

RECONCILIATION IN ZIMBABWE: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FEMININE IN SHONA CULTURE

The aim of this paper is to tell the story of how the newly elected government of Zimbabwe, at the time of independence in 1980, after an eight year long brutal liberation war in which 20 000 people lost their lives and following 90 years of oppressive white minority rule, declared a policy of reconciliation and created a unified state in that country. In recounting this remarkable series of events an analysis will be made of the cultural foundations that empowered the black people of Zimbabwe to transform the violence of the war and the colonial regime into a situation of peaceful co-existence, where not only black and white people live peacefully side by side, but also tribal differences have been largely resolved.

The paper will firstly outline the main features of the oppression which blacks suffered in their own country during the colonial period, and then events immediately following the election of a majority government in 1980 will be revealed, in stark contrast to what occurred before. Various perspectives on the basis for the reconciliation policy will be considered and then the suggestion that particular aspects of Shona culture made a major contribution to reconciliation will be explored.

Obviously a full account of continuity and change in Shona culture is not possible nor apposite in a paper of this nature. However, a brief review of factors favouring continuity will be provided and after this a particular constellation of characteristics will be identified which could be labelled yin or 'feminine' aspects in distinction from an alternative set of "yang", "masculine" aspects, more prevalent in western culture. The "yin" constellation will then be further analysed with regard to how these characteristics could have contributed to reconciliation and forgiveness in a situation where revenge and bitterness could well be expected.

Finally, it is suggested that there is much to be learnt from the Zimbabwean experience which, with all its difficulties and imperfections offers a path of peace and reconciliation without capitulation.

Key Features of White Oppression

a) Land and Agriculture

The first white settlers arrived in Salisbury, present day Harare and capital of Zimbabwe, in 1890 and exactly 90 years later in 1980 the final liberation of that country took place with the first democratic universal franchise election. The early settlers came to Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was formerly named, in the hope of finding the rich gold fields promised by Cecil Rhodes who gave the country its earlier name. However, the settlers were disappointed to find only minor gold deposits and soon turned their attention to farming instead.

At the time of the arrival of the white settlers there was a flourishing peasant agriculture in the country particularly in

Mashonaland where the majority of the people lived and where the capital was established. The peasant farmer proved highly adaptable and produced a surplus of maize for sale as the demand for food for settlers and their mine employees arose. Consequently, when the mines failed the settlers decided to appropriate the land of the peasants and engage in agriculture themselves. This land grabbing on the part of the settler contributed to the first "chimurenga" liberation war, which ended in 1897 and about which more will be said later in the paper. By the end of that war, 15 million acres of farming land has been expropriated by the white settlers and the first African Reserve had been marked out (Riddell, 1978).

The process of land expropriation continued, and probably constituted the single most devastating form of economic and social oppression which blacks experienced under white rule. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 allocated 46.9 per cent of agricultural land to whites and 48.6 per cent to black peasant farmers, on a communal basis, while the remaining 4.5 per cent was designated as a purchase area where blacks could buy land on an individual tenure basis. In December 1978, 36 900 whites occupied about half of the agricultural land, and best land at that with the highest rainfall and richest soils, while 4.1 million blacks inhabited the tribal trust lands as the African Reserves had come to be known (Stoneman, 1981, p 132). "Thus white per capita land ownership was about 423 hectares as compared with black 'ownership' of 3.4 hectares each" (Stoneman, 1981, p 133).

The grossly unequal land ownership was exacerbated by a pricing system which favoured white commercial farmers, the provision of cheap credit for whites, and the establishment of a wide range of extension services and far superior marketing facilities for whites. Blacks, on the other hand, suffered an ever-increasing range of taxes, dipping and grazing fees (Stoneman, 1981, p 129). Palmer has summarised the situation as follows, "Thus the marked European prosperity of the post - 1945 period was achieved, as in South Africa, as a direct result of African poverty. In the years 1937 - 1958 the volume of European agricultural output increased by 259 per cent. African productivity meanwhile limped behind, barely able to provide for the rapidly growing population which was eking out a living on increasingly overcrowded and deteriorating reserves and being forced to seek work in towns, where they were harried by the notorious pass laws, paid, housed and fed as single men, and denied the opportunity to lead a normal family life - the social costs of development being borne by the rural areas" (Palmer 1977, p 244)

b) Social Services and Employment

The unequal distribution of land and agricultural services described above is further echoed in the skewed provision of social services and access to employment and wages.

Beginning with education the divergence in facilities for blacks and whites was apparent from the start. In the early years blacks were almost entirely dependent on mission schools for which they had to pay. Whereas government schools were provided for whites at the primary and secondary level on a non-fee paying basis. The first secondary school for blacks "was opened by the Anglicans as late as 1939; the first government school followed in 1946, but the second

only in 1957" (Kadhani and Riddell, 1981, p 60). Thus places for black school children were limited and costly whereas whites enjoyed 12 years of compulsory education which was virtually free.

By 1978, the drop-out rate for white children was only 5 per cent and this was due almost entirely to emigration. "The situation for black children was radically different... only 75 per cent of those eligible were enrolled. Of these 45 per cent dropped out during primary schooling, so that only 41 per cent of the population group completed primary education. Of thesefortunates only 19 per cent (that is 7 per cent of the age group) went on to secondary school with 42 per cent dropping out before completing" (Kadhani and Riddell, 1981, p 61).

