THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL DEATH RITUALS AND SOCIAL MEMORY IN PEACEBUILDING IN MUTARE RURAL DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE

BY

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Abstract

This study focuses on the significance of traditional death rituals and social memory in peacebuilding processes between the living and dead and it attempts to discover the relationship between traditional death rituals, social memory and peace building in the lives of the Shona people in Mutare Rural District, Zimbabwe. A phenomenological approach was adopted because the study sought to tap people's descriptions of their life experiences, beliefs, perceptions and their understanding of death rituals and social memory. A total of thirty-seven out of the purposively selected forty respondents for semi-structured interviews informed this study. This sample comprised of ordinary men and women, traditional leaders, leaders and members of the African Initiated Churches. Interviews revealed that a series of traditional death rituals and social memory are practiced to either prevent potential conflict or build sustainable peace between the living and the dead. This study concluded that death rituals and social memory which are characterized by negotiation for justice and equality, reconciliation with ancestors and the role of identity in transforming relationships have a significant role on peace building.

Key words: Ritual, Social memory, Peacebuilding

Declaration

I, Deliah Nyaradzo Jeranyama declare that the work presented here is as a result of my efforts except where acknowledged. I also declare that this work has never been submitted as a requirement for any degree at any university.

Student…………………………   Date……………………….

Supervisor…………………………..   Date………………………..

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The Shona say *kusatenda huroyi* (ungratefulness is equivalent to witchcraft). I therefore take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the headmen and village heads of Chishakwe, Mwaamba, Chikwanha and Mwandiambira in Mutare Rural District for granting their permission to interview their people in their land. My gratitude is also forwarded towards the villagers for their welcome and cooperation during the period of data collection. I would also want to extend my acknowledgement of the support I received from my supervisor, Professor Pamela Machakanja who guided me through all the stages of writing this dissertation. I recognize the time she gave me and all the academic literature she provided.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents, Torayi and Morgan Jeranyama. This is for you.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to describe death rituals and ways of creating social memory that are performed in Mutare Rural District and examine their significance in peacebuilding and prevention of potential conflict between the living and the dead. This chapter presents a background to the study, the statement of the problem and significance of the study. Research objectives and questions that guided the study are also highlighted. These are followed by study limitations which the researcher managed to address and delimitations which determined the scope of the research study. Other issues highlighted before the conclusion of this chapter include ethical considerations, operational definition of terms and the general structure of the whole study.

1.1 Background to the Study

In the Shona culture, peace or conflict between the living and the dead is always pending at every stage of life beginning at birth through to marriage, death and the after life. This implies that peace or conflict between the visible and the invisible worlds is first established at conception of a child in the mother's womb. This is evidenced by the way pregnancy is celebrated as a blessing from *Musikavanhu* (The Creator of human beings) through the ancestors as well as a sign of harmony between the spiritual beings (ancestors) and the physical beings. In that respect, failure to conceive is socially

interpreted as a manifestation of a conflict between the living and the ancestors thus the Shona words, *vadzimu vakasunga mbereko* (the family spirits have forsaken us) which points to the ancestors as the cause. Further, the act of presenting gifts for a newly born baby communicates acceptance of the new member from the natural into the social world, thus an establishment of peace between this new member and those already established in the social order.

The belief of the Shona people of Zimbabwe that ancestors are a channel of communication is founded in the belief that God who is the principle Creator is omnipotent and too powerful to directly converse with the living. As such, they do not turn to Him as they believe that He is too far removed from them. This is where different kinds of spirits are consulted and act as mediators between the people and God, depending on the matter to be addressed. These spirits include *vadzimu* (family spirits) who protect and sustain the family lineage and the *mhondoro* (community spirits) which are consulted on all matters that affect the community as a whole. Family spirits are consulted when the issue at hand concerns a family and its extended members while community spirits do not address family issues. Important to note is that the manifestation of good spirits is not confined within traditional religion as it is believed that anyone whom a family spirit operates through can still serve in a church, however, as either a prophet or prophetess. As such, they are equally important to family and society.

However, it is also important to note that there also exists bad spirits such as *ngozi* (revenging or angered spirits) and *varoyi* (witches) and *mashavi* (wandering spirits). All these spirits originate from the death of people and one factor that determines the type of spirit that results after the death of an individual is the cause of the death and the nature of burial process. For instance, the spirit of a murdered spirit transforms into an angered spirits that seeks justice and restitution from the relatives of the murderer. While the habits of a person also determine the kind of spirit that emerges after death, stealing, killing, smoking or any other habit that are condemned by society are often believed to manifest in the form of wandering spirits, thus, the prefixed behavior such as *shavi rekuba* (bad spirit of stealing).

In addition, it is also at that same stage that social memories begin to be created thus the Shona people often recollect socially memorable events and hand them down. For instance, people say, "*muchimuona kuita chimhandara kudai akatambudza mai vake achiri mudumbu uyu*" (as you see this young lady grown up like this, she gave her mother problems whilst in the womb). This further shows how social memories are elastically immersed in life processes.

Through death an individual leaves the physical world in which they are governed by social norms and values and enters into the natural world which is socially construed within most Shona cultures. In addition, death presents a possible conflict between the

living and the dead individual in that the role to pave a way as well as formally present and introduce the spirit of the dead to the spiritual community of the ancestors is played by the living. This act of presenting the spirit of the dead is commonly known as *kusuma mufi* (introducing the dead to those who died before him/her). This possible conflict between the dead and the living is also presented because it is a shared conception among the Shona that it is the role of the living to facilitate the transition of the dead individual into the realm of the ancestors, thus, this conflict can be prevented by means of traditional practices which can be in the form of rituals. Some of the rituals also contribute to the stretching of social memories that are presumed to facilitate the transition process before peaceful relations can be established.

Social memory created through the advancement of technology in the twenty first century is not new to the Shona people. The style of creating and keeping social memory of the dead is gradually transforming from simple narrative autobiographies and socially interpreted physical structures to videos, photographs, books and clothes, particularly T-shirts that have faces of the dead printed on the them which have dominated this world of technology.

However, traditionally the creation and handing down of social memory was limited to narrative autobiographies and social-physical structures such as gravesites and heroes acres. Additionally, these death rituals and social memory are closely knitted to the

Shona conceptualization of identity, belonging and reconciliation where an individual is socially identified with his or her ancestors so much that some people give instructions to be buried closer to their forefathers before they die. More often, the Shona people say, "*kana ndafa ndinoda kuchengetwa kumusha kune vamwe*" (when I die I would like to be buried in the rural area where my people are) with others even saying, "*kwakachererwa rukuvhute rwangu*" (where my umbilical code was buried-as per Shona tradition). This instruction means that one would be choosing to be buried in his or her area of origin where their forefathers also lie.

Therefore, it is against this given background that this study explored death rituals and means of creating social memory that are observed by people in Mutare Rural District in Zimbabwe and how they foster peacebuilding between the living and the dead. The study also looked into the significance of death rituals and social memory as a mechanism to prevent potentially possible conflict between the dead and the living.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Several peace and conflict narratives and writings have amplified several aspects of peace that include justice, reconciliation, peace education, peace institutions and mechanisms as the sole means to building peace. This is because conflict has attracted attention when it occurs at macro levels such as community, national and global levels where it manifests itself through violence and physical harm but instead can be

experienced at individual level. As such, conflict is misrepresented as solely a negative relationship that is explicit and not unusually suppressed. By presenting peace as merely open, the reality of existing relational conflict between the dead and the living is heavily overlooked.

The common understanding of death by the Shona people is that it is an inevitable phenomenon that is however conceived as a result of the works of the evil powers or people. As such, death is viewed as unnatural except that of a person who happens to have been aged. It is known that there are intrigues, suspicions, despondence, and bitterness after every funeral (Umoh, 2012) pertaining the cause of death and the allegedly responsible person. Unique to the Shona people is the way they strive to build and maintain peace between the living and the dead through various means as well as their efforts in building social memory of the dead. These efforts to establish smooth harmonious relations between the members of the visible and the invisible communities are derived in the Shona conceptualization of the purpose of life. This purpose of life is referred to by means of death rituals and social memory that are believed to be crucial for peacebuilding between the dead and the living.

Therefore, the problem seems to be the "demonization and abandonment" of traditional mourning practices as backward in favor of western ways that are presumed to cause relational disharmony between the living and the dead. Further, the role played by death

rituals and social memory as effective prescription for peacebuilding seems to be gradually abandoned as one of those practices that have been since stuck in ages.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Despite several twentieth century anthropological studies on the views of death, the dead and death rituals performed at funerals in different parts of Africa (Mbiti, 1975; Magesa, 1977; Thorpe, 1991; Banana, 1991; Shorter, 1998) among others, much focus has been directed on understanding the African people's perception of death and the dead. Some studies by Gundani (1994), Sitshebo (2000), Masaka and Chingombe (2009) and Sethsiba (n.d.) among other academic scholars have however expressed a theological and anthropological stance to demonstrate how African theology can participate and help in the conflict between believers' individual practices and religious teachings of the church but there has not been much attempt to extend the studies by looking at death among Africans in the context of peace and conflict both between the dead and the living as well as amongst the bereaved family members. From this angle, it is critical to understand pre and post-burial rites observed by the people in Mutare Rural District in the context of peace and conflict.

Although Mbiti (1975) stated that rituals provide continuity and unity among those who perform or attend them, aspects of peace have not been looked at in depth so as to ascertain the ways in which these rituals promote harmonious relationships and unity which might also ensure peace among the bereaved family or community members. As

such, this study seeks to contribute to documented academic literature and add a new understanding of the traditional practices performed in the 21st century. This study will set a foundation for further research on the sustainability of these traditional rituals which are currently running parallel to services provided by modern funeral services providers with a peace and conflict oriented perspective. Lastly, this study hopes to provoke researchers' attention on the under researched dimensions of conflict such as conflict between members of the visible and the invisible world and between human beings and nature.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

i.   Explore traditional death rituals performed for the dead and their meanings.

ii.   Explore the processes, meanings of social memory performed in Mutare Rural District.

iii.   Examine the significance of death rituals and social memory on building peace and preventing possible conflict between the dead and the living.

1.4.1 Research Questions

The research questions were:

i.   What are the traditional death rituals performed and their meaning?

ii.　　What are the processes and meanings of social memory performed in Mutare Rural District?

iii.　　How are death rituals and social memory important for peacebuilding and conflict prevention between the dead and the living?

1.5 Assumptions

This research was based on the following assumptions:

i.　　Whenever a person dies in an African setting in general and among the Shona in particular, there are some death rituals which are intended to build peace between the dead and the living and social memory of the dead that are performed from the moment he/she dies through to post-burial.

ii.　　Failure to observe death rituals and processes of social memory by the living is one of the causes of conflict between the dead and the living.

iii.　　Although some pre-burial rituals are increasingly performed by funeral service providers, many of traditional rituals are still performed in Mutare rural District in Zimbabwe.

iv.　　Village heads and traditional healers will be easily accessible for interviews and will also be willing to spare a moment of their possible busy schedules to chat with the researcher.

1.6 Motivation

Since pre-literature times, several theories and concepts have been developed in peace and conflict studies to give a clearer insight of peace and conflict, to explain the two concepts and to provide mechanisms for peacebuilding and conflict prevention. However, what motivated this study was the researcher's need to uncover and amplify the real Shona understanding of peace and conflict as well as their means of building peace and whilst preventing conflicts by way of rituals and ritualized processes of creating and handing down social memory. This interest was build from the researcher's Christian background and upbringing that saw traditional practices and beliefs labeled as works of evil. Thus, the research was driven to give a voice to traditional practices as not intrinsically evil but also a source of sustainable peace in the way it is viewed by the Shona people. There is adequate evidence to show that conflict has been largely conceptualized in a much broader sense thereby overlooking the existence of conflict in its latent form as sometimes experienced by the Shona people. As such, visible conflicts tend to be broadcasted, amplified and receive attention at community through to international levels thus approving of the common inherited definitions of peace and conflict.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitation of the Study

1.7.1 Limitations

Upon entrance in the villages where the research study was conducted, some village heads requested to know the researcher's political party but however, the researcher managed to explain her visit as that of a student with no political agenda. This assurance to the village heads was also given by producing a letter from the Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance (IPLG) in which the researcher had been granted permission to carry out the research. Time was also a constraint for there was a lot of enquiry to be done prior to conducting interviews in the villages yet not enough time to allow villagers from Chishakwe and Marange to build trust around the researcher. However, to address this limitation the researcher had to make use of a well known person in the targeted villages, making it easier for the researcher to penetrate the closely knit communities. The study was also limited by the reluctance of some participants of Christian standing to openly discuss their knowledge of the roles played by traditional healers for fear of being labeled especially by their fellow village member. To curb this, thorough probing skills were employed by the researcher where questions were rephrased so as to make the participants comfortable.

Gender relations were also a limitation because sometimes culture forbids women to attend, eyewitness or perform some of these ritual proceedings therefore limiting their knowledge and interactive participation in the study. However, they were required to provide information on those ritual processes they do experience, witness and perform.

1.7.2 Delimitation

To assure manageability of the data, this study was delimited only to pre and post-burial rituals performed by the people in selected wards of Mutare rural district. The study was also delimited to rituals of an African traditional nature so as to set a boundary on the scope of the study as there is a gradual shift from traditional towards modern funeral proceedings that are often followed by contemporary funeral service providers operating in Zimbabwe. The study was also delimited to Chishakwe and Mwaamba villages Chishakwe and Chikwanha and Mwandiambira villages in Marange. Chishakwe was selected because of its peri-urban characteristics and for its proximity to the city of Mutare therefore opening up for those who often transport the dead bodies of their loved ones for burial from Mutare. Furthermore, Marange was also suitable for this study because of the domination of the people of the Johanne Marange sect, which gave the understanding of traditional death rituals and social memories as a mechanism employed to build peace between the dead and the living by people with an apostolic approach.

