths and heights of the mathematical aspect of the song *Nyamaropa*. He comments that the system of the *mbira* has a certain kind of depth which challenges some of the ways in which mathematics are perceived in the West. Scherzinger suggests a way of analyzing the *mbira* song *Nyamaropa* by investigating the mathematical properties of

the song in intriguing ways. For instance he explained to me that if the song *Nyamaropa* is played backwards at half the speed (i.e skipping every second harmonic movement) one gets the same music as you would if the song is played forward at twice the speed. Scherzinger thus says that this reflects the fact that the music is “so carefully constructed and so symmetrically balanced that it’s able to produce a very unique kind of aesthetic experience” Through his method, he attempts to present the “true dimensions” of the song (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

It is clear that Scherzinger’s approach not only works for the analysis of *Nyamaropa*, but that the same principles can be used to analyze all *mbira* music. However he warns that each song is absolutely unique and should be treated as an entity. Scherzinger says that the music is much more complex than any of the theories about it. This point by Scherzinger shows that the complexity of *mbira* music is amazing so much so that he does not regard his analysis (or any other analyses) of the music as absolute. Like Tracey, Berliner, Jones, Grupe and Brenner he thus admits that there still remains a lot to ‘find out’ about *mbira* music. Scherzinger personally acknowledges that his work on *Nyamaropa* would probably not have been possible without some of the suggestive observations and insights that Andrew Tracey made (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

### **Andrew Tracey’s Contribution to Ethnomusicology in South Africa**

Besides Tracey’s publications on *mbira* music, also of notable significance is his establishment of the annual Symposia on Ethnomusicology in 1980. The Ethnomusicology Symposia prevailed until 2005. In 2005 it was merged with the Southern African Musicological Society to form a new body the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM). One of the Scholars I consulted to establish the significance of the Ethnomusicology Symposia is the musicologist Professor Christopher Ballantine who is based in the Music Department at the University of KwaZulu Natal (South Africa) and is well known for his publications on South African Popular music. Ballantine says that he closely collaborated with Tracey in the founding of the Ethnomusicology Symposia in the 1980s and acknowledges that Tracey’s contribution

was enormous. At this time Ballantine had just set up the first ethnomusicology degree programme at a South African university, and remarks that, “in the dark night of apartheid musical scholarship, the Symposium was a crucial link to a larger world” (C. Ballantine- email interview, 12/06/08).

Ballantine explains that during the apartheid era there was no other platform in Southern Africa for presentation and discussion of ethnomusicological research. Thus Tracey’s ethnomusicology Symposia offered that opportunity. He further explains that, setting up the Ethnomusicology Symposia was a pioneering move, “launching and sustaining the Symposia during those years (apartheid era) was a bold, difficult and immensely important initiative” (C. Ballantine-email interview, 12/06/08). The Symposia took an anti-apartheid stance in its conduct. It welcomed diverse music scholarship and gave the scholars and students alike the opportunity to converge, learn and exchange ideas.

Ballantine points out that race ideology was not entertained and people met on the basis of equality and mutual respect. Theory (the papers presented) merged with practice through the live-music jamborees and in-conference performances which became a permanent feature that was enjoyed by the participants. He also acknowledges Tracey’s personal qualities which attributed an atmosphere of warmth and humanity to prevail at all times. Ballantine consistently attended and actively participated in the Symposia throughout its existence.

Another notable achievement that resulted from the Symposia was, at Tracey’s initiative, the publishing by ILAM of the Symposium papers. Ballantine (email interview, 12/06/08), comments that, in spite of the uneven quality of the papers, they are important and a very accessible record which shows the ethnomusicological research that was undertaken in South Africa during those years. The published Symposium papers have been widely cited and consulted. The Symposiums were not only held at ILAM, they were hosted by various South African Universities such as the Universities of Venda, Zululand, Natal and Cape Town. They were also held in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Professor Christine Lucia, a musicologist and colleague of Andrew Tracey whom I consulted in an email interview is former Chair of Music at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand. She has published on female musicians, Schumann's Chamber music, multicultural education and South African music. She has performed widely as an accompanist. Lucia has edited the book *The World of South African Music: A Reader* (2005) and is editor of the academic journal SAMUS: South African Music Studies. She says that Andrew Tracey's publications were significant to her own research in the general sense of leading her towards many discoveries about African music, making her feel welcome to contribute ideas in the Ethnomusicology Symposia she attended, and enabling her to expose Tracey's ideas to her students. Lucia remarks that she finds the pulse notation transcription method used by Tracey to be helpful and logical for *mbira* music, although not as easy to read 'at a glance' as she finds conventional staff notation, because of her upbringing (C. Lucia-email interview, 17/12/07).