The small number of blacks obtaining secondary level qualifications naturally acted as a protection for whites on the job market. Further legalised discrimination occurred whereby certain job categories were reserved for whites resulting in a very high level of unemployment for black secondary school leavers, sometimes estimated to be as high as 80 per cent. Nevertheless, the incentives to enter wage employment were strong on account of the very high wage differential between peasant households with an estimated monthly income of \$12 (in the formal sector employment) and blacks who earned \$67 per month. The figure for black farm workers was \$19 per month while white formal sector employees earned \$513, which meant that white workers earned 27 times as much as black workers and 42.8 times as much as peasant households (Brand, 1981, p 46).

The trend in health service provision is similar. Prior to independence health services were concentrated in urban areas where the majority of whites lived and services were highly differentiated for blacks and whites both in quality and quantity. The health budget was concentrated on providing curative services in the major city-based hospitals and in the 1970s only 2 to 3 per cent of the budget was invested in preventative health care which would benefit rural black people. Even within the curative services, "in 1977 the system provided one clinic or hospital bed per 255 whites as against one bed per 1 261 blacks. (No.1: The Nations Health).

Again, in the area of housing at the time of independence not one white family was without a roof over their heads while thousands of black families lived in temporary shelters or in self-built squatter settlements or were crowded into inadequate accommodation occupied by extended family members. At the time of independence, in Harare alone, 50 000 families required housing (Wield, 1981, p.170). Such housing that was provided for blacks was largely funded out of profits from municipal beer gardens in black areas. "This was one of the most curious anachronisms thrown up by colonial history - the idea that the extent to which the state provides welfare services should depend to a great extent upon the consumption of beer by people who are to receive the services (Harris, 1981, p.85).

The above details on patterns of racial discrimination do not any way give a full picture of the social and economic injustices suffered by blacks in Rhodesia. For instance for many years black people were not allowed to walk on the pavement in Salisbury and even to this day

some whites still use the terms "boy" and "girl" when referring to black adult men and women. There were no opportunities for legal redress when black people were publicly humiliated or unfairly treated. In summary whites had power and privileges at the expense of black humiliation and exploitation.

There is little surprise then that blacks, after many years of fruitless negotiations with successive governments finally decided in 1972 to embark on the second "chimurenga", liberation struggle to gain their political, social and economic rights. However, what is surprising is the degree of forbearance that was exercised during the war, and particularly after the war, towards whites.

Non-Racism in the Liberation Wars

From the above description of what blacks suffered under the colonial regime it could be expected that counter-racism would develop in the form of a blanket anger, resentment and desire for revenge towards whites. Nonetheless, the evidence of non-racism is strong among the Shona people dating from their first encounter with the white settlers.

The National Archives of Zimbabwe gives an account of a very important spirit medium who had an influence on early attitudes to white settlers and who also had a role in the inspiration of the first "chimurenga". This medium, known as Ambuya Nehanda, was a person of exceptional leadership and spiritual qualities which were recognised at an early age. The archives account states that "Ironically the blacks had welcomed the settlers in a spirit of brotherhood and looked forward to peaceful coexistence with people they expected were temporary neighbours. Nehanda was at one with other religious and political leaders in urging the people to cooperate with the new settlers, including missionaries. She actually encouraged, and even helped in, the spread of Christianity in the Mazoe area... The reason for this was the apparent harmony between the Christian God and the Shona high-god Mwari. (National Archives of Zimbabwe).

The response of the missionaries was disillusioning. They did not display the same tolerance and began banning key ritual cultural practices including the playing of traditional musical instruments which were used to "call" the ancestral spirits. But the majority of people "finding that the white man had nothing better to offer than oppression and provocation, clung with greater tenacity to their old traditions" (Vambe, 1972, p 193). The activities of the missionaries were paralleled by those of the settlers who during the same period had begun expropriation of land. Thus, "as time went by it became clear to Nehanda and other Shona religious leaders that what the missionaries were teaching the people was in conflict with their own religious beliefs and would anger Mwari and the spirit-owners of the land. This added insult to the injury that was already being caused by the material and grievances arising from the settler presence." (National Archives of Zimbabwe).

Consequently, Nehanda and her spiritual and political colleagues decided that the whites must be driven out and this was the start of the first "chimurenga" in which Nehanda was an important inspirational force. In fact she was "said to have accompanied her forces to the

actions on some occasions, but it is not clear whether she actually took part in fighting. Even if she did not fight, her presence must have provided her forces with important motivation." In fact, the war, despite the major difference in weaponry, guns versus spears, which gave the settlers such an advantage was not considered to be finally over until Nehanda was eventually captured in 1897. (National Archives of Zimbabwe).

In any event, although the life and character of Nehanda, are extremely important, the main point here is that the first liberation was not based on racism but occurred on account of the cultural domination and economic exploitation that whites were perpetrating at the time.