1.8 Operational Definitions

Conflict: an unwelcome and unwanted disturbance where individuals who belong to the spiritual world of the dead use illness, misfortunes and death as an effective means of communication between themselves and the living.

Conflict prevention: The act of performing all possible means of pleasing the dead with the hope to block every potential danger, misfortune and affliction from the dead. This is done by the living to establish harmony between the two worlds.

Peace: a desired mutual relationship between the dead and the living in which the dead are remembered and honored through death rituals and social memory. In return, the dead sustain, provide for and protect the living from evil.

Peacebuilding: the task of preventing and reducing possible physical or psychological harm on an individual or family by the spirit of a dead person. It includes a wide range of ceremonies and practices that are symbolic and communicate commitment by the members of the physical world to appease the spiritual community members.

Social memory: Refers to the created, preserved and passed on social events of all life processes in the life of a person. This is does not stop with the end of earthly life but also stretches through to death.

Ritual: A prescribed religious ceremony that consists of a series of actions and is done the same way every time. This is done for a specific reason and at a prescribed stage of life.

1.9 Structure of the Study

This study will consist of five chapters. The first chapter will provide the problem statement, research objectives and questions, significance of the study and limitations and delimitations of the study. The research design will also be part of this chapter.

Chapter two will provide a literature review and chapter three will present the methodology for the study. Chapter four provides the data findings and its analysis and the last chapter will consist of conclusions and recommendation.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the Shona conceptualization of death how it informs their way of ensuring peace between the dead and the living and the creation and preservation of social memory of the dead in lives of the living. This phenomenon was developed in the background, problem statement, justification and was further highlighted using research objectives and questions. The chapter also showed the delimitations and limitations of the research study as well as the definition of operational terms.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter seeks to explore the complete and current state of knowledge on death rituals observed by African people in general and by the Shona in Zimbabwe in particular. It also provides a section that discusses the phenomenon of social memory in non-political terms. It also provides a conceptual framework on which this study is grounded. A constructive analysis of the approaches taken by previous researchers and their key findings is also provided in this chapter. This section is structured in a funnel method where the discussion will be broad and general, getting narrower and particular as the review continues.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

In his theory of peacebuilding, Lederach (1997) identified simultaneous undertaking of peacebuilding at every level of society as one of the key components of a comprehensive peacebuilding framework. According to this theory, Lederach adopted Adam Curle's description of conflict in terms of power balance in which conflicting parties are aware of their interests and needs. Thus, peace building needs to put focus on raising awareness and bringing about a balance of power. Further emphasis is put on the need to sustain rebuild relationships as one of the goals of peace building. Lederach also describes the resources for peace building and he identified the conflicting parties along existing socio-cultural resources as significant for peace building processes. He went on

to ascertain that every successful peacebuilding strategy has to be that which reaches every component of society.

The social memory theory is attributed to the seminal work of Maurice Halbwachs also points that memory is not a file of fixed data which only stores events and experiences of the past. Instead memory is collective and it is socially construed in the sense that the manner in which it is conceptualized and interpreted is agreed upon. Whereas memory can appear as merely of concern to the individual, this theory pushes the argument that it is instead located in relation to the society and is interpreted in such a way that society understands and finds sense in. This pushes for the importance of society in the construction of memory. Further, the theory of social memory identifies traits that distinguish the society in which people immerse themselves in thought from the present society as:

- People are free to evoke the former because it does not impose itself on them.
- Inconvenient memories or those which might seem to be a burden can be opposed

2.2 Relevance of Theoretical Framework to the Study

Lederach's theory of peace building was relevant for this study in many ways. This theory is inclusive of all aspects of society which in the Shona tradition includes the community of the dead who are believed to have so much influence on the lives of the

living. Having in mind that peacebuilding is a process; the two communities cannot be divorced if sustainable peace is intended because of a symbiotic relationship that exists between them. This theory is also cemented by its indication of peacebuilding approaches that enable individuals to link actions which meet short term needs and processes that can also help to build a broader vision. This theory further points to peacebuilding as a phenomenon that redefines violent relationships into a constructive and cooperative pattern, thus, resonating with the African concept of life after death as a principle in African Traditional Religion which Mbiti (1969) referred to as the concept of life in relation to time. It expresses life and death as a cycle which Aschwanden (1987) describes as closed. This concept is closely related to other concepts such as that of God, ancestors and life and it is also closely linked to Socrates' *opposites argument* for the mortality of the soul with which he meant to ease Cebe's worry that the soul might perish at death. This argument pushes the notion that things that have opposites come from their opposite and in the same way, there are two processes of transformation between life and death.

This concept of life after death points to the possibilities of structural violence which was put forward by Galtung (1996). In his theory, he emphasized how violence can be in the form of structural, cultural or direct conflict. While direct violence is overt, structural and cultural violence are often covert and this is true for African societies where this form of violence on the living by the dead is assumed to be prevented by means of ritualized customary practices such as death rituals. Pre and post-burial rituals that are

performed are therefore intended to appease, calm therefore making peace with the dead on behalf of the living thus stand to block possible latent violence from the dead which often manifests as either *ngozi* (revenging or angered spirit)*,* illness, misfortunes or worst of all, death. In this study, the adopted facet of *ngoz*i is that when the spirit of a person who died naturally haunts the living demanding a decent send of or seeking explanation for their failure to perform a specific death ritual for him/her

2.3 Understanding Death in the African Context

Africans view death in almost the same way although there are various explanations of how it came on earth just as there are many tribes on the continent. Shorter (1985) and Mbiti (1969) push the same argument in which they agree that death is seen as a rebirth to a new state of life when one transcends into the new community of the departed while Ray (1999) acknowledges that the Nuer of Sudan see death only as a temporary interruption of life. However, Mbiti (1969) further qualifies death as a gradual process that is completed a few years later following the death of the body. By referring to it as a process, he potrays death as a phenomenon that has a transformative significance which promises some form of transformation from one state to another. This transformation also rewards the dead with a deeper relationship with the family and the clan as a whole. Therefore, it is this dying process which stands between two worlds; of the human beings and of the spirits. To add on, death being a process implies that one does not completely die at once but instead gradually departs the visible world and enters the

invisible world. This transition and elevation describes what Mbiti (1969) calls the Sasa and the Zamani; the Sasa being the physical space and Zamani being the invisible world.

When death strikes, one is not detached from their family, clan or society but instead, they acquire some power to influence the lives of the living. As such, there are as many labels as there are early ethnographic researchers that have been coined to describe the dead. Among these labels are the "living dead" coined by Mbiti (1969), the "living-timeless" (Banana, 1991) and "intangible asserts" (Mararike, 2011). The first two names mirror the status of the dead as it is understood in Africa and by the Shona people in particular where the dead are known to be continuously living but in a different state. The dead are thus conceived to be in between the community of the spirits and that of the physical thereby making them bilingual, a characteristic that allows them to speak both the language of the living and that of the dead persons.

However, although Mararike (2011) does not dispute the titles forwarded by his predecessors, he came up with a more complex label. His label provides not only a description of the state of the dead but reinforces the description by suggesting the function of those who belong to the community of the dead. The title he brought forward, strongly points to the dead person's after-death capability to increase value of life for the living as well as the element of creation through time. As such, Mararike

(2011) shapes up the element of time in relation to space that had been brought forward by Mbiti (1969).

There is a common shared understanding of the living nature of the dead persons and this idea was later cemented by Magesa (1977) and Shorter (1998) who concluded that life comes out of death. They both emphasized on how the departed are asked to bring life and expected favors in the future thus reinforcing the relations between life and time as noted by Mbiti (1969). Following that up, Thorpe (1991) ascertained that throughout Africa, mere death and burial is not enough to enable a person to become an ancestor. Mere death does not warrant automatic entry and acceptance by those already residing in this community of the departed. Instead, entry is assured only if the dead receives a proper send-off regarding the burial or other means of disposal of the body. It is at this stage that death rites and rituals are performed in order to facilitate for the ancestors' acceptance of the dead person. Failure to perform the prescribed rites and rituals is believed to anger the living-dead who then haunt and pour their wrath on the living. To add on, revenge can be in the form of death, bad luck or failure in life. On the other hand, appeasing the dead through proper send-off is presumed to assure rewards for the living in the form of good health, happy marriages, and other social and financial blessings.

2.4 Causes of Death: The African Concept

The need to establish causes of death among African societies is aroused by two factors; fear of uncertainties and the value attached to life. African people have a general fear of the unknown which drives them to seek protection from their ancestors who are part of the spiritual world. It is therefore a practice of African societies to seek for meaning or cause of all that befalls them or that can possibly affect the smooth running of life. Some of the answers are therefore sought through a sequence of rituals of various kinds which are performed at all life stages of an African person. Magesa (1977) establishes that there is an intimate connection between life and death and it is this connection that requires some practices to be observed so as to ensure sustainability of this connection.

There is a strong belief that there is no such thing as a natural death of a young person among many African tribes. Aschwanden (1987), Iteyo (2009) and Umoh (2012) cement the notion pushed by Mbiti (1969) that every death apart from that of elders, is considered untimely or premature because the hand of an enemy is presumed to be directly invloved. The belief is that people are instead killed by an evil person or spirit than they naturally die. This is also expressed in the language used in desciding the actual act of dying. For instance, when an eldery persondies it is said: he has been called; he has breathed his last; he is sleeping; he has eaten enough while the death of a youngster is announced as: he has gone; he had a miscarriage or he has kicked the bucket. Due to this belief about death, several factors are identified as the cause of death.

Mbiti (1969) identified magic, sorcery, spirits, the living dead and witchcraft as the causes of death while Aschwanden (1987) and Skjonsberg (1989) agreed that death is seen as a result of disobedience and sin against God. However, scholars such as Umoh (2012) describes this belief as irrational and supersticious attitude. He goes on to conclude that this same attitude is the cause of grave disaster for family unity and harmony. This thinking is gradually getting accepted by some Africans owing to the HIV/AIDS pandemic that has spread across African countries.

2.5 Social Memory Explained

So much literature has defined social memory in political terms but Machakanja (2008) took a shift and provided a definition of social memory in more social terms where she defined social memory which some authors use interchangeably with collective memory as sociocultural processes of constructing and reconstructing images of the past within contexts of dialogue, action, interpretation, and representation. This follows an assertion by Confino (1997) identified one of the problems of defining memory in political terms and for political use. He argued that by limiting the definition to political uses, the phenomenon illustrates a reflection of nothing else but political development which will be often relativized to ideology.

Social memory can be kept intact and is easily and automatically retrieved from the human mind. The reconstruction of memory implies the plasticity and constant update of

events and images throughout the stages of life of a human being. Although means of creating and handing down social memory is often visible at national political levels where the vehicles of memory are primarily commemorations, important dates, museums, designated gravesites and honorary titles for official acknowledgement of those perceived by many to have positively contributed to their nations or the military dead such as the Zimbabwean title, *gamba renyika* (hero/heroine of the nation), it is not limited to the field of politics. Instead, there is a social dimension of social memory in which customary means of constructing, preserving and handing down social memories of the dead among the Shona are employed as a vehicle for building peaceful relations within both physical and natural/spiritual communities. Gaskell (2001) identified conservation of the coherence of social group and reassurance of its identity in the present and the future as the major function of social memory.

Therefore, its commemoration is associated with recollection, looking backward and offers a structure of anticipation. For instance, the Shona people's anticipation for future blessings and protection from the dead is expressed in the way sendoff prayers are composed. They often say, *"kwawaenda ikoko, usakanganwe kuti wasiya manyana ako pano pasi"* (wherever you have gone, do not forget that you left children behind). This would be a way of expressing how an individual is highly expected to sustain and provide for the living as a result of a social bond. Such anticipation of future blessings from the dead defeats the argument put forward by Sweeting and Gilhooly (1997) who argue that beyond ending earthly life, death also destroys the social being grafted upon

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an individual and Heimo and Peltonen (2003) who noted that the death process can be divided into three phases; physical death, disposing of the body and social death.

Despite subscribing to the arguments pushed by Mbiti (1969) who conceptualized death as a process that goes beyond the failure of the physical body, Heimo et. al (2003) seem to have diverted from manner in which Mbiti among other anthropologists ascertained continuous living of the dead by indicating social death which refers to the extinction of a person's social identity before or sometime after physical death as the final phase of death. As such, Heimo et. al (2003) express social death as a stage in which the living disengage or divorce themselves with the dead; a phase that the Shona people do not subscribe to. Instead, Shils (as cited in Machakanja, 2008) notes that social memory demonstrates a sense of historical continuity that acknowledges the idea that the past appears in the present and does so against the obstacle of death. Thus, death rituals which prevail from the announcement of the death through to the shared grieving and memory, in which the dead are mourned and social bonds are renewed are one form of constructing social memory among the Shona people in Zimbabwe.

2.6 Rituals

There are at least four major rites of passage in African culture namely rituals of birth, puberty or initiation, marriage, and death. Shorter (1998) defines ritual as a "bridge" between ideas and life and this understanding qualifies them to have that instrumental function which he went on to attach to these rituals. Having this instrumental function,

communication which is fostered by the performance of rituals is not merely "saying" but also making some things happen or preventing them from happening. As such, apart from being purposive, rituals are a system of means and ends in which they are a preventive measure as well as responsible for certain actions by ancestors which Magesa (1987) refers to as "spiritual authorities".