#### **Author's View on Tracey's "Values in African Music"**

I am most intrigued by Andrew Tracey's description of African music in his article "Values in African Music" (1994) for it accurately resonates with my own experience with Shona traditional music not only as an African, but as a Shona *mbira* player myself. Tracey's article aims to show that theory and philosophy exist in African Music as much as does in all musics. He explains the importance of why in African music performance things are done precisely in the manner they are done. Tracey explains the significance of group participation, and elaborates on how music in African societies is a communal affair. He explores other elements such as cooperation and co-ordination, the energy needed for performance, dancing to the music, accuracy in the playing of instruments or in singing etc.

Tracey also explains why the idea of contrast or difference in performance is important, how for instance the *kushaura* and *kutsinhira* in *mbira* playing or the lead and response in singing creates so many 'things' happening at once, but that each is ultimately coordinated into one whole. Tracey ends by discussing repetition, which is a common element in the form of African music. He points out that most 'outsiders' especially

Westerners in particular find repetition in African music frustrating. Tracey comments that the fact is that it simply exists and does not need to be explained in anybody else's terms and then he explains how it enhances appreciation.

Tracey successfully shows how in the African context people make music together and how the music becomes a unifying force. In my view, the manner in which Tracey justifies the way things are done in African music performance shows that he has truly developed a deep understanding of the music as a result of his many years of engaging with the music. He rightly says that, "...most importantly music (African) is learnt by doing it rather than by talking about it or analyzing it. This shows the difference between African and Western music learning approaches" (Tracey 1994: 273).

In addition to his scholarly contribution to the knowledge of *mbira* music, Tracey also made an outstanding contribution to the ethnomusicology fraternity through the Symposia on Ethnomusicology which he founded and successfully organized from 1980 until 2005 when it was merged with the Southern African Musicological Society to form a new body, the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM). As explained by Tracey's close colleague Christopher Ballantine, during the apartheid era there was no other platform in South Africa for presentation and discussion of ethnomusicological research, the Symposia offered this opportunity. Tracey published the Symposium Papers by the International Library of African Music, which have been widely cited and consulted by scholars.

### **Author's Personal Experiences with *Mbira* Music**

As someone who grew up with the music and as a *mbira* player myself, I now relate my own experiences with *mbira* music in relation to the deliberations by Tracey and other scholars cited in this thesis. As pointed out by Agawu (2003: 46) it is important in ethnomusicological studies that at some stage scholars assume an "autobiographical or self-reflexive turn" to reflect on their personal experiences with the subject of study. In this instance I am also an insider to the culture in which *mbira* music is played, thus I believe relating my experiences contribute an important part to the study.

I grew up participating actively in *mapira* (sing. *bira*) ceremonies which my father hosted at our home and also attended *mapira* in our neighbourhood. Each time when *mbira* were played, the music thrilled me greatly, so much so that as I danced to and enjoyed the music I made a promise to myself that I should be able to produce this fascinating sound for myself when I need to hear it, and not to wait for the next *bira* to enjoy the music. In other words, experiencing the music made me want to learn how to play *mbira*. This did not happen immediately. It was only when I enrolled for my teacher education course at Nyadire Teachers' College (Mutoko, Zimbabwe) in 1995 that I began learning to play the *karimba*.

Being taught songs on *karimba*, as I observed the teacher playing and listened to the melody; it just happened naturally that I would break the song into two equal parts, and then practice each part separately before joining the two again. Similarly, Tracey's description of *karimba* music is that it has a six-chord sequence in a 24 pulse cycle divided into two phrases. However, when I learnt the songs I did not think in terms of chords or the length of each phrase in terms of how many pulses it had. Because I memorized the melody I knew how long it took to play it. I always heard the first phrase as 'calling' and the second phrase as 'responding'.