Moving onto the second "chimurenga", again the point was repeatedly made that it was directed at oppression and not at whites as a racial group, those whites who were willing to abandon their laager were welcomed as allies, and farmers and missionaries in the war zones who opted to support the liberation fighters were given protection. Whites were also actually welcomed in the guerrilla camps. Sr. Janice McLaughlin, a Maryknoll sister from the United States of America who had been working in Rhodesia, decided to go and help in the military camps in Mozambique to which many civilians had also fled. On arriving at the camp she recalls that, "Everyone was so kind and friendly and I often wondered why an unknown American Sister should be so warmly received. I only found out much later that Cde. Tongogara had sent messages to the camps introducing me and telling them to welcome me. When I first met him in Maputo he had told me: "You helped us teach the Comrades that the colour of the skin doesn't matter". In the camp I saw signs on the walls saying "The colour of the skin isn't the enemy" (McLaughlin in Social Change and Development, 1988. p26).

Perhaps it is obvious that whites who supported the struggle would be well-treated but this tolerance was extended to all whites who did not actively support the white minority government and who did not behave in an overtly racist manner. In reflecting on the pre-independence period a well known Zimbabwean writer, Lawrence Vambe, recalls "I did not see a single instance in which any white man or woman suffered physically, even when they strayed into black areas.Somehow, black people still managed to make a clear distinction between the individual white person and the prevailing oppressive system.And I wondered how long this extraordinary virtue of tolerance and goodness in my people would last before being overtaken by indiscriminate animosity toward every member of the ruling race which was being blindly fostered by the government of the day" (Vambe 1989, p 56 - 57).

In fact, the tolerance did outlast the colonial period and has persisted under the independent black majority government in Zimbabwe.

Reconciliation After Independence

As is well known the second liberation war ended in 1979 with the Lancaster House Agreement which set out the procedures for ending the war, elections and the terms of the independence constitution. National elections followed the cease fire and to the surprise and horror of local whites, Cde Robert Mugabe's ZANU (PF) party obtained

a resounding majority of seats in parliament. Whites immediately expected revenge and brutality from the leader whom the media had for so long labelled a "brutal terrorist out to retaliate against all whites." Many whites instantly made plans to leave the country and one white school girl actually had a heart attack and died when the election results were announced. Then, that evening, Cde Mugabe made a reconciliation speech to the nation extracts of which have been reported as follows:- "We will ensure", Mugabe told the nation, "that there is a place, for everyone in this country. We want to ensure a sense of security for both the winners and the losers." There would be no sweeping nationalization; the pensions and jobs of civil servants were guaranteed; farmers would keep their farms; Zimbabwe would be non-aligned. Let us forgive and forget. Let us join hands in a new amity" (Mandaza, 1986, pp 42).

That speech was to set the tone for events which followed after the new government was established. The previous white prime minister and arch racist Ian Smith who had earlier promised in a public speech that "there would never be majority rule in my lifetime," was given government protection in the form of a 24 hour body guard. Two whites were made cabinet ministers and five members of the 24 member cabinet were drawn from the opposition black party, PF-ZAPU. In addition immediate steps were taken to integrate the three armies that had been fighting in the war ie, the Rhodesian army and the two liberation forces, Zanla and Zipra. the former Rhodesian army chief, Commander General Walls, was actually incorporated into the new military hierarchy.

There were of course pragmatic reasons for the above steps and these have been succinctly summarised by Ibbo Mandaza, "Mugabe would have to begin the delicate task of state-bulding - and nationa-building - in an atmosphere of intense suspicion and even hostility on the part of those he had defeated at home; against the background of overt and covert threats of military, political, and economic destabilisation from South Africa; and with the pervasive threat of economic and political blackmail by the imperialist powers that had been the undertakers of the Lachaster House Agreement but were now seeking to keep the new state in line. The policy of reconciliation and national unity became almost necessary and even inevitable in these difficult circumstances, if only to avert any opportunities for enermies (within and without) to lure this and that faction to the detriment of national security" (Mandaza, 1986, p.42)

However, despite the above practical reasons for the reconciliation policy there would appear to have been more than expediency in the policy for it was carried out in spirit as well as in law. Not only did the new black majority government abide by the Lancaster House Agreement, but there were no generalised outbreaks of racial violence at the grassroots level. Blacks continued to treat whites according to the attitudes which the whites themselves displayed. Yet, this was the time when any covert racism in blacks, which could not find expression under the previous oppresive regime, would be likely to emerge, but it did not. The only time since independence that racial violence has erupted in Zimbabwe was on the occasion of the death of President Samora Machel of Mozambique, but even then there were no serious injuries to whites and the main damage was to the offices of Air Malawi and South African airways. Again a non-racial basis is apparent in that Air Malawi is the national airline of a black state but it was seen as a symbol of collaboration with the South African regime.

The question then remains as to how blacks in Zimbabwe continued to

be non-racist throughout the years of colonial oppression and how this lack of racism culminated in the statement of Cde. Mugabe, "Let us forgive and forget. Let us join hands in a new amity."

It is suggested in this paper that there is a cultural foundation for this attitude, that Shona culture survived the years of colonial rule, and that black people never lost a sense of their own inner dignity and the worth of their own culture, in spite of the economic and social oppression which they endured.