With this understanding, traditional rituals do not only contribute towards peacemaking and conflict resolution but also play an important role in preventing possible conflicts. Above that, they focus on psycho-social dimensions of conflict in which spiritual authorities are deemed to have an influence in the lives of the living; something that western approaches fall short of. Nagy (2005) ascertains that a ritual can serve both psychological and social needs and can attempt to compel supernatural forces to respond in a specific way. As such, it is safe to describe rituals as an association that allows interaction with the spiritual beings in an attempt to strike a social balance between the sacred and the profane. One of the major strengths of using rituals lies in their focus on the spiritual world and non-verbal communication in addition to material issues, reason and talk.

2.7 Building Peace Through Rituals
Rituals play a complex role in both violence and peace efforts. For instance, the process of becoming a soldier ready for war has a couple of ritualistic elements. With the same token, the processes of disarmament and reintegration of the same soldier after war into

communities cannot be fully completed without the performance of rituals such as cleansing or reconciliation rituals. However, Africans have become so indoctrinated by Western culture and ideology so much that they believe that the West provides the best solutions for any crisis (Dodo, Banda & Dodo, 2014). Africans, Zimbabweans in particular, continuously overlook the wisdom and power they have to build and sustain peace through traditional religious mechanisms such as rituals for the sustainability of social systems. As noted by Schirch (2005) the social dimension of conflict, on the other hand, focuses on relationships and communication between parties. These relationships are built and strengthened by communication which among the Shona can be established by means of rituals that anthropologists describe as a key to dual communication between the dead and the living.

These mechanisms have not only prescribed actions for enhancing intra-community peace among community members but have also laid a foundation which is strong enough to sustain lasting peace and practical dialogue between the dead and the living. While some conflicts and wars are deeply rooted in religion, certainly, one cannot deny that religion holds a dual legacy regarding peace and conflict. Traditionally many scholars have focused on how conflicts and war have been rooted and are undertaken for various religious reasons. This hypothesis has been supported by Wright's monumental study of 1941 in which he presented numerous conflicts that have direct and indirect religious components.

African traditional peace mechanisms have yielded equally excellent results when compared to Eurocentric and Western means of resolving conflicts and building peace and coexistence within communities. This is because rather than putting a lot of emphasis solely on a single dimension of material conflict, the African notion of peacebuilding embraces the understanding that conflict occurs in many dimensions which are cultural, social/relational and material. However, many of the rituals that are performed seem to lack compatibility with conflicts of spiritual nature which fall within the category of social conflict; something that can be addressed by means of rituals. These rituals, for example, the *Mato oput* ceremony and the *moyo kum* ritual practiced in Uganda are specifically designed for a specific kind of conflict to be resolved. The former is a traditional ritual ceremony which is aimed at restoring justice, peace, reconciliation and relationships. It involves the individual parties at conflict drinking a bitter potion which is made from the leaves of an Oput tree from the same bowl. The latter is also a Ugandan ritual performed for the purpose of cleansing the body of former war captives upon return home.

Therefore, traditional mechanisms address the relational dimension of conflict which Africans have a deeper and shared understanding of as compared to the west. In traditional religion, peace as a religious moral value stands as a result of harmonious living between the living, living-dead and the ancestors. This confirms the central role played by relationships in peacebuilding. Peace is also seen as a fullness of life marked by material, social and spiritual blessings. As such, it conceived as a precondition for

progress because African societies consider divine blessing as something that cannot be achieved where there is social disorder.

This broad, deep and shared common understanding of peace among Africans together with the insufficiency and incompatibility of western peacebuilding mechanisms and approaches to some African conflict of spiritual nature gave birth to indigenous mechanisms and institutions of peace building that suite the contexts and nature of conflicts. The major drive was to come up with and adopt African solutions compatible enough with African problems. Among these indigenous traditional mechanisms are rituals such as birth, puberty, marriage and death rituals. Although both western and African indigenous mechanisms call attention to the need for mediation in resolving some conflicts, the latter has more to offer to the African people owing to its sensitivity to the spiritual dimension of conflict. Acknowledgement of this dimension of conflict informs the involvement of spiritual mediums who assume the role of a mediator.

The philosophy of *ubuntu* (human-ness) is also one of the central concepts that inform peacebuilding among the African people. This notion of *ubuntu* emphasizes on the importance of making and building peace through reciprocity, inclusivity and a sense of shared destiny between people. One of its components is metaphysics which is at the core of reconciliation in conflict situations. The reason reconciliation is centered on metaphysics is that Africans live in a world of uncertainties such as death and conflict

among others. However, for most Africans, the dead are believed to have continuous existence and have capacity to intercede and advise the living in certain circumstances. Such intercession is crucial in reconciliation rituals in which the ancestors and invisible beings play a significant role. They often provide explanations and/or advise concerning some happenings.

2.8 Shona Death Rituals

The Shona people of Zimbabwe observe a number of death rituals from the period a person dies until post-burial. These rituals are believed to play a very critical role in fulfilling the death process of every human being and also play a role in building, creating and transforming identities. This transformation of identity is crucial for peacebuilding on one end and affirming social memory of the dead on the other. As affirmed by Thorpe (1991), rituals help to structure and thus give meaning to human life but this communication process through rituals can have negative endings if there are any misunderstandings among those who perform or attend these rituals. Kurewa (2007) also notes that the difference between death rituals and any other rituals is that rituals related to death are conducted not only for the deceased, but also for the living. In that sense, there are two possible conflicts that may result which are either between the dead and the living community or that amongst the bereaved community members. Although there are many dialects within the Shona people of Zimbabwe, rites that are performed are the same although they sometimes differ in the way they are expressed. These rites

can be split into three groups depending on the stage at which they are performed at any funeral.

Aschwanden (1987) and Thorpe (1991) provide a mere description of death customs among the Shona while Gundani (1994) and Masaka et.al. (2009) identify a prescription of rites often performed across people of various dialects that fall under the arm of the Shona. These rituals are namely pre-burial, burial and post-burial. Pre-burial rituals include mourning and *kupeta mufi* (folding the dead) while burial rituals include procession to the graveyard, actual burial, *rumuko* (early visit to the grave), *gata* (a search for the cause of death) and the ritual of a person who dies away from home or commit suicide. Post-burial rituals include but are not limited to *kurova guva* (beating the grave)*,* inheritance ceremony, ritual of honor and ritual of appeasement.

2.9 Conclusion

Despite having these specifically tailor made indigenous approaches in Africa, scholars such as Tadesse (2010) puts forward the gender aspects of traditional institutions. He argues that women have minimal direct participation in most of these indigenous institutions of conflict resolution. This comes as a result of the nature of many African societies which are patriarchal thus biased towards men and their perceived authority over women. As such, there is need to adopt and comply with and effectively implement the United Nations Resolution Council 1325 (2000) which stipulates that women should

be actively involved in decision-making at national and regional levels as well as in all

institutions for the prevention, management and resolution of armed conflict.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter presents the steps which were taken in the data collection process. The research design and the methodological framework are also discussed. The population and the sample are thoroughly described and in addition the sample size is explained and justified. Instruments to be used for data collection and the actual data collection process are also discussed followed by data analysis methods that were used in this study. Ethical issues that were considered at all stages of the research process from the period of entry into the research community through to data analysis are also considered.

3.1 Research Design

This research was grounded in qualitative approaches in which the study was interested in inductive processes and established a deeper meaning of the relationship that exist between death rituals, social memory and peacebuilding.

3.1.1 Phenomenological Approach

A phenomenological approach which was propounded by Edmund Husserl was adopted for this research study because of its tenets which are discussed in this section. Its primary purpose is to identify a phenomenon through how those in that situation perceive it. This study sought to get into contact with "life's raw material" (Kruger,

1982) that are fresh and first-person original experiences through interviews and conversations. This approach was relevant for this research study in that its primary purpose was to unearth hoe the people of Mutare Rural District understand death rituals and how they have experienced processes of social memory.

This approach also provides a description of the people's experiences and understanding of their world thus putting enough emphasis on their relationship with the world. In the context of this study phenomenology gives informants an opportunity to amplify their voices as they share their personal experiences and knowledge. This is of significance to this research study as it provides the researcher with rich data which allows for the identification of themes, recurring issues and interrelatedness or differences. It is also important to point that although there are a variety of phenomenological paradigms, this research study adopted a holistic approach that allowed the researcher to be involved with the participants by being a listener as they gave their experiences, knowledge, perceptions and beliefs.

Another reason for adopting a phenomenological approach in this study is that it aims at penetrating the central issues which requires the researcher to practice epoche which is the suspension of all religious assumptions, convictions and beliefs. This principle claims that in order to collect rich phenomenological data one needs to suspend all preconceptions and biases concerning the investigated issues. This is considered

essential so as to allow it also allowed respondents to describe their perceptions and meanings attached to death rituals and social memory as well as experiences of those who have performed or witnessed the practices.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised the men, women and children who are residents of four villages; Chishakwe and Mwaamba villages in Chishakwe and Mwandiambira and Chikwanha villages in Marange in Mutare Rural District. It also comprised of the married, single and women of child-bearing and non child-bearing age. It was made up of people of different beliefs with some subscribing to different Christian denominations while others only observe traditional religion. However, out of the total population, a sample of forty people was pulled at household level from the population. Further, this sample was the unit of analysis (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000).

3.2.1 Sample Selection Methods

Participants for this research were selected using purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a method that is used when the researcher's intention is to target particular people who can also be difficult to locate. In the context of this research study, the researcher targeted the male and female elders in the selected villages. This method was therefore used to select village elders, traditional healers, traditional leaders and spirit mediums that were thought to most likely contribute with appropriate data in terms of

depth and relevance. Of the total sample healers, leaders and spirit mediums residing in one village, the researcher decided on whom to interview on the basis on what needed to be known and thus identified people who were willing to provide the information on the basis of their assumed knowledge and experience.

These sampling methods allowed collection of data from individuals who have attended or performed death rituals before. The sample was made up of a total of 40 interviewees who were drawn from four villages of the two areas. Ten participants were selected from each village. Of the ten informants from each village, eight were ordinary individuals and two were pulled from custodians of tradition that include village elders and traditional leaders. Traditional healers communicate with the ancestors because they are spirit driven, therefore are directly involved in traditional issues.

The primary reason for collecting data from the different kinds of people was to collect the views of people of all age groups and social standing. This was also done to triangulate the data collected from ordinary men and women. Data triangulation is a form of contrasting and validating collected data by finding out if the research study yields the similar findings from different people (Arksey & Knight, 1999). Age was an important factor because lack of information documentation about some rituals at community level undermined triangulation, but the researcher made use of those old people who are always the custodians of the tradition.

In addition, the elderly people are always the teachers of clans who also have the duty to convey culture and beliefs to the younger generation. Many a times they facilitate these rituals and in terms of social memory they are an invaluable archive that was useful to the researcher. They were deemed important in this study on the basis that they are the library of how death rituals are performed and social memory is created and handed down because of their age and experience. Likewise, traditional healers and prophets play a key role in mediating spiritual processes under which death rituals and social memory fall.

3.3 Entry into the Research Area

In many rural settings community members identify each other with their totems and the researcher also did the same wherever applicable to build trust, familiarity and confidence. The advantage of this was that respondents relaxed and became free to give information with the element of family in mind. This use of totem-animals to identify oneself is further justified by the ubuntu concept on identity which speaks to the phenomenon of oneness. Understanding of the local culture and practices was also expressed to the traditional leaders, healers and spirit mediums as a means of gaining their trust.

The first port of call in every village was the homestead of the village head where the researcher was formally introduced to the village head by one selected village member

with whom the researcher walked around. This gave the researcher a platform to inform the village head of her being in the village and also to explain the purpose of the research to the village head. As a way of informing the village heads and seeking permission to interview people from their land, the researcher paid a small fee to each of the village heads.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The specific phenomena that this study focused on were death and social memory and the central question to this study was: What significance do death rituals and social memory have in building peace between the dead and the living? In order to capture rich descriptions, life experiences, beliefs and meanings about death rituals and social memory, semi-structured phenomenological interviews were conducted. Primary data was collected for this research. Semi-structured interviews were deemed appropriate for this study because they allowed the researcher to extensively probe with interviewees and make follow up on the issues during interviews thus creating room for the researcher to grasp the meanings and interpretations of the discussed issues. Interview questions sought to unearth in the participants' own terms, their beliefs, experiences, perceptions and meaning about themes around the relationship between death rituals and social memory on one end and peacebuilding on the other end. Data was also collected on what participants think in more direct ways using this method. With the permission of the interviewees, interview sessions were recorded for data storage and for the purposes of continuous reflection. A code was allocated to each interview, for example,

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"Interview number 1" and the date of the interview at the bottom of informed consent forms. In addition, field notes (memos), particularly theoretical notes were taken. These notes were an attempt to derive meanings by the researcher.

Oral history transmitted through shared childhood experiences, storytelling and casual conversations was another method of collecting data from the selected participants who were thought to have valuable information on the traditional practices and social memory and their significance on peacebuilding between the dead and the living. Oral history allowed elders to relax and discuss the phenomenon of death which to some of them remain a sacred topic in a more free language.

