

The Adaptation of Zimbabwean *Mbira Dzavadzimu* Music, from Traditional to Modern Popular Band Format; the Case of Thomas Mapfumo

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Abstract

The focus of this chapter is to discuss Thomas Mapfumo's adaptation of *mbira dzavadzimu* music from a traditional performance setting onto the modern popular music band format. Data presented in this chapter was derived from an analysis of purposively selected music of Thomas Mapfumo, interviews of *chimurenga* music artists, cultural bearers and document analysis. Findings revealed that the adaptation of mbira music onto modern popular music (pop) band format involved the use of instruments such as the guitar, keyboard, brass and modern Western pop drums sets to meet the demands of a new audience setting. Thomas Mapfumo's adaptations were basically in two forms; the mirror and the partial adaptations. In the mirror adaptation, the artist fuses the mbira with western instruments in such a way that the music is a reflection of the original one. This is achieved by maintaining its melody, general characteristics, form and structure. In partial adaptations, the artist takes a part or a component of a particular mbira tune, adjust and modify it to suit the contemporary pop music band format. He rearranges the tune, effecting some changes on the traditional form and structure of the music to give it a new feeling.