Factors Favouring Cultural Continuity

It is ironic that the very structure which served to maintain economic exploitation of blacks also served to preserve their cultural base. As hinted at earlier, during the colonial period blacks were discouraged from moving into urban areas with their families. The economic strategy was to maintain a labour reserve in the rural areas where land was over-utilised and impoverishment prevailed and to draw workers from this pool at a very low wage. Wages were artificially maintained at this low level on the basis that peasant farming had been undermined and offered no competition in earning capacity.

Then, to prevent the cities from becoming invaded with job seekers such legislation as the Vagrancy Act and African Urban Areas Accommodation and Registration Act of 1946 maintained a valve so that only blacks in employment could remain in town. In addition, there was scant family accommodation and since the low wages could hardly support a family without subsidisation from peasant farming anyway the vast majority of families maintained a base in the rural areas which would also provide a retreat in old age since pensions were scarce. Thus home remained "kumusha", in the village, and these rural roots meant that very few people became de-culturated. Even, today many professional urban people if asked where they spent Christmas will reply that they went "home" meaning "kumusha".^{MP} A further indication of the resilience of traditional culture occurred in the role that spirit mediums played in the second "chimurenga". This role is explained by Lan, "The contribution of the mhondoro mediums to the guerrilla war was that they made the acceptance of the guerrillas easier, quicker, more binding and more profound by allowing this new feature in the experience of the peasantry to be assimilated to established symbolic categories" (Lan 1985, p 165). The socialist ideology which permeated the liberation struggle did not drive a wedge between the people and their culture and religion, but rather a link was forged between the first and second "chimurengas" by the spirit mediums who saw the struggle as a continuation of Nehanda's stance. Thus traditional cultural practices and values still have a strong hold in Zimbabwe and although many western ways have been adopted particularly in urban areas the "African soul" has not been violated.

Shona Cultural Foundation for Peace

In analysing Shona culture with respect to the aspects which have contributed to reconciliation certain methodological weaknesses must be acknowledged at the outset. An exploration will be made of particular cultural values and formations to assess whether they could be classified as 'yin' within ancient Chinese system or as "feminine" within Jungian individual psychology. Firstly, an exhaustive analysis of Shona values in general based on field research would have provided a better basis for analysis. As it is not all values are considered and the author had drawn on secondary sources and her own participant observation as a resident in Zimbabwe from birth. Furthermore, not

all aspects of the "feminines" in Jungian terms are taken into account so the process of exploitation is selective in terms of Shona culture and the Jungian perspectives.

Furthermore, certain adaptations of Jung's approach also occur in that although he viewed the "feminine" or 'anima' aspect of the individual psyche as archetypal and therefore as arising in the shared experience of all human beings mediated through the collective unconscious, he did not apply the concept to societies as a whole. His social analysis took a different direction and he relied more on sociologists such as Durkheim. However, as Ira Progoff has said of Jung, "He derives the deeper levels of the unconscious not from individual experience, but from the great communal experiences of mankind and he thus places social factors at the origin of the psyche". Therefore, while acknowledging that Jung himself did not proceed in this way it may not be considered completely inappropriate to apply what Jung saw as manifesting in the individual psyche, also to social groups where the origin of the dynamic concerned is in the collective unconscious.

The main purpose of the paper is not to prove that Jung's concepts of the 'anima' and 'animus' can be applied at the societal level, nor even to prove that Shona culture manifests more of the "feminine", yin than the "masculine", yang, but rather to identify the particular features of Shona culture which have contributed to a non-racist reconciliatory approach to conflict and it is the hunch of the author that these features can be seen as a constellation which coincides very much with the characteristics of the Jungian anima or with the ancient Chinese yin syndrome. The usefulness of this approach could be for other groups in self-reflection to consider whether this constellation has been "integrated", to borrow another Jungian term or whether it is still in the "shadow" or unconscious area of the societal psyche, for it is the contention of the author as in the case of the individual psyche, that this constellation is never absent but only may be more or less manifest. The application of the yin/yang analysis provides a "handle" for isolating and understanding the peace-making aspects of Shona culture.

The Yin Constellation

In considering the feminine constellation the term yin will be used hereafter to emphasise that this constellation is not exclusive to women but exists in all people and is exhibited to a greater or lesser extent in everyone. A precedent has been set for applying the yin/yang dimension in a cultural context by Fritjof Capra in his book "Turning Point", but Capra firstly clarifies the combination of the two forces in every individual, "the Chinese ancients believed that all people, whether men or women, go through yin and yang phases. The personality of each man and woman is not a static entity but a dynamic phenomenon resulting from the interplay between feminine and masculine elements" (Capra, 1982, p. 36).

Capra then expands the discussion to the societal level and distinguishes between the yin and yang mode and the implications of each. He maintains that yin action is conscious of the environment, yang action is conscious of the self. In modern terminology one could

call the former eco-action and the latter ego-action "(Capra, 1982, p 38). He goes on to identify some of the main aspects of each, "These two kinds of activity are closely related to two kinds of knowledge, or two modes of consciousness, which have been recognised as characteristic properties of the human mind throughout the ages. They are usually called the intuitive and the rational and have traditionally been associated with religion or mysticism and with science. Although the association of the yin and yang with these two modes of consciousness is not part of the original Chinese terminology, it seems to be a natural extension of the ancient imagery and will be so regarded in our discussion" (Capra, 1982, p.38). Likewise in the discussion in this paper the "ancient imagery" will be extended to application at the societal level.