3.5 Data Presentation and Interpretation

Other forms of qualitative studies make use of software packages for easy line-to-line coding and analysis of data but this study did not employ such packages. The first step that was taken to handle data was bracketing out the researcher's preconceptions and personal views (Miller & Crabtree, 1992) to avoid subjective judgments. This was followed by delineating meanings which is a critical stage in that all statements that clarify the phenomenon under research are extracted and isolated (Creswell, 1998; Hycner, 1999). Open coding divided collected data into segments and then commonalities were identified to reflect themes that are used to direct the discussion of the findings. During this process, repetitions, similarities and differences and unfamiliar

indigenous terms were used to discover themes and link them to the theoretical and conceptual framework. In addition, these themes also reflected on the types of questions used to collect data in the villages of Chishakwe and Marange.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Every research study is guided by ethical considerations that should ensure that no psychological or physical harm is inflicted on the research participants in the process. By the same token, this research was also grounded on a number of ethical issues that were considered during all stages of the research. Prior to conducting the study, the researcher obtained a written letter of approval to conduct a research from the Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance (IPLG). This letter served as a confirmation of the researcher's genuine and valid studentship as well as an introductory letter to the participants. This approval letter also assisted the researcher in fostering cooperation as it assured participants that the research would be strictly academic. In addition, this letter provided a clear explanation of the study and its purpose.

Having in mind that death as a phenomenon is sensitive to many, if not every individual, the purpose of this study was disclosed to participants before collecting any data from them so as to allow them to decide whether or not to participate. This also served to guard against any form of deception that can be employed during the collection of data. An informed consent form was designed for every participant who expressed willingness

to be interviewed. This form was presented in two languages which are English and Shona and this was done to accommodate people who were not comfortable with either of the languages. The form clarified issues of voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the interview at any given stage. In addition, permission to record the interview proceedings was sought from the interviewees. However, some declined the request while others orally granted their consent because of old age and illiteracy.

Participants were informed of the choice to introduce themselves with their real or pseudo names. Those who chose to use their real names were assured that their names would be kept with confidentiality and not be disclosed at any stage of data presentation. This promoted sincere responses and minimized suspicion.

The kind of data to be collected required only people within the ages that understand the phenomenon of death and social memory as well as those who attend and/or perform death rituals. As such, interviewees who were considered for participation were the married and single men and women, women who are still capable of bearing children and the old women of non child-bearing age. In addition traditional leaders and healers also made part of the sample for the study. During this stage of data collection, the researcher also disclosed how the data would be used before engaging participants in the data collection process.

Due to potential power imbalances and gender issues, the researcher was sensitive to the culture of the people of Chishakwe and Marange thus established respectful relations without stereotyping and using labels that participants do not embrace. Considering that some of the information is going to be collected from traditional leaders or any distinguished social characters, the researcher first sought permission from the traditional leaders to conduct the study.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the methodology that was followed was discussed. The population and the sample for this study were also provided. The approach that was adopted and its rationale were discussed as well as the data collection method. Ethical considerations and the procedures of entry into the research area were discussed before the conclusion was given.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4. Introduction

This chapter provides the field findings that were obtained through semi-structured interviews. The first part of this chapter gives a description of death ritual processes as they were described by respondents who informed this study. For further clarification and emphasis, transcriptions were extracted and presented in this chapter. Following the findings are interpretations of induced meanings of death ritual meanings, beliefs and perception. Meanings and significance of social memory in the context of the people of Chishakwe and Marange are also discussed under themes identified during interviews.

4.1 Data Presentation

4.1.1. Death: Shared Childhood Experiences

Face to face in-depth interviews with both men and women from the four villages in Mutare Rural District revealed that they had been told various stories about death while they were growing up. Despite some of the respondents pointing out that they had ceased to believe in these stories now that they are grown up, the stories they shared revealed death as something that was respected and kept a secret away from children below the ages of thirteen. Death was described as a phenomenon that does not come naturally. Instead, an evil power or person intervenes and causes death. Being the first interviewee after seeking his permission to collect data in his land, one chief shared his lived experience;

Munoziya, for example, hondo yakarwiwa ndakuziva ini. Pane chendakaona, chendakadzidza. Inini baba angu akasofa muna 74 ndichitori mudiki asi ndanga ndakuziya hangu asika, eeeh, pane zvakaitika zvendakaona kuti shuwa kuchengetwa chaiko chaikoka kana munhu….(loss of words) midzimu inochengeta anhu. Taigara apa pemuri kuona apa, ndopana mai wangu izvozvi mazuwa ano haasipo hawo ari kurwara akaenda kutaundi but takanga tiine imba, pamupichisi wemabva uyo wakanga usati waapo. Pane imba yakanga iri pane huswa huri apa uhwo. Yainga iri yeuswa, ndiyo yakasiya baba iri 2 rooms. Eeeh, hondo yashupaka, maauxillary aMuzorowa aipfeka makamafurawu akaita brown-so aya akanga ari kugara paChitakatira paprimary apa. PaMatondo ndopanga paine akomana emaD.A aya. Munoziya, akauya kupisa dzimba (laughs) pamashop pemabva paDumba apa. Yakapiswa imba Dumba aripo kwauya kwese uno asi pedu panapa pakasara, asi ndiyo nzira yaaipinda nayo iwo masoja but yakasara. Saka ndiri kuti ndinobhirivha kuti takachengetwa ndibaba. For example, you know war was fought when I was grown up. There is something I saw and learnt. My father died in 74 and something happened that made me see that surely ehh ancestral protection exists. We stayed there and that is where my mother stays although she is not around for she is ill so she went to town. That peaches tree was not there then. There was a two-roomed thatched house. Muzorowa's auxiliary who wore brown-like camouflages were staying at Chitakatira Primary while DA guys were at Matondo. They burnt houses at Dumba in Dumba's presence but our house was spared yet that was their patrol route. That is why I am saying I believe that my father protected me. (Interview 1, 16 March, 2014).

While others shared what they had been told or witnessed about death, some chose to tell what they had experienced because they reported that during their days of childhood death was not a topic which could be discussed with children of the ages they were at that time-it was a taboo. Therefore, they had nothing to say concerning what they had been told when they were growing up. However, one respondent reported;

Wanhu wekare taisaonaba mufi wana wadiki, kwaishisa, kwaibva kwaita rima risingabviri. Kana kwatofiwa maiungana mumba kudai (hand signal) *maisabuda panze. Kwainge kune huma. Kana mazi muri kugara kumba kwana ani sadza taingouya topiwa tobha tahya tiri ikiko. Mufi taisambomuonaba.* Long back we could not see a dead person, it was scary as if there is a frightening animal.

Whenever death occurred, we crowded in the house and never went out. When you were instructed to stay at somebody's place we would be served with our sadza whilst there. We would not see the dead. (Interview 18, 20 March, 2014).

Those who managed to recall and tell a short stories about what their elders used to tell them about death, were those who were in their thirties and one of respondents from Chishakwe village recalled that;

Mmm (laughs), *ndaiudzwa kunzi munhu akafa inenge isisiri hama yako.* Mmm (laughs), I was told that once a person dies they cease to be your relative. (Interview 6, 17 March, 2014).

Following a probing question, she went on to further explain saying:

Nganditi ndimai vangu vafa, hanzi kana paine munhu akavauraya, either akati chienda kune ana ako iwo haachagoni kuramba kuti ana angu hapana chaakanditadzira. For instance, if it is my mother who has died, it is said if someone is behind her death she [my mother] will not be able to point out that my children did not offend me if she is instructed to come and haunt me. (Interview 9, 17 March, 2014).

Several stories aligned to this nature were told by many of the respondents. Two village heads from Chishakwe and Mwandiambira shared the same story with one elderly prophetess from Chishakwe who said:

(Midday news on radio Zimbabwe in the background) *Tichiadoko, adoko pazera remakore 7 zvichiende kosvika 10, zvanga zvisingabvumirwi maningi kuti mwana mudiki aziye rufuba, rwaihwandiswa. Ndomaziiro a…*(loss of words) *ini ndakatokura rwuchihwandiswa. Ehh, Unozoziya paumba panenge paine munhu washaika, zvakaita pano munhu wafa, waitozwi watorwa ngemadundundu kuti tisaziyaba kuti gogo wafa kana kuti sekuru wafa. Aitinyepera kuti akazotorwa ngemadundundu ikava madundundu, isu tisingaziwi kuti madundundu chinyi.* When we were young of ages around 7 to 10, it was forbidden for a child to be

aware of death, it was kept a secret. That is how I know….. (Loss of words) it was like that when I grew up. Ehh, for instance, if someone at this house dies that person would be repeatedly said to have been taken away by human raiders; we did not even know who these human raiders were. (Interview 22, 20 March, 2014).

While many respondents recalled and shared their childhood experiences concerning stories which they were told about death, only one female respondent could not remember any of her childhood experiences. All she said was;

> *Ahh, ndambodirei kudzoka kumasure? Ini ndava wekare hino andichazvizii zvandaitaurirwa ndichimudoko.* Ahh, why would I need to discuss the past? I am old thus cannot remember what I was told during childhood. (Interview 36, 29 March, 2014).

4.1.2 Death Rituals

Informants from the selected villages in Mutare Rural District that included village heads, headmen, prophets and prophetesses, traditional healers, elderly men and women together with married as well as single men and women gave their different knowledge and experiences of death rituals that are performed when an individual dies either by natural death or as a result of evil powers. These various respondents who informed this study narrated the processes of death rituals that they execute witness or   play a part in. The identified compulsory death rituals processes are as discussed below:

4.1.2.1 Folding the Dead

All informants who informed this study identified *kupeta mufi* (folding the dead) as the first ritual that is performed whenever a person dies. This process was said to involve the straightening of all body parts into a posture socially acceptable for burial by those who would be there when an individual dies. This process begins by laying the dead body down (if a person dies with their head on somebody's lap) and this is followed by closing the eyes and mouth of the dead person immediately after he/she dies, making sure that the lower and upper jaws are well aligned. Further, the hands of the dead person are folded and placed on their lap while legs are stretched and straightened. In an interview with a female traditional healer, she highlighted that under normal circumstances when the elderly notice that an ill person is losing their breath or is steadily grasping for oxygen (which signifies death) and there is no hope for life, the process of closing the eyes and aligning jaws can be conducted. She explained that:

> *Munhu kana achinge anyarara anobatwa maziso nemuromo. Munhu haafairi kunyarara ziso rakavhurika uye muromo haufanire kunge akavhurika....* When a person dies, their eyes and mouth are closed. A person should not die with their mouth and eyes open (Interview 28, 26 March, 2014).

Village heads also narrated that sometimes the legs of the dead person are tied by a piece of cloth in order to keep them together. In his narration of *kupeta mufi* (folding the dead) ritual, a male traditional healer who is originally from Chipinge and is from a royal house further explained how the ritual should be performed by virtue of him being of the royal family within the Ndau people. Among all narratives of the ritual, he provided a

description that was different from that given by the rest of the informants. According to

him:

> *Zvezvinochiende koita manje ngezvonaizvi, mapetero anozosiyana zvechienda kuti ndiani. Zvakaita ini, ndiri chiremba asi ndeibvazve muimba yeumambo. Hino munhu akadai ndini akafa ndinotwasudzwe nyara zvikunwe zvochiridzwa nhodo. Ndizvo futi zvinoitwe zvikunwe zvemutsoka umwu.* This is what happens, handling a dead body differs depending on who has died. If it is me, I am a traditional healer thus when a person like me dies, my hands are strengthened and my fingers are also strengthened to produce a clicking sound from the joints. The same is done with the toes. (Interview 34, 29 March, 2014).

The last thing that is done during this ritual process was described as *kuputira mufi* which entails wrapping the body of the dead in a clean blanket and cover it with a plain white cloth which was described as *fuko* (derived from the Shona verb *fuga* which means to cover oneself) before placing the body in a coffin. Further clarity on the colour of the blanket always followed whenever respondents described the process. It was highlighted that red blankets are discouraged while plain coloured ones are accepted. To the knowledge of many respondents, *fuko* should be purchased by the dead person's father and is commonly known by the term *mberikunashe* (There is God ahead). This piece of cloth was described as a symbol that signifies light which the spirit of the dead needs on its way to its destiny which will be perceived walking in the dark. As such, this white cloth sheds light on the journey which is walked in a dark path. Respondents thus saw themselves as responsible for making this journey easy for their dead relatives and friends.

4.1.2.2 Presenting the Dead to their Relatives

This was identified as the second ritual that follows the ritual of folding the dead. During in-depth interviews, respondents who informed this study revealed that when a person dies it is important to formally inform his/her relatives despite their knowledge or presence during the occurrence of death. It was also pointed out that this formality is not done by mere word of mouth but is rather done by a small monetary gift which can amount to one United States Dollar. This money was said to be presented to the immediate family of the dead person. Much emphasis was put on the importance of informing the dead person's relatives before people publicly start crying. One of them, an elderly woman in her fifties explained;

> **A**[1]*: ...zvadaro, zvinonga zvoda kuti kuti uri mukadzi zvandakaita izvi, hama dzangu dziripo azvina kuti ndafa hama dzangu dziripo, ehh yanguwa yekuti ndafa panongobuda urongwa hwekuti aah, kabva mochisuma anabambo kuti mwana wenyu wadini, wafa*. At that point, what is needed is that if it is a woman like me who has died, despite having died in the presence of my relatives there will come a time when they have to be formally informed about my death.

> **B**[2]: *Iwo aona nekufa kwacho*? Despite them having witnessed the death?.