I noticed that with most *karimba* songs the 'call' and 'response' phrases start in the same way and then at a certain point the 'response' phrase changes to a 'lower voice'. In most cases the 'call' has the upper 'voice', and the 'response' is the lower 'voice'. This is what Tracey describes as an oscillation between the tone centre, to the note above, back to the tone centre then to the third below. Tracey's description agrees with mine except Tracey's gives a measurement of how high or how low the 'voice' fluctuates i.e a third below. As I learned the *karimba* I worked my way through the songs by memorizing the melodies and trying to reproduce them as I played. My lecturer and *karimba* teacher Marumo Ncube, did not use any notation system for me to refer to, and I did not see the need for it.

When I listen to *mbira* music I do not necessarily hear the music in terms of chord progressions, but in terms of the conversation that is going on between the two or more voices (both within a single melody and among several melodies-i.e the *kushaura* and *kutsinhira* parts). I started learning *mbira dzavadzimu* in 2001 when I enrolled for the National Certificate in Music at the Zimbabwe College of Music in Harare (Zimbabwe). My father was very pleased when I started learning *mbira dzavadzimu*. He taught me some songs and I learnt from my *mbira dzavadzimu* teacher at the College of Music the late Pepukai Mudzingwa. I soon discovered that as I learnt *mbira dzavadzimu* I needed to break down the songs into four parts or phrases for practice. Mudzingwa would notate each song for us and we could follow the notation without difficulty. Now that the songs were longer (12-chord sequence in a 48 pulse cycle), I found the notation very helpful when my memory would have failed me in remembering the melody.

When I went home my father would teach me in *mbira dzavadzimu* in the same way that I was taught *karimba* i.e without use of any notation. I would just observe him play and aim to reproduce the melody he played. When I played a wrong note or could not remember which note (s) to play he would hum or sing the note (s) so that I could locate it on the keys. This is all about knowing the sounds or voices of the different notes of the *mbira*, which in English are called pitches. Interestingly, when a song seemed challenging I would ask him to play slowly and/or play the right and left hand separately, and then notate the song in the same way as Mudzingwa's for later reference when practicing. Although most of the songs on *mbira dzavadzimu* can be partitioned into four phrases, there are a few which have a different 'shape' and feel such that they are best presented in either more than four phrases or less than four phrases.

Tracey's analysis yielded three common 'standards' of chord progression or harmonic movement in *mbira dzavadzim*, that have a four phrase structure. As he correctly points out, there are some songs which do not fit in any of the three common 'standards'. This documentation by Tracey applies to the description I gave above, of some songs which fall in less than four phrases and a shorter cycle, and others with more than four phrases and have a much longer cycle.

The ‘kaleidophony’ of *mbira* music as described by Andrew Tracey or the ‘elusive’ nature of *mbira* music in Berliner’s description shows the complexity of the music. It never ceases to amaze me and other *mbira* players and listeners how one can always find new ‘things’ to listen to in the same age old *mbira* songs that are played time and again. I think this can be attributed to the combination of the three registers or ‘voices’ on the *mbira*. Each ‘voice’ has its own melody and appeals differently to the mind or ear of the listener and/or player.

When I listen to *mbira* music, I initially identify the various melodies in relation to the three registers (high, middle and low). The first category is that of the melody or parts of the melody that is produced by the notes in the top and bottom left manuals of the *mbira*. In my view, collectively these notes ‘carry’ or contains the essence of the song. Secondly the melody(ies) produced by the high pitched right hand notes (high register), I would describe as providing a tingling sensation to the soul or to the very essence of one’s being. The low register/bass notes ground or steady (*kutsigisa*) the music. The resulting effect of these voices coupled with what the left and right hand produce directly creates a myriad of melodies. As a result when listening to *mbira* music, one is constantly shifting attention from one melody or conversation to the other. So when one follows closely these conversations one ‘gets carried away’ and hence is elevated into a different space beyond the usual or normal, a space conducive for meditation, for the spiritual aura of *mbira* music never fails to register itself.