Capra then provides a "framework for exploration of cultural values" by identifying two contrasting lists of characteristics.

<u>YIN</u>	<u>YANG</u>
Feminine	Masculine
Contractive	Expansive
Conservative	Demanding
Responsive	Aggressive
Cooperative	Competitive
Intuitive	Rational
Synthesizing	Analytic (Capra, 1982, p 38).

Capra considers that western society has a predominance of yang values but before considering fully the applicability of these constellations to various societies it may be as well to fill out the picture by turning to Jung and his concept of the anima. In focussing on the anima the concentration will not be on the aspects which Jung described as occurring in the repressed anima of an individual male psyche but rather the emphasis will be on the general characteristics of the "feminine" which could be manifest in a man or a woman. As James Hillman who differed from Jung in this respect has clarified, "the anima is an archetype and an archetype as such cannot be attributed to or located within the psyche of either sex" (Hillman in Sanford, 1980, p.106).

The anima archetype has qualities that have not been fully covered in the yin list above, though Capra is obviously aware that there is more to the constellation than those characteristics that he highlighted. For instance, in Jungian terms the "anima carries spiritual values" and is more concerned with the spiritual than materialism as a value (Fordham, 1953, p.54). The synthesing, cooperative aspects of the "yin" mode are extended to a preference for "harmony with nature" rather than "mastery over nature". The latter phrases are borrowed from Wyne Hanson Dubray who distinguishes between American Indian and Anglo-American values along lines that are very similar to the yin/yang polarity which Capra defined as "eco-action" and ego-action" (Dubray, 1985, p.31). The anima also is more concerned with relationships than action-in-the-world. In fact, "the development of relationships is of primary importance in the shaping of life, and this is the real field of feminine creative power" (Emma Jung, 1957, p.21). This concern with relationship and

a preference for cooperation over competition means that the yin approach to relationship in groups is more oriented towards democratic power "with" rather than hierarchical power "over", the latter being viewed by Capra as very patriarchal (Capra, 1982, p.282).

The form of decision-making linked to power "with" would be consensus whereas power "over" would result in top-down decision-making at worst and voting at best. Some of the above is summarised by June Singer who also adds her own conceptualisation of feminine values, "among these values is a preference for cooperation rather than competition, for a team approach to problems rather than strictly individualistic approach, for giving credit to intuition at times over and above a deliberate thinking process, and for emphasizing sexuality and relationship over and above power and violence" (Singer, 1977, p.15).

Perhaps, the most important aspects of the anima is the openness to the "shadow" unconscious part of the psyche. The yin is often associated with the dark, or unknown and the yang the light, or known, and these can be linked with the unconscious and conscious areas of the psyche. As Emma Jung has stated, "because the anima, as the feminine aspect of man, possesses this receptivity and absence of prejudice toward the irrational, she is designated the mediator between consciousness and the unconsciousness" (Emma Jung, 1957, p.56). This openness to the unconscious including the irrational shadow aspects is of particular importance as the greater the awareness and acceptance of the shadow area, the less need there is to project it onto others.

This point leads us to the next section which involves a scanning of Shona culture with respect to its yin/yang dimensions.

The Yin in Shona Culture and its Relationship to Reconciliation

Before exploring the yin in Shona culture it may be useful to aggregate some of the above yin and yang characteristics as follows:-

<u>YIN</u>	<u>YANG</u>
a) Consciousness of the environment Eco-action Harmony with nature	a) Consciousness of self Ego-action Mastery over nature
b) Intuitive Synthesizing Religious Spiritual	b) Rational Analytic Scientific Material
c) Relationship Cooperation Responsive Team Approach Power "with" Consensus Equity	c) Action-in-the-world Competitive Aggressive Individualistic approach Power "over" Top-down decision-making Hierarchy

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| d) Unconscious
Dark | d) Conscious
Light |
| e) Contractive
Conservative | e) Expansive
Demanding (experiment ^d) |

The above conglomerates may then be considered in relation to Shona culture and further analysed with respect to their possible role in forgiveness and reconciliation.

- a) It is very clear that Shona people regard themselves as part of nature and in interrelationship with nature. If droughts occur they commonly consult the ancestral spirits via a spirit medium to find out what has been done that is offensive, which has caused the drought. A great deal of trouble is taken to maintain proper relationship with the natural environment and it is expected that violations will have negative impact on prosperity. This sense of belonging to the environment actually gave the Shona hope that they would win the war of liberation. "In opposition to the conquerors, the white population of Rhodesia, all Zimbabweans were regarded (and largely regarded themselves) as autochthons or, less pedantically, as 'sons of the soil' (Lan, 1985, p.172). Interestingly in Shona the term 'vana vevhu' children of the soil, was more commonly used than "sons" as a rallying cry during the war. "It was a call to all those who were denied their full rights and freedoms in their own native land" (Sithole in Lan, 1985, p.172).