> **A**: *Iya! iwo aripo! Yatowa ndiro. Dzimwe nguwa ndiwo atobata, kutoita nekudeketera kuti atete hino makuenda ere? Zvambodiniko atete woye? Kuzopedza chenji* (interviewee throws hands up in the air) *atoradzika pasi kwakutobuda panze atoungana panze. Hama dzekumukadzi dzatane choto chawo idziwo dzekumurume dzatane chawo. Ozonzi, kabva ana bambowee, pano dzatiputsa! Ndokushuma uku.Mukasadaro iye unototi mwakandiika hama dzangu dzisikazi kuziya.* Yes! They have to receive a gift. At times they could have been the ones who cried and pleaded with me not to die but they will lay me down and go and converge outside waiting to be informed. Both relatives of the dead woman and those of her husband will have separate cooking sites. This is the

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[1] Respondent

[2] Researcher

process. Failure to do so they will say you buried me without the knowledge of my relatives. (Interview 26, 26 March, 2014).

Emphasis was put on the importance of this ritual process saying that this is done to make sure that the relatives of the dead confirm that indeed the corpse is of their relative. Once the relatives of the dead have been informed, the corpse's face is uncovered by the person who folded it for them to have a look. However, if a person dies at a hospital, *kupeta mufi* could have been done by hospital personnel thus leaving the niece or nephew with the responsibility of uncovering the blanket for other relatives to see. Findings revealed that bypassing this stage provokes the dead to come back and demand justice.

4.1.2.3 Tying Together the Clothes of the Dead

When a person dies, his or her clothes are taken and tied in a bed sheet or a light blanket. This is done by the relatives of the dead as soon as a person is declared dead. Married female respondents emphasized on the importance of removing all their kitchen utensils and stove, whether electric or traditionally hand-made, winnowing baskets, *duri* (pounding bowl) and *dengu* (carrying basket) from their matrimonial homes during this practice. On the other hand, married men also reported that their equipments that include a hoe and axe should also be considered as personal property during the ritual process. One married woman said:

Ini ndikatofa panapa, chinoti ini chese ngachibude pachiwanze apa, vehama dzangu anongozotora tushoma twekuti atore tsvina yehama yawo. Chitofu chinofana kusimuka netsero netswanda zvopiwa abereki angu ngekuti ndiyo kicheni. Kana kuchikukuyiwa guyo futi arifani kusara. Kana ari a—(name withheld)[3] *ashaika handizosari nedemo ngekuti rinode kupiwa hama dzacho saka ndikasare naro rinotondinetsa.* If I die, every belonging of mine should be put assigned and my relatives will take a few things only to show that they have also taken their child's dirt. Hand-made stove, winnowing basket, carrying basket should be handed to my parents because they constitute the kitchen. If Mr.—(name withheld) dies I need not keep his axe but should present it to his relatives. If I fail to do so afflictions and misfortune will befall me. (Interview 12, 18 March, 2014).

Respondents went on to emphasize on the reason for the practise. It was reported that according to the Shona custom death does not signify the end of life thus there is greater need to remember the dead and one way of doing so would be by possession of the belonging of the dead (as shall be discussed later in this chapter). However, this process begins by putting aside all the belongings. In addition, if a married woman dies the Shona custom forbids the newly wedded woman to utilize kitchen ware that belonged to the first wife, therefore, to make sure that this does not happen these belongings are put aside and only those that cannot be utilized following a married woman's death a shared among her relatives.

4.1.2.4 Mourning

In the perception of the traditional leaders (village heads and headmen) people within a village do not begin to mourn before seeking their permission and that of the headmen.

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[3] Name of interviewee's husband

Once permission has been granted, people begin to sing songs and hymnals, beat drums and dance. All these activities constitute the mourning ritual as described during interviews. It was also disclosed that mourning is the longest process which ceases after burial. Female respondents repeatedly mentioned *kuchemedzana* (crying together) and *kubata maoko* (shaking hands) in their description of this ritual process. Both phrases refer to the practice of communicating condolences to the relatives of the dead. The former was described as the practise of two more people crying and exchanging words of condolences while the latter was said to mean the act of shaking hands at a funeral.

However, findings of this study disclosed that when a child of between two years and below dies, people do not mourn, gather, shed tears, shake hands or exchange words of condolences. All they do is exchange words of support and bravery with the mother of the child. One interviewee said that this is done because, *"Unenge usati waamunhu"* (It will not be fully human).

4.1.2.4.1 Spending a Night in the House

This ritual was said to be determined by the way of death. All who participated in this study agreed that a person who commits suicide by either hanging or poisoning does not qualify for this ritual. One married old man said:

> *Anozvisunga haapindi kana kurara mumba ngokuti kunenge kuri kupembedza mweya wacho. Akandorara mumba amweni anozozviuraya ngekuti mweya wekuzviuraya unenge wotenderera paumba.* (The body of a person who commits

suicide does not spend a night in the house because that would praise the spirit of death. If it spends a night in the house the spirit will continue live around the house. (Interview 29, 26 March, 2014).

Findings revealed that it is observed that the body of a dead person should spend a single night in the house. In explaining why this is done married and widowed respondents revealed that this ritual provides the dead with an opportunity to bid farewell to their matrimonial home. Further emphasis was given that even those who die unmarried spend a night in the house of their parents. However, for the unmarried, this is done do give a chance to friends and family to bid their farewell by singing and dancing overnight. A description of the arrangement of the coffin was fairly given by female respondents who admitted to often spend the night in the house in which the coffin will be placed. They indicated that in the process of placing the coffin into the house, the head should enter the door first and this means that the lower part of the coffin in which the lower abdomen lies will be positioned closer to the entrance of the house and not the other way. One respondent said:

> ...*hakuna munhu anopinda mumba nereverse and hakuna munhu anobarwa achitanga kubudisa makumbo.* No person enters a house with their back. No person brings out their legs first at birth. (Interview 31, 26 March, 2014).

4.1.2.5 Washing the Body of the Dead

Respondents described this practice as very crucial and likened it to the process of bathing a newly born baby. What differs with the practice of washing a newly born is that it is the whole body that is bathed while only the face of the dead is wiped with a

damp towel. Two major reasons were highlighted for observing this practice. The first one is to show the dead person that his/her relatives do not consider him as dirt and also to make sure that the dead departs the social world and enters the spiritual world in a clean state. However, there are factors that determine who washes the body of a dead person and these are marital status as well sex of the dead. When a married man dies his body is washed by his wife while the body of a married woman is washed by her daughter-in-law or niece. In the event that his wife is late, her sisters or his sister does the work. If it is an unmarried man his uncle or nephew does the ritual while an aunt washes the body of an unmarried woman. All these people are prescribed because of their being close relatives at family levels.

When this is done, Vaseline is put on the face and clean ironed clothes are taken from those the dead used to put on and the dead body is clothed in those clothes. However, elderly women clarified on the colours that are forbidden for this ritual. Among them is an old woman in her sixties, who said;

> *Kana ari munhukadzi tinomupa zvichena mukati umu, bhurukwa pamwe nepitikoti yake chena. Tinotonzi unagara uine nhumbi dzako chena. Toti isu munhukadzi, kana paine yunifomu zviyaizvi tinomupfekedza hembe yake yeruwadzano[4]*. If it is a woman, we give cloth her with white undergarments. Actually, we are advised to have such white garments. If the woman has church uniform we cloth her in that regalia. (Interview 32, 26 March, 2014).

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[4] Ruwadzano refers to women Christian fellowship groups.

Interviewees revealed that the towel, soap, bottle of Vaseline and small dish that they use to wash their dead relatives are given to the person who carries out the exercise. However, no one besides the recipient is allowed to make utilize of these things. It was also reported that nowadays due to fear of the consequences of inappropriate handling or storage of the dish, some refuse to accept these things particularly that small dish and when that happens it is broken and put on top of the grave after burial. To stress that point one respondent went on to give an example saying:

> *Kwete kuti zvendakaita ndapuwa, mai*—(name withheld) *otora dhishiro kana ana acho. Kana sipo yacho kana mafuta acho anoda kuzorwa ndini basi kusvika zvipere.* It should not be that when I am given the dish, soap or body oil, --'s(name withheld)[5] mother or her children should not utilize them. Only I should use them till they get finished. (Interview 2, 16 March, 2014).

Findings also revealed that if person dies unmarried, different items are laid before the dead body in the coffin as a symbol of a child. This was dually explained. The first explanation for this ritual was said to be a way of preventing this person form haunting the living in search of a child. Secondly it was explained in line with the purpose of life which was hinted as procreation. As such, if one dies before fulfilling this purpose of life, respondents said, they are bound to come back and torment the living. Items identified during interviews are a dead rat, a maize cob and a cooking stick that has been used before. A traditional healer also mentioned that failure to prevent the possible haunting spirit of the dead; he/she often comes back and ask for a child from the living. She thus shared her experience as a person whom people consult when they strange

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[5] Name of interviewee's daughter in law

illnesses befall them and as someone who has the power to facilitate smooth communication between the dead and the living saying;

> *Mufi unondosvika pakamwana, svikei tswiii, kamwana kototi ah aha ah kugomera. Kokati chechekete pahakata wanike ahh ndibamnini ari kuti ndakafawo ndisikazi kuroora, hino ndigadzirirei apa*. The dead person causes physical pain on a child and the child becomes ill. When they come to us I throw bones and you find that it is because of an uncle who died without unmarried and is asking for you to make things right. (Interview 9, 17 March, 2014).

4.2.2.6 Send off Prayer

Whilst the people in Mutare Rural District have a series of death rituals that are appear to be dated, they also respect sendoff prayers as one of the fundamental death rituals. As was mentioned by one of the interviewees who pointed that Church regalia is appreciated as acceptable clothing for burial, a prayer was also described as a way of communication with God whom respondents believe should ultimately receive the spirit of the dead. Respondents raised two reasons for saying sendoff prayers for the dead. The first reason was presented as to facilitate a smooth journey to the resting place. Prophets and prophetesses highlighted that prayers also communicate with the dead that the living have interceded with God for the forgiveness of sins committed during the dead's days on earth. By doing so, respondents revealed, they will be assisting their fellow human who will be in a state of disconnection with the social world and thus will be unable to speak. Assumption is, this person might not have had a chance to say their last confession prayers as a way of acknowledging their sins which necessitates forgiveness

and happy afterlife. Therefore, this prayer was said to be a public confession that frees the spirit and allows it to find peace and rest without disturbances.

4.2.2.7 Body Viewing

Discussions on the practice of viewing the body of a dead person for the last time raised mixed feelings from respondents of different groups. Responses from all interviews displayed similar understanding of the ritual process. All respondents reported that when a person is about to be buried, friends and relatives get n opportunity to pay their last respect by viewing the dead body. When a person dies it is offensive to them to dismiss them in the manner a grazing cow is released to wander around searching for grass. By the same token, the spirit of the dead should not be bid farewell. Both men and women reported that pregnant women are forbidden by tradition to view the body during this ritual process for it is supposed that this will affect the unborn baby or complicate the process of delivering the baby. However, the infiltration of modern western culture which they referred to as *chirungu* (culture of the whites) was blamed for allowing them to take part in his ritual process. Antagonistic feelings, views and beliefs were reported when clarity was given on the appropriateness of young children of twelve and below to practise this ritual.

Custodians of tradition (traditional healers, kraal and village heads) shared a contrasting feeling with the ordinary village members. While the latter argued that there is nothing

inappropriate about children taking part in the body viewing ritual because it is another step towards the constant updating of social memory, the former argued that children should not take part and they also pushed their reasons for their argument. One headman pushed forward a social explanation saying;

> *Ini ndinorambidzana nazvo asi unoona mai akabereka mwana kumusana echitoti, "hona sekuru, uri kuaona ere sekuru? Izvozvo anenge akanongedza sekuru ari mubhokisi.* (I personally am against it but you see a mother carrying a child at her back saying, "look and see your grandfather. Do you see grandfather? At that moment she would be pointing fingers at grandfather who would be in the coffin. (Interview 34, 29 March, 2014).

A different reason against children taking part in this ritual process was also provided by two traditional healers from one Mwandiambira, one female and the other one male. They pushed forward a medical explanation which they interrelated to the nature of their work and day-to-day experiences as *vanachiremba* (healers). In an interview with the female traditional healer she explained:

> *Munhu wakafa unofanira kuonekwa neakadzi akuru zvetaita izvi nearume akuru zvemaitaizvi* (pointing to her client) *kwete mwana mudoko kana anyari ndimai ake afa. Kana dai akura asi asati ane mhatso yake zvakaite ana—*(name withheld)[6] *aya kana zvemakaita izvi pachianhu hamufani kuona hope yemunhu akafa. Munoziya, kune chirwere chiya chekuzi azi munhu unogwinha kana kuti ahh wakudonha pfai, handi pfaiba, zvakubudisisa ngekuringisa kwetinoita afi tisina mhumba dzasimba.* The body of a dead person should be viewed by elderly women like me or him (pointing to her client) despite the dead being the mother of the child. Even if a child is old but not married like –(name withheld) or you (referring to the researcher) tradition forbids them to see a dead person's face. You know, epilepsy is a condition that results from viewing faces of the dead while still of tender heart. (Interview 12, 17 March, 2014).