The different rhythmic patterns and melodies of *mbira* music are produced in the same way as what Kubik (1962: 33) describes as the “inherent rhythms” that are found in east and central African instrumental music, specifically *likembe*, *zither*, *lyre* and *xylophone*. More so, Kubik points out that in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Andrew Tracey’s research has also shown the prevalence of inherent rhythms in *mbira* music. He likens African instrumental compositions to picture puzzles that can be seen in more than one way and explains that there is no single way of perceiving the music (42). Kubik elaborates that the emergent melodies, each with its particular inherent rhythm, are a result of the fact that “from moment to moment the notes may form different groups [in

the auditor's perception], because they can be associated in more than one direction” (ibid.). In other words, each newly emerging melody adds to the complexity of the sound and creates a new image in the ‘kaleidoscope’ that both Tracey uses to characterize *mbira* music’s sound. I find Kubik’s observations to be accurate because I have personally experienced these phenomena both as a listener and performer of *mbira* music.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusions

Andrew Tracey's passion for African music coupled with the influence from his father Hugh Tracey prompted him to embark on a life-long mission of research in African music. Hugh Tracey's contribution to research in African music is unquestioned. His extensive research in and recording of music of sub-Saharan Africa led him to establish the International Library of African Music (ILAM) in 1954. His objectives in the establishment of ILAM encompassed documentation and preservation of recordings, research, publication, education and community outreach regarding African music (<http://ilam.ru.ac.za/page.php?pID=2>).

Although Hugh Tracey was not trained as an anthropologist or musicologist, he felt it was necessary to collect the music before it got lost. According to D. Thram (2004: 2), "Tracey sincerely feared that the therapeutic ways music-making, through group expression functioned to expiate societal grievances and maintain cohesion within communities was in danger of being lost to forces of acculturation". Percival Kirby did the same type of research with indigenous musical instruments of South Africa hence his book *The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa* (1953).

In many respects, Andrew Tracey joined his father in this endeavor when he followed him as Director of the International Library of African Music in 1978. It has been the intention of this thesis to show how his contribution to research in African music, specifically to structure and form of lamellophone music of southern Africa, is outstanding.

#### **Significance of Tracey's Research**

Whilst Andrew Tracey conducted research on *mbira*, *timbila* and *nyanga* panpipe music, the focus of this thesis has been his research on *mbira* music. This focus was chosen because I wish to show that his research on this subject contributed greatly to the existing body of knowledge on *mbira* music. In his research on African music, Andrew Tracey

chose a path less trodden by ethnomusicologists. As reflected in his publications, with the exception of his article “Values in African Music”, his interest and focus was undoubtedly on the technical aspect of the music he studied, rather than on its social function, although this had come to be the approach prominent in ethnomusicology after the seminal book *The Anthropology of Music* was published by Alan P. Merriam in 1964.

As revealed in Chapter Five, much of the research, theorizing, and publications and of the selected scholars - Gerhard Kubik (1988; 1994), Klaus-Peter Brenner (1997), Gerd Grupe (1998, 2004), and Martin Scherzinger (2001) and the two compositions of Kevin Volans (1980, 1982) - discussed in this thesis would not have been possible without Andrew Tracey’s research and findings on *mbira* music or without his very accurate transcriptions which most of them used as their starting point.

Composer Kevin Volans’ two pieces “*Mbira*” and “*White Man Sleeps*” on his CD, *Cover Him with Grass: In Memoriam Bruce Chatwin* (1990), are re-arrangements of Andrew Tracey’s *mbira* (1970) and *nyanga* (1971) panpipe music transcriptions. Literally speaking, Volans’ compositions could not have existed if it were not for Tracey’s transcriptions. The transcriptions form the basis of the compositions.

Kubik’s theory (Chapter 5: p56-64), in which he argues about the possibility of the Nsenga/Shona harmonic patterns having their origins in the San !Kung’ bow of south eastern Angola, shows the significant role of Tracey’s research findings in that, to put forth his argument Kubik creates a model in which he compares the San !Kung bow, to the Nsenga “Harmonic Cliché” by A.M Jones (1959) and the Shona *mbira* music “harmonic particle” by Andrew Tracey (1970, 1989). Kubik’s theory has more credence and is actually based on the prior research and analysis of Jones and Tracey.

The question is: Were there any other research findings by other ethnomusicologists that Kubik could have used in place of Tracey’s theory of the “harmonic particle”? It was only Tracey’s early and elaborate analysis of Shona music that was available to Kubik when he conducted his research and analysis and came to the conclusion that Shona

harmonic patterns possibly have their origins in the San !Kung bow. All the other analyses of Shona music by scholars such as Grupe, Brenner and Scherzinger came several decades later and were still then based on Tracey's theory. So it was essential for Kubik and the scholars who followed him to have had Tracey's analysis at their disposal. Without Tracey's research and analysis it would have been impossible for Kubik to make an argument on the harmonic progressions of Shona music and their relationship with the San !Kung bow. Clearly, Kubik utilized Tracey's analysis in order to construct his theory. In what follows I show how Brenner, Grupe and Scherzinger also ground their findings in Tracey's analysis and theory, 'the system of the *mbira*'.