Thus the sense of belonging to nature did not so much lead to reconciliation with the white settlers but in fact it acted as a rallying point for demanding the restoration of the land to those who really respected it and to the ancestors who had guarded it and provided rain. Previous conquerors, such as the Ndebele in the west of Zimbabwe, were assimilated and would "participate in rituals that ensure the continuation of its (the land's) fertility..." But for the whole period that they held political power in Zimbabwe, the white conquerors refused to accept the supremacy of the autochthonous ancestors, either as owners of the land or as bringers of the rain" (Lan, 1985, p.173). This lack of participation on the part of the whites in rituals involving respect for the ancestors and their relationship to nature was a cause of the rift between the Shona and the settlers. It was other "yin" characteristics that provided the basis for reconciliation.

- b) As has become obvious from the above, Shona society is religious rather than secular. A great deal of emphasis is placed on spirituality and in fact the spiritual dimension permeates the whole of life. "The foreigner so it seems to the Shona tends to regard religion as a separate compartment of life, but for the Shona themselves religion is an integral, all-pervading element of their way of living and thinking and acting". (Hanman, in Gelfand, 1977 forward).

Shona religious thinking not only emphasises right relationship with nature but also among human beings. Whenever, disputes occurred or even killings some kind of reparation had to be made to restore right relationship and the ancestors had to be placated. For instances Gelfand in his book "The Genuine Shona"

describes how, "In the olden days, a person guilty of manslaughter would offer a daughter to the bereaved family. This act would quieten feelings because the guilty family retained the status of the wife's father (tezvara)" (Gelfand, 1973, p. 1).

There are also many instances after the second liberation war of placation of the spirits of the dead. Garlake describes how a particularly highly respected spirit medium, Sophia Tsvatayi Mudimu who "played an important role in the last war advising and assisting the liberation forces" later was involved "in conducting a traditional ceremony of reconciliation and peace at the Monument (Great Zimbabwe)" (Garlake, 1983, p.16).

The account does not relate whether the "reconciliation and peace" referred to peace required between the living and the dead or between blacks and whites, but it nevertheless illustrates the principal of restoring good relationships after a dispute. It is considered that this concern arising out of Shona religion played a role in the willingness of blacks to reconcile with whites after the war.

c) Obviously the third conglomerate of yin characteristics in dealing with relationship relates very much to the second for as mentioned earlier religion and life cannot be separated. Nevertheless further attention will be given to this aspect of Shona culture because it is so central. Much is revealed about the Shona attitude to relationship in the values relative to competition. Gelfand states that, "As compared with western society, the Shona have no system of honours which can be awarded for outstanding performance or the display of exceptional ability.... What stands out most is the emphasis placed on character, respect, love and compassion" (Gelfand, 1973, p. 1). Humility is considered to be a "cardinal virtue" and boasting and ostentatiously doing better than others are discouraged. The feelings of others should always be considered. There is no tradition of the male hero and no military cult.. "The fighter is not admired but instead the person who engaged in good husbandry of the soil was respected." (Vambe, 1989) Thus, the yin values of responsiveness rather than aggression and cooperation rather than competition are very much in evidence and would contribute to a willingness to end the war as soon as the objectives had been attained rather than engaging in "over-kill".

The fact that the group's well-being was considered to be more important than individual progress naturally leads on to consensus decision-making in order to ensure that no parties are offended. In traditional society, where there was a slight hierarchy in that each district had a chief, the chief had to go through a listening process of finding out the views of the people through long deliberations which, when finally concluded, would be voiced as the opinion of the chief but the chief would also take into account the view point of the people.

This relationship of the chief to the people was misunderstood by the white settler government who mistakenly thought that the chief had power "over" his people rather than power "with". Consequently, the white government attempted to gain control over

rural people by appropriating the chiefs through giving them salaries and status within the local government structure. However, those chiefs who maintained loyalty to the white government rather than to their own people during the second chimurenga became alienated from their people and were often killed by guerillas (Ranger, 1983, p.36).

The whole concept of power "with" is also important in relationship to the new government of Zimbabwe because there is no tradition of a cooperative opposition outside the decision-making structure. In the traditional system everybody was incorporated so dissenting views were expressed from within rather than outside the structure. Thus, it has been important to incorporate other black political parties and even whites into the ruling party structure. This synthesising aspect, in contrast to a fragmented multi-party system, is decidedly yin and has played a role in the reconciliation process, not only between blacks and whites, but also between the two major black political parties, who on New Year's Day 1988, announced a unity accord.

Lastly, in relation to the concept of hierarchy and status in Shona society is interesting in that it is non-monolithic and very complex with interweaving threads of different status relationships. For instance, in general, the elderly would have high status by virtue of the respect accorded to the wisdom of old age and its proximity to the spirit world so a younger chief would have to be respectful towards a very elderly uncle. Then within a homestead a young wife could be asked to do errands by her mother and sisters-in-law in her husband's village but when she visited her parents home she could in turn send her brothers' wives on errands. So there are many anomalies and nobody is in a fixed status position in relation to everybody else except for the generalised respect for the elderly and in this system wealth did not make very much difference. Consequently, whites were not automatically respected for their possessions and although an elderly domestic worker may have been humiliated by his employers he could still enjoy great respect in his home village. Possibly, this situation contributed to the way in which many domestic workers while resenting the harsh condition under which they worked also laughed at their employers and did not seem to build up the kind of hatred and desire for revenge that was evidenced after the French Revolution and which is immortalised in the character of Madame le Farge in Dicken's "Tale of Two Cities."