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[6] Name of interviewee's daughter

4.2.2.7.1 Driving Away Flies from the Coffin

Interviews revealed that the process of *kufumha munhu* (driving away any potential flying insect from the coffin of the dead) is practiced during body viewing ritual. It was described as a traditional practice where an aunt to the dead makes a flag-like thing by tying a white piece of cloth onto a stick cut from a tree. She then sits next to the coffin and constantly drives flies away. This is done despite the absence of flies around the area and while performing this ritual, that aunt will be called *mai emumvuri* (female shade provider). It is that ritual process which is known as *kufumha mufi* (driving away flies from the dead coffin of the dead) among the respondents who informed this study. This practice was reported to have a dual meaning. First, the ritual of driving away flies from the coffin was said to be a symbol of respect for the dead and lastly it was described as a sign to show the dead that they are still accepted by the living relatives as one of them. Responses given during interview sessions showed that driving flies away is also one means of recognizing the humanness of the dead for only animals should be food to flies. As such, the ritual maintains identity of the dead and demonstrates that although the body has ceased to function, the dead is still considered as belonging to with the rest of the family.

4.2.2.8 Officiating the Digging of a Grave

The Shona custom does not subscribe to any other means of disposing the body of the dead besides burying under the ground. As such, despite having other means of disposal, all respondents described burial as the only means they perform when a person dies.

This practice begins by digging up the grave which many respondents in their late twenties up to thirties referred to the grave as *guva* while the elderly spoke of *imba* (house). The latter was preferred as it hints the concept of an afterlife while the former indicates the notion of burying the dead and forgetting about them. In their argument against the term *guva*, elderly respondents reported that it insinuates the idea of burying which fails to differentiate between the handling of a human body and that of an animal, something which is done by the term *kuchengeta* (safely keep).

The ritual process was described as critical for the spirit of the dead to "rest in peace". Clarity was put on the relations of the person who starts the process of digging the grave by marking the four corners of the grave using a hoe; a process which respondents called *kutanga guva* (officiate the grave-digging process). It was brought to the knowledge of the researcher that the role of *kutanga guva* (officiate the grave-digging process) is not assumed by anyone despite being related to the dead. One respondent narrated;

> *Guwa ariambwi ngemunhu nhando, anotanga guva munhu weukama kunyanya baba emufi zvechireva kuti ndiwo aiga munhu. Zvikasadaro munhu unodzoka wechiti ndakaikwa newatorwa ngei imwi hama dzangu mwuripo.* A relative of the dead initiates the process of digging the grave, particularly, the father of the dead not just an ordinary person. This means that he is the one who has buried the dead individual. Failure to do so, the dead person haunts the living seeking explanation why relatives left strangers to bury him/her whilst they are there. (Interview 12, 17 March, 2014).

According to Shona culture, when a person dies, they have the power and ability to identify those they share the same blood with. As such, it is customary to submit the

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roles that require to be carried out by relatives of the same blood into their hands. Married respondents strongly shared the position that if they died the relatives of their husbands cannot initiate the grave digging process. They went on to emphasize that even their children are not the rightful people to initiate this ritual process because they do not have their mothers' blood flowing in their veins. Instead, they highlighted that relatives from their side should initiate the ritual process. To further emphasize this clarification one female responded said:

> *Kana munhu usiri hama yangu yekwandakabva haiwa pano pendakaroorwa ukatanga guwa rangu inini ndinotopanduka ndonoshupa kuhama dzangu kuti maindipa munhu uyi ngei imwi mwuripo.* (Once someone who is not from my original family where I was born initiates the digging of my grave I will haunt my relatives asking them where they were. (Interview 15, 17 March, 2014).

4.2.2.9 Allowing a Dead Person to Rest

"*Mufi haandotakurwi express kusvika kumakuwa asina kumbozorodzwaba*" (The dead is not moved to the graveyard without resting on the way), narrated one man. This echoed responses that were provided by other respondents who informed this study. This ritual practice was described as a process in which those who carry the coffin to the graveyard place it on a wood log hand-made carrier some called *uchanja* (carrier made out of logs) and others, *hwanyenze* (carrier made out of logs). While others reported that this is followed by prayer, some reported that they clap their hands and inform the dead that his/her house is ready for occupation. All these processes were described as a means of notifying the dead that from then onwards, they should cease to visit their former home

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of residence and acknowledge that they now have a new home specifically prepared for them. Respondents also pointed that if this ritual is bypassed the spirit of the dead will continue to roam around the place around which he/she resided before death thus resting in peace cannot be achieved.

4.2.2.10 Actual Burial

Burial was said to be very critical both for the dead and the remaining living relatives. For the dead, it was reported to be a way of allowing one to "rest" while waiting to join the ancestral community while for the living burial was described to mean an achievement in which the living have given their relative a dignified send off. "*Kuchengeta mufi zvinochipangidza kuti taonekana naye zvakatsiga*" (Burying the dead demonstrates a dignified send off) were the words of one young male respondent. Similar responses were recorded from the rest of respondents and emphasis was put on the need to bury an individual along with his/her immediate ancestors who died first. In discussing this issue, respondents linked burial to clan burial sites where all the people who belong to a particular family have a potion of land on which they are buried. They went on to explain the consequences of failing to observe this ritual and one responded shared this story;

> *Kuna amwe akafa, andichadudzi zita ngokuti uyu[7] angazoaziya. Wafa kuHarare iyo, anga agarako ngemukadzi wake. Akatenga makuwa, atenga makuwa kudaro murume wakazofa. Hama dzemurume dzakabva kuMbire kwakuti tode kutora*

[7] Referring to interviewee's fellow village member

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munhu wedu kuenda naye kumba mukazdi kwakuti aiwa amutori takanga takatenge makuwa. Zvakakashana mudzimai akanyisa hama dzemufi, akaikwa kuHarare. Apedze kwakapedza nine years, rechiten, mwana wamukoma ake mufi musikana yange yamhandara yakaamba kubudirwa ndiwo babamunini aya. Akati imwimwi kuiika kutoundi muchireke kundiisa kune amwe angu, hino ndiri kutode kuti mundiise kune amwe. Dzimara akaende kuhurumende, kuminisiparati ngekumaroya, zvakabvumiranwa, akaendeswe kumusha. Someone died but I will not say out the name because this one who will know whom I am taking about. He died in Harare where he stayed with his wife and they had paid for graves in advance so the wife denied her husband's relatives to carry the corpse for burial in Mbire, his rural home. Nine years later, the dead man possessed his brother's daughter and demanded to be buried in the rural area where his predecessors were buried. They approached the Government, municipality and lawyers and it was agreed. They took his remains and reburied them in his rural home. (Interview 28, 26 March, 2014).

Before lowering the coffin in the grave, the same person who kicks off the digging of the grave is required to sweep the base of the grave with a branch cut from a wild green mint-smelling shrub which the respondents called *Mushani/Zumbani* (mint-flavored wild shrub)*.* This was described as "*kuchenesawo umba yehama yedu*" (cleaning our relative's house). After that a traditional mat made out of water reeds (*bonde*) is placed on the base before placing the coffin. Once the coffin is placed it is filled with earth that came out of the grave during digging. The last thing that is done is sweeping around the grave with another fresh wild shrub which is left lying on the grave with the leafy part lying on the side where the legs of the dead are.

4.2.2.11 Bringing the Spirit of the Dead Back to the House

The name of this ritual process was said to mean the practice of bringing back the spirit of the dead to the house. It is performed early in the following morning by close family

members of the dead who visit the grave and rearrange the *Mushani* (mint-flavored wild shrub) and place the leafy part at the head. This was described as provision of shade for the dead. In explanation of the meaning attached to this ritual, respondents declared that the primary meaning is to show the dead that their presence is still needed among the living thus it is the role of those in need to direct the spirit back home. If not performed respondents reported that it would be a clear sign of having thrown away a relative because of death yet it should not be like that.

4.2.2.12 Inheritance Ceremony

Findings revealed that due to migration, time, financial constraints and distance between relatives, this ritual is practiced immediately after burial and was described as a way of *kutora tsvina yemwana wedu* (taking our child's dirt) by many respondents. Further explanation was given that if this is not done the done complains to the living accusing them for disowning him/her by means of what respondents called *kusema* (discriminating). During an interview, one respondent said:

> *Nhumbi dzinotanga dzasonwa ngetsono kana kukushwa ngemvura yakasanganiswa nemiti inotorwa kudondo yotswanywatswanywa.* Clothes are sewn using a needle or sprinkled with water mixed with crushed wild herbs. (Interview 4, 16 March, 2014).

Further, female respondents emphasized that this ritual ceremony is not performed for children who die at the age of twelve years and below. Instead, their clothes are kept and

distributed among remaining siblings without any formal gathering by relatives. It was reported that this ritual is officiated by anyone who is a niece or nephew to the dead.

4.2.3 Construction of Social Memory

Respondents did not have a problem understanding the concept of social memory in general which made it easier for them to contextualize the phenomenon in their life experiences. Five forms of creating social memory were identified but there were mixed feelings about the rationality of some of these forms and their significance to peacebuilding. "*Kana munhu echinge afa watofa isu atichina chetinombomuitira ngokuti atichina ukama naye*" (when a person dies we do nothing for him/her because we are no longer related), said many respondents who do not subscribe to the significance of creating social memory. One young married man went on to say:

> *Ini hangu personally handione kukosha kwazvo because I believe kuti munhu akafaka better mumusiye, even mweya wake ukaenda kwaunonga uri ikoko better kutosiyana naye because wafa. Zvekuzoda kuti takomudaidza-daidza kuti takomudzosa-dzosaka munodzosa nezvese zvaanga ari. Saka personally andioni zviine basa ini.* Personally, I do not see its significance because I believe that it is better to have nothing to do with the dead despite where their soul goes. This thing of bringing their spirits back has the danger of brining even their bad deeds. So, personally I do not see its importance. (Interview 15, 17 March, 2014).

While a few respondents who nullified the significance of social memory pushed the same argument, many respondents described social memory as a very crucial means of "keeping in touch" with the dead. Although some methods were disputed as western by some of the respondents, social memory was said to have been there since the days of

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their childhood, thus, has become ritualized within their tradition. Six vehicles of creating and handing down memory of the dead were identified by respondents who informed this study. These are *humboo*[8] (life experiences of the dead), which is shared during the mourning period, inheritance of the dead person's personal belongings, giving out names of the dead to the living, pictures and videos of funeral proceedings, annual commemorations and the laying of tombstones on the grave. For those who subscribe to these means of consistently creating social memory of their dead relatives, there are some negative implications upon failure to create and keep such memories. Illness, death, and absence of material blessings were identified as the major consequences that befall the living as either revenge from the dead or a reminder for the living by the dead. Absence of peace which respondents described in the sense of *rugare* (good living) was also pointed out during interviews with traditional healers and two respected females from both villages who are referred to as *anaShe.*

4.2.3.1 Life experiences of the Dead Person

Respondents emphasized on their consistent building of social memory of the dead and as well as the elastic nature of the phenomenon. Interviews with villagers from Chishakwe and Mwandiambira villages reviewed that the first step towards building social memory begins during the mourning period when friends and relatives of who know the dead person reminisce about their moments with the dead when he/she was

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[8] This is done by family and friends, workmates, church colleagues and anyone who knew the dead during his/her days alive.

alive. It was revealed that they even go as far as imitating the deeds or behavior of the dead during this period of the funeral.

4.2.3.2 Inheritance of Personal Belongings of the Dead

The double edges of the process of inheritance came out when the same process was discussed under the issue of social memory. Inheritance of the belonging of the dead was described as, "*nzira yekuzorangarira nayo*" (a way of remembering) by many of the respondents. This concept of remembrance was pushed and explained by elderly respondents as most significant for the living who depend more the dead in the form of ancestors. Explanations that they gave pointed to the dead as their immediate channel of communication through which they communicate their sorrows, life challenges and pain. Thus, a symbiotic relationship was described as a fair deal in which they demonstrate non discrimination between them and their dead relatives in order to receive favors through the dead whom many described as, "*vari pedyo nevadzimu naMwari*" (Closer to both the ancestors and God). However, some expressed that the only force that pushes them into accepting belongings of the dead is fear of what can befall them if they choose to reject the given belonging.

4.2.3.3 Passing Down of Individual and Clan Names

Two types of names were identified as very important as far as social memory is concerned. The first name is the individual name while the other one is the family name.

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Personal names were said to be given to the eldest son of the dead, that is, if it is the father who has died in the family. One elderly man said:

> *First born yangu inofana kupihwa zita rangu rangu. Kwochizouya zita redzinza, zita rekuti—(name withheld)[9] rakutsvagwa kuona kuti mumusha medu wasara ari mukuru ndiani. Ndiye anopiwa zita iri saka mukaridaidza mwana wangu ini ndiripo haadairi, ini ndini ndinodaira zita iri. Zita iri harina kunge rakapihwa kwendiri asi ngepamusana pekuti ndini ndamukuru ndini ndakudaidzwa ngezita iroro. Saka mazita i2.* My first born should be given my personal name and the comes a family name which is given to the one identified as the eldest among the remaining within the clan. Should my son be called with that clan name in my presence, he does not respond because it is me who responds to it. So there are two names. (Interview 15, 17 March, 2014).

Importance of keeping up the clan name to make sure that is does not vanish was strongly discussed the most important way of keeping social memory because the process of giving that name was said to be conducted in the publicly allowing everyone to know about it. Therefore, the new of the names are given responsibilities that would have been left by the dead for them to carry. Even the dead person is made aware of the new bearer of the names. Interviews revealed that when this is done, respondents say these words, "*Iwe* —(name of the dead) *takuisa pana* —" (new name bearer) which means you-- we have placed you on-- , and this is done to notify the dead that indeed no discrimination has occurred and people have accepted him to be one of their helpers in the future. It was also emphasized that if the dead leaves no son his name is not left to vanish, instead it is given to one of his brother's sons because failure to do so provokes

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[9] Interviewee's clan name

the anger of the dead man. However, the names of people who died unmarried can be voluntarily passed on to any relative's child as a form of social memory.