Brenner (1997), like Kubik (1988, 1994), makes the proposition that Shona musical (*mbira*) harmony has its origins in bow music. This time the object of comparison to Shona *mbira* harmony is the Shona *Chipendani* mouth bow. Brenner's hypothesis is only possible because he uses Andrew Tracey's (1970, 1989) analysis of 'the system of the *mbira*' in which Tracey presents the 6- chord sequence of the *karimba* with a 24 pulse cycle, and the 12-chord sequence of the *mbira dzavadzimu*, *matepe*, *njari* and, *nyonga-nyonga* with a 48 pulse cycle.

It is then possible for Brenner, in his ethno-mathematical approach, to make the mathematical argument that possibly two versions of the six step progressions on two *zvipedani* (plural for *chipendani*), tuned a fourth apart could have led to the discovery of the twelve-step standard-progression found in *karimba* music. He also speculates that this development may have later evolved into the heptatonic (seven notes) tuning-plan on *mbira dzavadzimu*, *matepe*, *njari* and, *nyonga-nyonga*. Thus Brenner's hypothesis is largely grounded in Tracey's 'the system of the *mbira*'.

Both Kubik and Brenner's theories pursue the idea that Shona music's harmonic progression might have its origins in the musical bows (!Kung bow - Kubik and *chipendani* bow - Brenner). Although their theories are quite compelling, I find their idea of an 'evolutional' process in the development of *mbira* music from bow harmonics not fully convincing. Although it is usually the norm to move from simple to complex, in my

opinion, the fact that *mbira* music is more complex than bow music does not necessarily mean that it emanated directly from the bow. There is every possibility that *mbira* music has always had an autonomous life of its own. In the case of Kubik's !Kung bow of the San, from my knowledge gained from my father and from my Shona history studies in high school about the historical relationship of the Shona and the San, they had very little contact and very different cultural practices. This makes the connection drawn by Kubik highly speculative.

Brenner's (1997) and Scherzinger's (2001) work have a lot in common. They both ground their analysis in Tracey's theory and transcriptions as they analyze the mathematical properties of the music. Their ultimate aim is to wrest not only Shona (*mbira*) music, but the music of Africa from the social context perspective it has most often been viewed in and show that this music also has an autonomous existence which is in no way inferior to Western music. Scherzinger uses the Shona *mbira* music harmonic progression and transcriptions of the Shona *mbira* song *Nyamaropa* presented by Tracey (1970, 1989) to embark on an analytical journey which seeks to illustrate the numerous different ways of hearing *Nyamaropa*.

Gerd Grupe acknowledges Andrew Tracey (1970a, b, 1989) as the pioneer in harmonic analysis of *mbira* music, particularly with his "standard Shona chord sequence" on which many *mbira* songs are based. Grupe and Scherzinger share the sentiment that - since Andrew Tracey's (1970, 1989) seminal articles on the analysis of *mbira* music - this subject has not been pursued with the gusto that it deserves. Grupe and Scherzinger believe that the analysis of the harmonic structure of *mbira* music is not yet exhausted despite the various published technical analyses of *mbira* music by Grupe, Scherzinger, Kubik and Brenner that I've examined in this thesis, which all emanate from Andrew Tracey's work (Grupe 1998, 2004; Scherzinger 2001). I agree that there is still more to unravel about the harmonic structure of *mbira* music, especially in relation to its 'kaleidophonic' nature (Tracey 1989) which is attributed to the "interlocking rhythms" and the "resultant" or "emergent melodies" both of which were explored by Kubik in his analysis of Ugandan Amadinda xylophone music (1962).

Grupe's (2004) analysis of Andrew Tracey's harmonic progressions attempts to find answers to further questions that arise from the nature of *mbira* music. Without Tracey's groundwork in *mbira* music analysis, Grupe would not have the basis with which to form his argument. Taking on from what Tracey terms the "kaleidophonic" nature of *mbira* music, Grupe explores this "harmonic ambiguity" of *mbira* music and deduces from his analysis that the harmonic ambiguity is a very important structural feature of the music (Chapter 5, pp. 69-70).