- d) It is difficult to provide clear evidence of openness to the unconscious or lack thereof but perhaps one indicator could be the seriousness with which dreams are regarded since dreams are according to Freud, and supported by Jung, "the royal road to the unconscious". In traditional Shona culture there was no apparent conceptualisation of the conscious and the unconscious yet dreams were taken very seriously and indeed are by all African cultures known to the author. Furthermore, intuition is usually heeded and this again taps the unconscious as a Jungian analyst working with a Xhosa traditional healer in South Africa has stated, "The 'two worlds' I am concerned with are the Western world which is primarily scientific, rational and ego-oriented, and the world

of the black healer and his people, which is primarily intuitive, non-rational or oriented towards the inner world of symbols and images of the collective unconscious." (Buhrman, 1984, p.15).

The inner world of the collective unconscious is also revealed through myths, traditional songs and dances all of which have a primary place in Shona culture. An interesting feature of popular songs is that the lyrics often deal with current social problems and people's short comings. There are songs about the plight of a second wife, and about baby-dumping and many other social ills. Songs provide a kind of social commentary but not in a judgmental distancing way. For instance, a few lines translated from a song quoted in a book called "Songs that won the Liberation War" tells of the plight of people in the rural areas during the war,

"Come and see what's happening in the rural areas
People drinking themselves silly at beer parties
Oh! come and see this bad omen
Behold this madness it melts my heart
This is a bad situation" (Pongweni, 1982, p.100).

There is obviously concern expressed about the drinking but without judgement and rejection.

Can it be suggested from this slight evidence that there is acceptance of the shadow material in the unconscious and acknowledgement and acceptance of weakness? Probably, the evidence is poor but nevertheless it is the observation of the author that there is greater willingness to acknowledge problems in Zimbabwe than in many western countries and often current problems are talked about with great deal of humour, which does not mean that the problems are not regarded seriously but rather it is a way of getting them into perspective and not being undermined by them.

If this tolerance of weakness in Shona culture is accurately described, then it would partly explain the lack of racial prejudice which is so common among Shona people. It would seem that the openness to the unconscious which presupposes an acceptance of its darker shadow contents would result in greater tolerance of the foibles of others and would obviate the necessity for projection of the shadow onto others, and this projection must be the basis of most racial stereotyping. As it is, there is a clearly individualised responsiveness exhibited by Shona people rather than a tendency to stereotyping. It is noticeable how Shona people are able to assess people's characters and attitudes very quickly and accurately on the basis of non-verbal cues alone. This ability to assess people accurately would in turn suggest projection is not a major problem for Shona people. However, this is now veering into inductive reasoning.

- e) In considering the last of the yin characteristics, which Capra included in his list, ie, contractive and conservative it is not easy to understand what he meant by contractive in a cultural context and he does not elaborate the concept. Perhaps he referred to a 'small is beautiful' approach in contrast to the expansive view of 'bigger is better.' Also, the meaning of conservative

is confused by its opposite being stated as demanding. A more common opposite to conservative would be experimental. Anyway, notwithstanding the confusion surrounding both terms it is hard to assess whether traditional Shona culture was contractive or expansive. There is a current tendency to favour bigger projects at the national level but on the other hand traditional values would discourage individual ostentation. Either way, it would not seem that the concept has any bearing on reconciliation.

Cultural conservatism on the other hand, was apparent, in that the first "chimurenga" was partly triggered by the lack of cultural sensitivity of whites and the steadfastness of blacks in refusing to abandon their cultural practices. Conservatism probably would not enhance reconciliation. Neither does it seem to have hindered it because now that the cultural foundations of the country are firmly established there is actually a great deal of appreciation for other cultures. The respect for traditional culture is evidenced in that a statue of Ambuya Nehanda, the inspirational spirit medium of the first "chimurenga" has been given a place of honour in the entrance to the parliament building, and at the same time^{at} the annual national cultural gala white and other minority groups are encouraged to do their own dances and are also invited to participate in traditional Shona dancing. Cultural integrity and integration are thus both maintained and do provide a good basis for reconciliation.

Concluding Comments

A number of yin characteristics have been identified and their prevalence in Shona culture has been discussed followed in each case by an exploration of their contribution to reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Probably more yin characteristics could have been cited and probably not all would have been manifest in Shona culture. It seems that not all yin characteristics contributed to reconciliation. Thus a highly selective and therefore suspected process has been applied. Nevertheless, there are certainly contrasts in Shona society to the constellation of yang characteristics which Capra sees as being strongly manifest in western societies, and it would seem that the yin features of Shona culture have played a role in the extraordinary reconciliation policy implemented in Zimbabwe.