Contrary beliefs were came out on the issue of passing names with ordinary respondents saying that if the dead person is believed to have been a thief, a murder, a jailbird or a witch they can choose not to pass their name onto anyone while traditional healers and faith healers from apostolic sects claimed to have the power to separate the bad deeds from the name. They presented similar arguments and one of them said:

> *Tisati tamupa munhu wetinomupa kudaidza zita rake iye mushakabvu uyu, kunotanga kutaurwa kuti mabasa awaiita ainge akashata saka namasi uno tinotanga kurase zviri pamiri pako kuti uzokone kuuya kugara apa. Tisati tarasha atikupi ngokuti wanga wakashata. Saka munotanga kutuka kwakutotaura kuti tode kuti uuye iwewe chaiye chaiye mabarirwo ako, pedzezvo toshandira unode kupiwa zita. Tadaro tochizope zita riya kumwana.* Before passing the name onto someone else the owner of the name is told that all your bad works are first separated from you and obtain the pure you before giving you a place to stay. Before that you name is not passed onto anyone. As such the first thing is to condemn the name and then pass it on to the child). (Interview 15, 17 March, 2014).

4.2.3.4 Photographs and videos

Technology is celebrated for providing people an opportunity to keep memories through videos and photographs that are easy-to-keep. While photographs and videos were identified as vehicles of social memory by all respondents who informed this study, custodians of tradition strongly contested against the morality and appropriateness of taking photographs and recording of funeral proceeding for replaying purposes. They all

shared the same view that these methods are western and look down upon their Shona tradition as inferior because they the processes fail to give due respect to the dead. One of the chiefs argued saying;

> ....*zvinotaridza kusaremekedza chianhu chedu ngokuti pachuanhu munhu wakange wafa unofana kurespectwa kuti afambewo zvakanaka kwete kuti munhu unonga weingotorwa mapikicha. Amweni kuzototora mavhidhiyo nemafoni. Zvinobva zvatopangidza kuti kana time yekuchema mufi wacho anhu haachina nekuti ari busy kushuta vhidhiyo. Pakadaro ungati munhu wachemwa ere? Handiti ndozvekuzoburitsa disc riya raMasasi eparufu?* It demonstrates failure to respect our tradition because according to it when a person dies they should be respected for them to travel well and not having people continuously taking them photographs. Others even shoot videos using their cell phones. This shows that people no longer have time to mourn because they are busy shooting videos. When it is like that would you say a person has been mourned? Is it not what resulted to the disc called Masasi eparufu (Funeral quotes). (Interview 16, 17 March, 2014).

4.2.3.5 Annual Commemorations

"*Amweni hedu tinobika doro date raakafa gore rega rega. Tikange tatodarozvo pese petopira vadzimu takutotangawo nezita raiye wapedzisira kufa*" (Some of us brew beer annually on the same date on which the person died. Once that is done we can mention the name of the person who just died whenever we address our ancestors), narrated one respondent. This way of keeping social memory was identified by all respondents. Even some who emphasized that they had chosen to abandon some elements of tradition in favor of Christianity believed that annual commemorations keeps the two worlds at peace.

4.2.3.6 Tombstones

So much emphasis was put on the need to please the dead by beautifying their home and building up a structure that is not easily destroyed by rains or grazing cattle since the gravesites are not fenced. It was further explained that it does not end by putting this tombstone but there is need to maintain the grave by placing fresh flowers once in a while, sweeping around the grave and plucking off weeds around the grave.

4.3 Data Interpretation

4.3.1 Death Rituals and Social Memory: Evidence of Continuous Life?

The African concept of life after death partly explains the significance of traditional death rituals and social memory practiced by the people of Chishakwe, Mwaamba, Chikwanha and Mwandiambira villages in Mutare Rural District. According to the findings obtained during the collection of data, the need to build peace does not only arise when an individual dies. Instead, peace manifest at birth, thus some of the processes performed as part of death ritual procedures are performed at the period a new baby is welcomed into the society. These practices include bathing, wrapping the baby in a cloth, driving away flies from the baby, laying the baby in the house with the head inside the house and the legs facing outside. All these practices are emphasized during death rituals and their meaning are correlated to expressions of peace with newly born babies. By the same token, they also express good relations and peace with the dead because the life of the living is meaningless without consistent contact with the dead. As such, if the living ignores the dead they (the dead) become dangerous to the living.

Although it explains the processes that stand as a vehicle for peace between the living and the dead, this concept does no justice in explaining the stage at which peace or conflict can begin. This is shown in diagram 1 below.

Birth

Peace   Conflict

Death

Living dead

Bypass death rituals   Perform death rituals and

and social   observe social memory

memory

Ancestors

Revenging
Spirits

Haunt, afflict   Sustain, protect

Seek justice from   The Living   Bless, Provide for
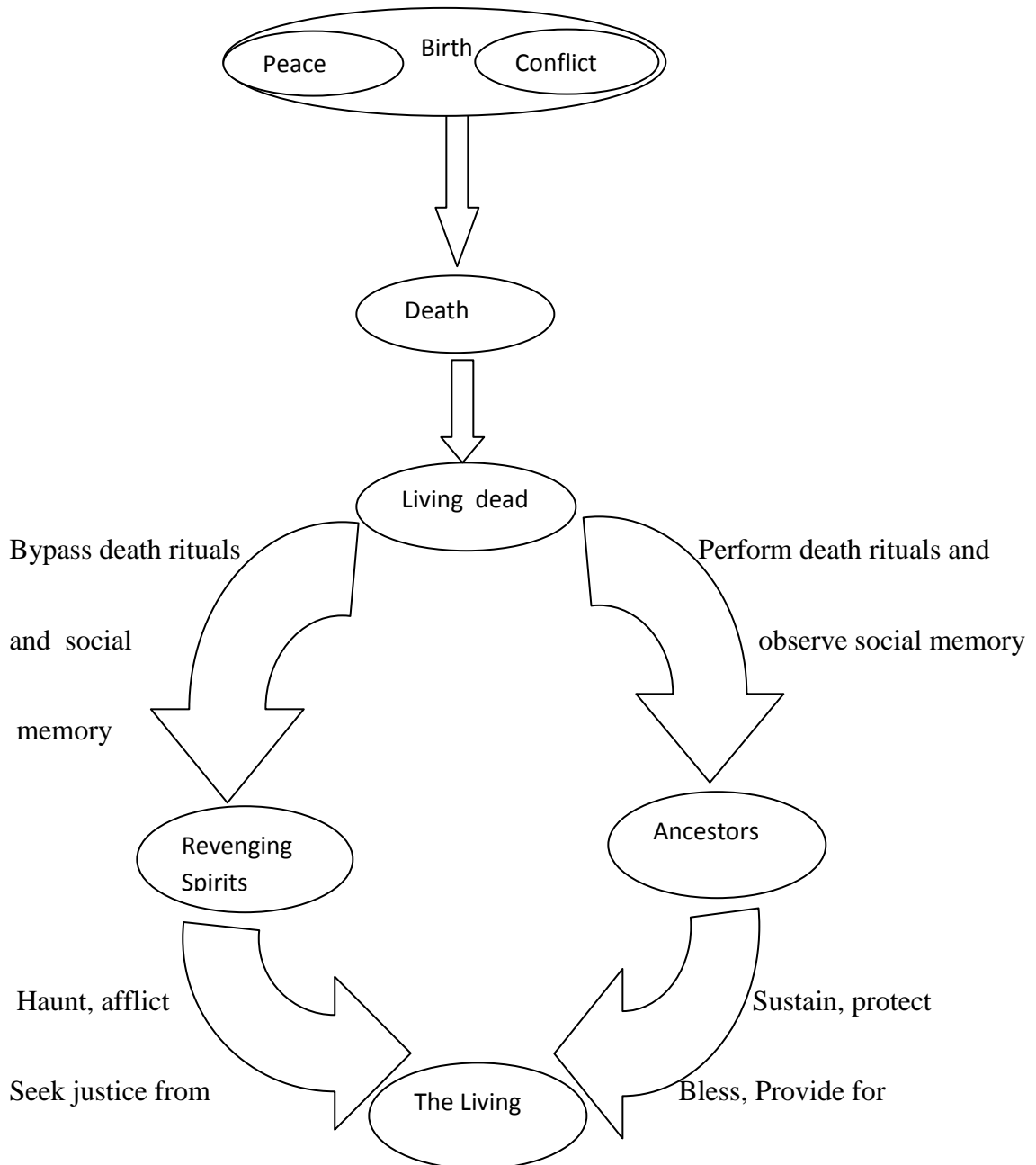
Diagram 1: Life after death in relation to peace (Jeranyama, 2014)

4.3.2 Death rituals and Social Memory: For Peace Building or out of Fear?

Of all the approaches to peace building that include reduction of direct violence, capacity building, waging of conflict nonviolently and transformation of relationships, the lastly mentioned approach is well expressed through death rituals and social memory. It also symbolically explains commitment reinvent relationships between the living and the dead in order to create a smooth relationship between those in the natural world and those in the social world.

Although death ritual processes are described as an expression by the living for the need to build sustainable peace with dead relatives who in turn provide relational and material peace, narratives of fear are not dismissed as unworthy. Indeed, death rituals are a vehicle for peace building but fear of possible harm from the dead also drives such practices. The peace building theory tailored by Lederach partially explains the significance of death rituals and social memory in peace building because they emphasize on all dimensions of conflict and focus on transformation of relationships.

4.3.3 Identity: A Binding and Dividing Factor

Understanding identity is very crucial in processes of peace building because whether dead or alive, a person belongs to a clan with which he or she is identified thus creating a distinguishing boundary between "them" and "us". Based on that, one identifies their relative who has similar blood to theirs flowing in their veins thus the African saying "I

belong, therefore I am". As such, identity is one of the fixed and non negotiable elements that can cause conflict if compromised. As evidenced in macro level conflicts the world over, identity plays big role as both a cause for conflict on one hand and a lubricant for peace on the other hand. In the context of this study this is also true in that all traditional death rituals cannot be performed by any other person who does not share blood with the dead. Further, the practice of reconciling the spirit of the dead with the land of his/her people stirs revenge if it is bypassed. Therefore, identity is presented as a prerequisite for successful peaceful relations in the sense that the transfer of the soul from one social order to the other through funeral rituals involves a transfer of a new social identity onto an individual (Bloch & Parry, 1982).

It is only the relatives of the dead who have the power to instruct the dead to demand justice once there is expected foul play and as such, they also have the power to condemn the spirit of their dead relative if it unnecessarily haunt the living. The significance of identity in peace building is also applicable to social memory in which laying of the tombstone and receiving the name of the dead are specifically for related members of the family.

4.3.4 Peace Building Between the Spirits and the Living

The acknowledgement of the existence of family spirits is also expressed in the adherence to certain clearly defined sanctions which should not be broken lest the family spirits are offended. Theses sanctions include payment of all services, no incest, no marriage without *roora* (bride price) which is complemented by *mombe yeumai* (mother's cow) and no son is allowed to leave his homeland. If a person abides by these sanctions they surely have peace of mind (*rugare*) which is a very important aspect in the lives of the Shona people. Peace of mind is also satisfies by good health and material prosperity. A poor man cannot have peace of mind in the absence of material blessing which is believed to come from God through ancestors.

4.3.5 Peace Building Through Negotiation for Justice and Equality

Negotiation is not a western concept and neither is it unique to political spheres but has been known to the Shona people for ages. This clearly comes out with the role played by traditional healers, prophets and prophetesses in negotiating for equality through dialogue between the dead and the living. Not only do they negotiate when there is physical harm on the living or demand for justice but they also take preventive measures to calm potential anger of the dead. As such, death rituals are form of a negotiation tool and do not only focus on one dimension of conflict but also addresses relationships and bring about a win-win result. Further, social memory points to the concept of equality where the dead can cause affliction if they fell belittled by not being assigned

responsibilities which benefit the living. Death is therefore just a transforming force that does not strip away the humanness of the dead. As such, the dead seems to expect to be treated as equals with the living in the sense that they need to be recognized and identified with their families, relatives and friends and this identification can be strengthened by means of passing down individual names of the dead to the living. Therefore, rituals and social memory regulate power relations between the dead and the living thus creating relationships which can be sustained.

4.3.6 Social Memory and Prevention of Potential Conflict

Passing down the names of the dead serve the purpose of eliminating potential danger from the dead and ensures enhancement of the well-being of both the dead and living. It also symbolizes the legitimate domestication of the spirit of the dead which is presumed to keep it closer to the living who depend on it for their peace which manifests in the form of good health, material blessings, fruits of the womb and relaxed minds.

4.3.7 Significance of Death Rituals and Social Memory on Peace Building

There is a strong relationship that exists between traditional death rituals, social memory and peacebuilding. Death rituals involve both words and action that communicate commitment to keep social harmony which is presumed to be directly influenced by the members of the spiritual world. Further, social memory has a dual role in the lives of the Shona. It provides the bereaved with a healing therapy which speeds up the healing

process by quick acceptance of the unexpected phenomenon. It also taps in that element of identity which is needed for social harmony. On the other hand, social memory also cultivates the element of identity, reconciliation and transformation of relationships that re crucial for the prevention of the wrath of the dead on the living. As such, there exists an interdependent relationship by which death rituals and social memory act as declarations of oneness which results in the living declaring their dependence in the dead for sustainable peace.