Still, in the light of the "kaleidophonic" nature of *mbira* music, Scherzinger moves a step further from Grupe's "harmonic ambiguity" to investigate the cause of the "harmonic mirroring" that occurs in the harmonic progression of *mbira* music. Using a more mathematical approach, Scherzinger discovers that the way the chord progressions move in *mbira* music is such that each group of dyads in a particular phrase or measure is always similar to or repeated in another phrase somewhere in the progression thereby resulting in harmonic mirroring. Scherzinger thinks that it is this mirroring which results in the possibility for *mbira* songs to have more than one starting point. I agree with Scherzinger, but think this multiple starting point phenomenon is also enabled and enhanced by the cyclical nature of the music, because each harmonic progression appears in the cycle in relationship to the chosen starting point.

Although *The Soul of Mbira* (1978) is Paul Berliner's independent work and is not based on Andrew Tracey's publications, Berliner acknowledges the significance of Tracey's pioneering work on *mbira* music and his findings are similar to Tracey's. For instance, what Tracey (1989) terms the 'kaleidophony' of *mbira* music, Berliner (1978) describes it as the 'elusive' nature of *mbira* music. Berliner further explains that *mbira* songs do not have a fixed musical structure, for new phrases appear in the music as one listens to the 'inner parts of the piece'. Listening for these evolving 'inner parts' is what Tracey terms critical/attentive listening. I have a great appreciation of the work done by Andrew Tracey and Paul Berliner because their publications on *mbira* music served to expose it to the outside world. Berliner's *Soul of Mbira* contextualized the music in depth; Tracey's publications presented an in-depth analysis of its form and structure. Other scholars have

followed, but Tracey's research provided the earliest comprehensive documentation on the technicalities of mbira music. I recall Andrew Tracey's frequent visits to our home as he learnt to play *mbira* from my father, but it is only now after going through all his work that I fully understand what his mission was.

That Berliner's findings are similar to Tracey's is highlighted here to show that Tracey's earlier findings have remained true and accurate and are reflected in the work of subsequent scholars. On that note, Grupe comments that very little progress has been achieved by subsequent scholars when comparing their findings to Tracey's analyses. He says that only new insights that have emerged are from Gerhard Kubik (1988) and more recently Brenner (1997), who both attempt to trace and link the Shona chord sequence as having its roots in the musical bow (2004: 2).

All the interviewed scholars highly commend Tracey's findings in his 1972 article "*The Original African Mbira?*"- Tracey's attempt to trace the possibility of a prototype *mbira* for all the *mbiras* of the lower Zambezi valley covering Zimbabwe, Mozambique and stretching into South Africa. It is clear that this was ground-breaking analysis. Tracey has been praised for the insights he brought, the speculative thinking he did on *mbira* music, and how he approached it as equally complex and of equal value to Western music. As Scherzinger remarked, this shows that Tracey has "a deep trust and respect for the music" (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08). Scherzinger comments that ethnomusicologists and anthropologists alike are hesitant to speculate for they always want to ground their facts in something already established or documented by their predecessors especially when it is not their own music. Thus, as Scherzinger observed, against all odds Tracey ventured into *mbira* music analysis armed with the view and trust that it was "an intellectual tradition, a system of reasoning which was the match of any of the highest mathematical forms found in the West" (M. Scherzinger-Interview, 12/11/08).

As a *mbira* player myself, coupled with my participation in *mapira* ceremonies for the ancestral spirits, I already had personally experienced what Tracey (1989) examines in relation to form and structure of mbira music and what Berliner (1978) presents in

relation to the cultural context of mbira performance. However, reading their work gave me knowledge of how the music is described in terms other than that of my indigeneous Shona language, and how this was necessary in order for the instrument and its function in my society to be understood by the outside world.

Since undertaking the research for this thesis, I have found Tracey's theory to be an added advantage in my teaching of *mbira* in terms of how I explain the form and harmonic structure of *mbira* music to my students. I think that Tracey's theory and all his publications on *mbira* music provide very useful material for teaching and learning of *mbira* music by individuals in educational institutions such as schools and universities in southern Africa and beyond. This is witnessed by the popularity of learning to perform *mbira* by Westerners and Asians who either come to Zimbabwe to learn, or learn from Zimbabweans or others who have learned the instrument well enough to teach it who live in the diaspora e.g London, New York and the West Coast of the USA.