What is striking in recalling the events during the colonial period and its aftermath is the extraordinary balance which the Shona people maintained. There was neither an excess of aggression nor submission, neither revenge nor capitulation but there was what might be viewed as an entirely appropriate response. Friendliness was shown to the settlers in the beginning. When this was abused a firm stand was made but the battle was lost on account of military technology. Then negotiations were attempted over a long period but failed and so a second firm stand was made but not carried too far (possibly not far enough!). Then, when the objectives were achieved all were encouraged to leave the past behind and "join hands in amity". Such inner balance could only be termed extremely skilful. Possibly, the basis cannot be entirely fathomed. However, ^{it is unlikely} that the explanation can be found in entirely political or economic terms. It does seem that a further explanation is needed and perhaps ideas on a cultural psychological dimension as proffered above could at least provoke further investigations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY IN SOCIAL CASEWORK : THE JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY
SOCIAL WORK (JANUARY 1985)

- BOURDILLON, M. (1982) The Shona Peoples
Mambo Press, Zimbabwe.
- BRAND, C. (1981) "The Anatomy of an Unequal
Society" in Stoneman, C (ed)
Zimbabwe's Inheritance
MacMillan, London.
- BUHRMAN, M.V. (1984) Living in Two Worlds
Human & Rousseau, Cape Town.
- CAPRA, F. (1982) The Turning Point
Bantam, New York.
- CLAREMONT DE CASTILLEJO, I.
(1973) Knowing Woman : A Feminine
Psychology
Harper & Row, New York.
- DUBRAY, W.H. (1985) "American Indian Values :
Critical Factor in Casework"
- FORDHAM, F. (1953) An Introduction to Jung's
Psychology
Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- GARLAKE, P. (1983) "Prehistory and Ideology in
Zimbabwe" in Peel, J. & Ranger,
T. Past and Present in Zimbabwe
Manchester University Press,
Manchester.
- GELFAND, M. (1973) The Genuine Shona
Mambo Press, Zimbabwe.
- HANNAN, Fr. (1977) Forward to Gelfand, M.
The Spiritual Beliefs of the
Shona
Mambo Press, Zimbabwe.
- HARRIS, L. (1981) "The Reproduction of Inequality
:Taxation and the Social Order"
in Stoneman, C (ed) Zimbabwe's
Inheritance
MacMillan, London.
- HART, D. (1982) The Hunter and the Swan Maiden
: A fairy tale of Individuation
Round Table Associates,
Wilmington.

- JUNG, C. (1961) Memories, Dreams, Reflections
Landan House, New York.
- JUNG, C. (1964) Man and His Symbols
Doubleday, Garden City.
- JUNG, E. (1957) Animus and Anima
Spring, Dallas.
- JOHNSON, R. (1976) SHE
Religious Publishing Co.,
King of Prussia.
- JOURNAL Journal of Southern African
Studies (1988) Special Issue
on "Culture and Consciousness
in Southern Africa", Volume
14, No. 2, January 1988.
- KADHANI, M. & RIDDELL, R. (1981) "Education" in Stoneman, C (ed)
Zimbabwe's Inheritance
MacMillan, London
- LAN, D. (1985) Guns and Rain : Guerillas &
Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe Publishing House,
Zimbabwe.
- MANDAZA, I. (1986) Zimbabwe : The Political
Economy of Transition 1980 -
1986
Codesria Books, Senegal.
- McLAUGHLIN, Sr. J. (1988) "Woman, Believer and
Revolutionary" in Social Change
and Development, No. 21, 1988.
- NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE "Ambuya Nehanda : Fighter for
Justice" in supplement to
Social Change and Development,
No. 21, 1988.
- NEUMANN, E. (1956) Amor and Psyche
Pantheon, New York.
- PALMER, R. (1977) "The Agricultural History of
Rhodes" in Palmer, R. &
Parsons, N.
The Roots of Rural Poverty in
Central and Southern Africa.

- PHIMSTER, I. (1977) "Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890 - 1914" in Palmer, R. & Parsons, N. The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa.
- PONGWENI, A. (1982) Songs that Won the Liberation War
College Press, Harare.
- PROGOFF, I. (1953) Jung's Psychology and its Social Meaning
Grove, New York.
- RANGER, T. (1985) Peasant Consciousness and Guerilla War in Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe Printing House, Zimbabwe.
- RANGER, T. (1983) "Tradition and Travesty : Chiefs and the Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960 - 1980"
in Peel, J. & Ranger T. Past and Present in Zimbabwe
Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- RANGER, T. & KIMAMBO, I. (1972) The Historical Study of African Religions
Heinemann, London.
- RIDDELL, R. (1978) The Land Question
Mambo Press, Zimbabwe.
- SANFORD, J. (1980) The Invisible Partners
Paulist, New York.
- SINGER, J. (1977) Androgeny : Toward a New Theory of Sexuality
Anchor, New York.
- VAMBE, L. (1989) Personal communication.
- VAMBE, L. (1988) How we Recovered our Birth-right
Unpublished manuscript of a book.
- VAMBE, L. (1972) An Ill-Fated People : Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes
Heinemann, London.

- VAN DER POST, L. (1976) Jung and the Story of our Time
Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- VAN DER POST, L. (1957) Race Prejudice as Self
Rejection
Workshop Publications, New York
- WILHELM, R. (1984) The Secret of the Golden Flower
Arkana, London
(first published by Kegan Paul,
1931).

Trisha Swift,
School of Social Work,
ZIMBABWE.



This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>