4.4 Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that respondents in their youthful ages are not very interested in discussing traditional issues such as the one under discussion. However, this is not due to mere reluctance but rather ignorance of the traditional death rituals. Instead, they liven up when they discussed social memory where they emphasized the significance of photos and videos which they said was "their thing". It was also observed that traditional leaders strongly perceive youngsters like the researcher as heavily westernized and up to prove that Shona tradition is aged and inferior. This perception compromised their willingness to disclose traditional death rituals for fear that the researcher could influence new policies that speak against tradition.

4.5 Conclusion

Research findings that came out of the research study were presented and interpreted in this chapter. Raw data was presented in the form of direct interview transcriptions which provided the actual words that were said by respondents who informed this study. Following respondents' different dialects, all new and unusual terms that were constantly repeated during interviews were explained in footnotes. Further, to stick to the ethical principle of anonymity, all names of respondents' relatives and family members were deliberately withheld in the presentation of research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Introduction

This chapter provides a brief summary of the whole study and a conclusion to this research study. Issues that emerged during the collection of data are also discussed and these are followed by researcher's recommendations which are based on the findings and interpretation of the research findings.

5.1 Key Findings

The key findings of this research study are as follows:

- The Shona people on Mutare Rural District have a deeper conceptualization of peace and conflict which is understood at very local levels and there also exists cultural means of building and sustaining such peace which involves all levels of society that ranges from the living through to the dead.

- The process of constructing memories begins at birth through to all the life processes and also does not end with death. Instead the processes of consistently updating these memories after death are informed by one's how a person has lived their earthly life.

- There is an existing relationship between death ritual processes, social memory and the need to build peace between the dead and the living.

- Elements that include identity and justice play an essential role in the processes of peace building that are imbedded in traditional death rituals and social memory. To add on, identity is reinterpreted in order to transform relationships

between the living and the dead and this is expressed by how it influences death ritual processes and construction of social memories.

- The concept of negotiation for a win-win situation is not unique to the field of politics but is well understood at community levels where traditional and faith healers assume the role of mediators and facilitate communication between the dead and the living.

5.2 Summary

This study aimed at identifying traditional death rituals and means of social memory that are practiced by the people of Mutare Rural District in Zimbabwe and examine their significance in peace building processes between the living and the dead. A phenomenological approach was employed as the most appropriate way to acquire the raw data of people's experiences, beliefs and meanings that they attach to such phenomena. Significance of the two phenomena was drawn from the meanings, perceptions and beliefs of the participants who revealed that their continued practise of death rituals and observation of social memory are deeply rooted in their need to establish good relations with their mediators. Respondents were selected based on the judgment of researcher because there was need for people who might have performed or witnessed these rituals. In addition there was need to hear the experiences and social responsibilities given to those who named after the dead as one of the respected means of social memory. These participants were purposively selected at household level and

custodians of tradition who comprise of village heads, headmen and traditional healers were also interviewed.

5.3 Conclusion and Emerging Issues

5.3.1 Conclusion

This study revealed that there is a correlation between traditional death rituals, social memory and peacebuilding. This relationship was derived from the beliefs, perceptions and life experiences of the respondents who informed this study. However, this study showed that when these rituals and social memories are observed, there are dual reasons for this practice with the first one being that of wanting to lay a foundation for sustainable peace and also that of fear of harm from the spirits of the dead. The element of fear-driven action was derived from some reasons that were attached to certain ritual and social memory processes. Different elements of peace that include identity, reconciliation and conflict prevention repeatedly came out of interview sessions that were conducted.

5.3.2. Emerging issues

Ritualized Gender Based Violence

There has been debate around the rationality of forbidding women from bidding farewell to their newly born babies and children below the age of 2 when they die. Women complained over how this slows down the healing process and adds to the bottling up of

anger and bitterness against their families. In addition, women are expected to sexually please their husbands during this period as mourning is forbidden.

Grievances Over Inheritance Ceremonies

Economic hardship has been a cause of greed for the personal belongings of the dead. Traditionally, the relatives of the dead should take only a single belonging as an expression of family love but instead all belongings are grabbed by money-hungry relatives. Therefore, the inheritance ceremony is gradually getting difficult to manage because often it stirs violent conflict and exchange of bitter words among families. Village widows who have experienced this suffer a silent form of violence from their husband's greed relatives.

5.4 Recommendations

- Further unearthing and analysis of conflict dynamics around the practice of traditional death rituals and social memory.

- Based on the findings obtained in this current study, a follow up study could be conducted to explore the feelings of women about the forms of gender based violence engraved in some of these rituals.

- Further study on the gender dynamics of traditional death rituals with specific emphasis on the implications of traditional inheritance practices on the rights of women and children.

- A comparative study on the beliefs, perceptions, meanings and experiences of people living in urban areas and those in rural areas on the relationship between emerging funeral practices such as central city parades and car drifts and prevention of potential conflict between the dead and the living.

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LIST OF APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Permission Letter to Undertake Research

INSTITUTE OF PEACE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
(A United Methodist - Related Institution)

P.O. BOX 1320, MUTARE, ZIMBABWE - TEL.: (263-20) 66788/60075/60026/61611 - FAX: (263-20) 66788/61785 - E-MAIL: iplgsec@africau.ac.zw

18 March 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: Permission to Undertake Research for Dissertation at Africa University

Delia Jeranyama student registration number **096720** is a student at Africa University. She is enrolled in a degree program in Peace, Leadership and Governance and is currently conducting research for her project, which is required for completion of the program in June 2013. The research topic is **" Significance of Death rituals and Social Memory on Peacebuilding Processes in Mutare Rural District, Zimbabwe".** Delia is expected to undertake this research during the period January- April 2014 before the dissertation can be submitted to the Faculty in May 2014.

The student will share with you the results of this research after its approval by the Institute.

We thank you for your support and cooperation regarding this research.

Yours sincerely

Prof. P. Machakanja
Director

Appendix 2: English Informed Consent Form

Title: Significance of Death Rituals and Social Memory on Peacebuilding in Mutare Rural District, Zimbabwe

Introduction and Purpose

My name is Deliah Nyaradzo Jeranyama. I am a graduate student at the Africa University, Mutare, and am currently studying for my Master's degree in peace and governance. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study, which concerns the role of death rituals in peacebuilding. However, there is no direct benefit for participating in this study. You are also free to decline any question or withdraw from the study at any point. The information you provide will be used strictly for academic purposes and I will not use your name in the presentation of the data. The purpose of this study is to unravel a deeper understanding of the significance of death ritual and social memory on peacebuilding in Mutare Rural District.

Consent

I confirm that I have fully understood the objectives and purpose of the research under study. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the interview at any time. I therefore voluntarily agree to take part in the study.

Researcher's signature: _____   Date: _____/_____/_____

Respondent's signature_____   Date: _____/_____/_____

Appendix 3: Shona Informed Consent Form

Musoro: Kukosha kwenzira dzechivanhu dzekuchema nadzo vafi uye kuchengetedza ndangariro mukuuumbiridza hukama mumaruva edunhu eMutare muZimbabwe.

Nhanganyaya nechinangwa

Ini ndinoitwa muzvare Deliah Nyaradzo Jeranyama. Ndiri kuita zvidzidzo zvangu zvedanho repamusoro zvePeace and Governance paAfrica University. Ndinokumbira kuti mumwe umwe wevanhu vandichakurukura navo nenhau yemachemero echivanhu anoitwa kana munhu achinge ashaika senzira yekuvaka nayo runyararo pakati pevakafa nevapenyu. Zvichakadaro, kana muchinge mabvuma kukurukura neni hapazorina muripo weipi zvayo mhando. Makasunungka zvekare kusarudza kusapindura ungave upi zvawo mubvunzo unenge wabvunzwa kana kusarudza kubuda muhurukuro pane ipi zvayo nguva. Zvese zvatichakurukura zvichangochandiswa chete mubasa rangu rechikoro uye handizoshandisi zita renyu mukuburitsa zvandinenge ndawana muhurukuro ino. Chinangwa chetsvakurudzo iyi ndechekuda kuziva nzira dzechivanhu dzekuchema nadzo vafi uye kukosha kwadzo mukuuumba hukama nemagariro pakati pevapenyu nevasjakabvu mumaruwa edunhu reMutare muno muZimbabwe.

Mvumo

Ndinobvuma kuti ndanzwisisa zvinangwa zveiyi nhau iri kutsvagiridzwa. Ndanzwisisa zvekare kuti kuve kwangu muhurukuro iyi hakuna mubhadharo uye ndakasunungka kubuda muhurukuro pane ipi zvayo nguva. Zvakadaro, ndinobvuma kuva muhurukuro iyi.

Taratadzo yemutsvakurudzi: _____   Zuva: _____/_____/_____

Taratadzo yemupinduri: _____   Zuva: _____/_____/_____

Appendix 4: English Interview Guide

What death rituals are performed to foster peacebuilding between the dead and the living in Mutare rural district?

1. I would like you to start by remembering a short story that your elders told you about death when you were young. If you remember any, would you tell me what your elders would tell you about the death?

2. Now that you are grown up, do you still believe or find truth in those things you were told about the dead whilst growing up?

3. In your opinion, when a person dies do they continue to live in another world or their souls perish?

4. What do you understand about traditional ways of continuing to remember about the loved ones who would have died?

5. Long ago, what death rituals did you perform and how did you use them for social memories of the dead?

6. What rituals do you perform to ensure a proper send off for the dead?

7. Of the rituals you have mentioned, are there some that are performed for specific people such as children, men, women, etc and who performs them?

8. What rituals do you expect to receive from the living in the event that you die?

Why are these rituals performed?

9. In your opinion, how significant are the death rituals you have mentioned earlier for the living?

10. How are the same rituals significant for the dead?

11. What are the implications of failing to performing the rituals on the living?

12. In your understanding, what is the nature of the relationship between the dead and the living?

13. You have identified the nature of the relationship between the dead and the living, could you further explain how this relationship established is and how it can be compromised?

How do death rituals and social memories enhance peacebuilding between the dead and the living?

14. What is the relationship between death rituals and peacebuilding between the dead and the living?

15. How does mediation by spiritualists promote peacebuilding between the dead and the living?

16. What relationship is there between death rituals and conflict prevention between the dead and the living?

17. What are some of the beliefs held by people in your community when they conduct death rituals? Can you please elaborate on the reasons for such beliefs?

Appendix 5: Shona Interview Guide

Ndedzipi nzira dzechivanhu dzekuchema nadzo vafi dzinotevedzerwa senzira dzekuumba nadzo runyararo pakati pevafi nevapenyu?

1. Ndingade kuti mutange nekurangarira kanyaya kapfupi kamaitaurirwa nekufa nevakuru venyu muchiri kukura. Kana paine kamunoyeuka, munganditaurirawo here kuti maitaurirwa kutii nezvekufa?

2. Sezvo nhasi makura, muchiri kutenda kana kuona chokwadi here munyaya dzamaitaurirwa idzi pamaikura? Sei muchidaro?

3. Semaonero enyu, kana munhu achinge afa anoramba achirarama here ave kune imwe nyika kana kuti mweya unobva wangotsakatikawo?

4. Zvii zvamunonzwisisa maringe nenzira dzechivanhu dzokurangarira nadzo vadikani vavo vanenge vavasiya nenzira yorufu?

5. Makare-kare ndezvipi zvaiitwa senzira yekuchema vafi uye nzira idzi dzaishandiswa sei kuumba ndangariro dzevashakabvu?

6. Inzira dzipi dzekuchema vafi dzamunotevedzera senzira yekuonekana navo zvine mutsigo?

7. Panzira dzamareva idzi, pane here mamwe machemero anosiyaniswa zvichienda nekuti mufi anove mwana, murume, mukadzi, zvichingodaro uye ndivanani vanozviita?

8. Munotarisira kuchemwa nemutoo wakadii kuri kunzi mashaika?

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Chikonzero nei nzira idzi dzichitevedzerwa?

9. Semaonero enyu, nzira dzekuchema nadzo vafi dzamadoma dzakakosherei kuvapenyu?

10. Nzira dzimwedzo dzakakosherei kuvaskababvu?

11. Kusacherechedza nzira dzekuchema vafi idzi kunogona kuve nemhedzisiro dzipi kuvapenyu?

12. Sekunzwisisa kwenyu, pane hukama hwerudzi rwakadii pakati pevapenyu nevashakabvu?

13. Madoma hukama huripo pakati pevashakabvu nevapenyu, mungapfuurire mberi here muchitsanangura kuti hukama ihwoyu hunogadzirwa nei uye zvekare hungaputswa nei?

Nzira dzechivanhu dzekuchema nadzo vafi idzi dzinonyaradza sei shungu dzevafi uye kusunganidza hukama pakati pemushakabvu nevapenyu?

14. Pane kudyidzana kwakadii pakati penzira dzekuchema nadzo vafi uye kusunganidza hukama nemagariro pakati pevashakabvu nevapenyu?

15. Ko ihwo hugwevedzi hunoitwa nen'anga kana maporofita hunobatsira sei kuusunganidza hukama nemagariro pakati pevashakabvu nevapenyu?

16. Pane kudyidzana kwakadini pakati penzira dzekuchema nadzo vafi nekudzivirira kupokana pakati pevapenyu nevakafa?

17. Ndezvipi zvimwewo zvinotendwa mazviri nevanhu venharaunda yenyu paya pavanenge vachichema vanhu nenzira yechivanhu? Mungapa here zvikonzero zvekutenda mune zvinhu izvi?

Appendix 6: Glossary of Terms

Guva-Grave

Kufa-To die

Mufi-The dead

Munhukadzi-A female

Ndangariro-Memory

Ngozi-Revenging or angered spirit

Rufu-Death

Rugare-Peace of mind