It is my opinion that, with regard to *mbira* or any other African music, an insider listening to the music largely does not hear it in the same manner the theories about it based on Western musical concepts debate. Insiders do not hear the music in terms of Western concepts of form in music, but rather understand it in his/her own way which is linked to his/her culturally-based vocabulary of the music. For myself as a Shona musician and mbira teacher, this culturally-based vocabulary rests on hearing the interplay or 'conversation' of voices within each individual song as it unfolds in performance. The theories of *mbira* music generated by analysis by Western scholars are important in giving a better understanding of the music, more especially to outsiders. These theories also enable insiders, such as myself, to know how people from other cultures engage with their music. Insiders are often surprised to find that their own music has spawned a fully developed theory such as Andrew Tracey's, and analysis of how it functions in society. In general most insiders do not enjoy the benefit of education in Western music theory or the methods used by scholars to analyze culture. They understand the music in their own terms, not in Western terms.

This research has shown that Andrew Tracey's pioneering work in *mbira* music analysis was a significant contribution to ethnomusicology/musicology. His research findings formed the basis of many subsequent *mbira* music scholars' work. The depth and breadth of these subsequent scholars' work which emanated from Tracey's earlier research is of notable value, as shown in the material presented in Chapter Five. Andrew Tracey largely succeeded in his mission to unravel and demonstrate the true nature of *mbira* music's form and structure to the world.

Finally, reflecting on the work of Andrew Tracey plus that of Brenner, Scherzinger, and Grupe, it is clear that these scholars have a strong will to see African music recognized in educational institutions and want it to be given a platform to contribute on an equal footing with Western music in musicological debates on an international level. I find it intriguing that this proposal about education in African music has been made in the discussions about *mbira* music. I have no doubt that it is the complexity of the nature of *mbira* music which prompts them to argue that analysis of African music should be viewed no differently from the analysis Western music enjoys. This corresponds to Agawu's (2003: 174) explanation that theories in African music embrace "the idea of an autonomous musical object" and rather dwell on the similarities and not the differences between African and Western music.

The analyses of *mbira* music by the various scholars interviewed has made me realize the extent to which scholars have battled to try and understand the music. In addition, their theories and analyses broadened my appreciation of the music of my culture by giving me knowledge of the music in the vocabulary of Western music analysis. The realization that the outsiders are so keen to learn more about my heritage makes it more interesting. In my opinion and as reflected in the theories on *mbira* music discussed here, it is clear that the music has an autonomous life of its own. The so nuanced and so compelling harmonic structure of *mbira* music is perhaps the reason for the popularity it increasingly enjoys throughout the world.

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## ADDENDUM

This addendum is as a result of my correspondence with composer Kevin Volans and James Rushton who is the Managing Director of Chester Music Ltd in London, England. Chester Music Ltd is the owner of copyright of Kevin Volans' work. The information below was received after final submission of the thesis.

In Chapters Five and Six (pages 55 and 99 respectively), I mention that Kevin Volans' two pieces "*White Man Sleeps*" and "*Mbira*" (#4 and #2 on thesis CD respectively) would not have existed if it were not for Andrew Tracey's transcriptions which form the basis of these two compositions. However, Rushton in consultation with Volans (J. Rushton-email correspondence, 06/10/09) argues that the more accurate statement would be to say that these compositions would not have existed *in this form* if it were not for Andrew Tracey's transcriptions. He explains that for instance, each of the two versions of "*White Man Sleeps*" has a total of six movements, two of which refer to Andrew Tracey's transcriptions. He says that if the Tracey transcriptions had not been available, a composer as resourceful as Volans would have composed some other material for these two movements. According to Rushton, the harpsichords are not tuned to the average *mbira dzavadzimu* tuning as stated on page 55, but rather "a modification of this that is more suited to the sound of the harpsichords". Kevin Volans also acknowledges that he first came to know about mbira music through Paul Berliner's recording *The Soul of Mbira*. According to Volans (K. Volans-email correspondence, 02/07/09), he withdrew the piece *Mbira* from copyright circa 1992 as a result of his dispute with Tracey so it is no longer accurate to refer to it as Volans' composition.

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