THE POLITICS, STRATEGIES AND DYNAMICS OF PEACE IN NONSTATE SOCIETIES:
THE ADAPTIVE RATIONALE BEHIND CORROBOREE AND CALUMET

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Peace: a period of cheating between two periods of fighting
Ambrose Bierce, Devil’s Dictionary

So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation.

INTRODUCTION
Nonstate societies do not exist in a noble and peacefully sublime state of nature. Consensus exists among students of nonstate (‘primitive’, preindustrial, non-industrial, pretechnological, non technological, acephalous, ‘simple’, ‘stone-age’, small-scale, nonstate, prestate, nonliterate, preliterate, traditional, premodern, precivilized, foraging, subsistence, band-level, tribal, decentralized, hunter-gatherer, indigenous, folk, Naturvölker, etc. – and in older literature ‘savage’) societies that they were/are not particularly peaceful (Alexander, 1979, 1987, 1989; Andreski, 1954, 1964, 1971; Bagehot, 1872; Bigelow, 1969, 1975; Bowles, 2009; Caplow & Hicks, 1995; Chagnon, 1988 et seq.; Cohen, 1984; Coker, 2010; Corning, 1975, 1983, 2003, 2005; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Darwin, 1871; Davie, 1929; Diamond, 1992, 1999, 2005, 2012; Durham, 1976; Edgerton, 1992; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974, 1975; Ember, 1978; Ember & Ember, 1992, 1994, 1997; Falger, 1994; Freeman, 1964; Gat, 1999, 2000, 2006, 2015; Ghiglieri, 1987 et seq.; Glover & Ginsberg, 1934; Goldstein, 2001; Gottschall, 2008; Harris, 1989; Helbling, 2006a,b, 2011; Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg, 1915; Huxley, 1888; James, 111; Johnson & Thayer, 2016; Jones & Allen, 2014; Jorgensen, 1980; Keeley, 1996; Kelly, 2000; LeBlanc, 2014; LeBlanc & Register, 2003; Lee & Daly, 1999; Livingstone, 1968; Low, 1993, 2000; Meyer, 1977, 1981, 1987, 2002; Mühlmann, 1940, 1977; Nivette, 2011; Otterbein, 1989, 2004; Richerson & Boyd, 2005; Ross, 1983; Service, 1962; D.L. Smith, 2007; Spencer, 1892; Sumner, 1911; Thayer, 2004; Turchin, 2003; Turney-High, 1949; Van der Dennen, 1995, 1999, 2002; E.O. Wilson, 1975, 1978; M.L. Wilson, 2013; Wrangham, 1999; Wrangham & Glowacki, 2012; Wrangham & Peterson, 1996; Q. Wright, 1942; see also Bingham & Souza, 2009; Crook, 1994; Pinker, 2011: Ch. 2; Potts & Hayden, 2008; Shermer, 2004, 2015).1 These and most other scholars of warfare in nonliterate societies (including myself) are fully aware that raiding, sneak attacks and ambushes in these societies were/are utterly lethal and disgustingly bloody affairs; often indiscriminate massacres with genocidal intent; even though military historians Dyer (1985) and Keegan (1993), together with Ehrenreich (1997) and others, are co-responsible for disseminating the notion that warfare in nonliterate societies was a harmless, non-bloody, highly ritualized affair (see Textbox “The Myth of the Peaceful Savage”). Even relatively peaceful contemporary hunter-gatherers, such as the Bushmen and Hadza, are known to have engaged in intergroup combat when they were not surrounded by stronger peoples (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974; Livingstone, 1967; Symons, 1979).

According to Bowles (2009), Daly & Wilson (1988), Ember (1978), Ember & Ember (1997), Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915), Keeley (1996), Van der Dennen (1995), Q. Wright (1942), and others who have presented quantitative evidence, the overwhelming majority of known nonstate societies (90 to 95 percent) have been involved in warfare. War in nonstate societies has severe consequences: war-related male mortality is as high as 35% on average and overall war-related mortality is at 25% on average in their samples including the Abelam, Andamanese, Anggor, Auyana, Baktaman (Faiwolmin), Blackfoot (Piegan), Bororo, Buin,
Cahto (Kato), Chimbu, Chippewa, Comanche, Crow, Dani, Dinka, Eipo, Etoro, Fijians, Fore, Gebusi, Hewa, Huli, Jivaro (Shuar), Kalinga, Kamano, Kapauku, Kunimaipa, Mae Enga, Marind Anim, Mekranoti, Modoc, Mohave, Mtekwana Zulu, Murngin, Nalumin, Tauade, Tauna-Awa, Tehuelche, Telefolmin, Tiwi, Tsembaga, Usurufa, Waorani, Yanomamö, and Yurok (among others). Also regional studies, such as New Guinea (e.g., Roscoe, 1996 et seq.; Wiessner, 1998, 2006; Wiessner & Tumu, 1998; Wiessner, Tumu, Tumu & Pupu, 2007), Aboriginal Australians (e.g., Allen, 2014; Chaseling, 1957; Fison & Howitt, 1967; Gat, 2015; Kimber, 1990; Meggitt, 1962; Morgan, 1980; Pardoe, 2014; Strethow, 1970; Warner, 1958; Wheeler, 1910), North American Indians (e.g., Biolsi, 1984; Burch, 1974; Chacon & Mendoza, 2007a; Ewers, 1975; Jorgensen, 1980; Kroeber, 1925; W.E. Lee, 2007; Maschner & Reedy-Maschner, 1998; Mason, 2013; McCorkle, 1978; Mishkin, 1940; Newcomb, 1950; Secoy, 1953; M. Smith, 1938; Secoy, 1953; M. Smith, 1938) and South American Amazonia (e.g., Chacon & Mendoza, 2007b; Métraux, 1949; Walker & Bailey, 2013) point to the same number of casualties. The latter authors report that violence led to about 30% of adult deaths, of which about 70% were males, in lowland South American societies.²

In general, estimates of the mortality resulting from ‘primitive’ war and/or feuding range from < 1% to 33% of adult male deaths from all causes, with an average of about 20% for war-infested areas such as Amazonia and Highland New Guinea, and < 1% to about 7% of adult female deaths from all causes. Feil (1987) estimated that among the New Guinea Usurufa 12%, and among the Tauna-Awa even 16% of all female deaths was due to raiding and warfare. Among the South American Achuarä Jivaro studied by Ross (1984), even 59% of adult male and 27% of adult female deaths were caused by feuding. These are astounding figures for these relatively small populations.

These astonishing figures are comparable with mortality figures in chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) communities resulting from intercommunity raiding – and compatible with my “phylogenetic continuity” theory of male-coalitional violence (van der Dennen, 1995). According to current data, as reported by Wrangham, Wilson & Muller (2006), the average conservatively estimated risk of violent death for chimpanzees (271 per 100,000 per year) falls in the same order of magnitude as the median value for rates of death from warfare among subsistence-society hunters and farmers (164 and 595 per 100,000 per year, respectively). Thus, the authors concluded, among chimpanzees the risk of death from violence appears roughly similar to the risk experienced by humans living in subsistence societies³.

The condition among ‘primitive’ societies is not one of permanent peace nor one of permanent war but can rather be characterized as one of *permanent peacelessness* (Hartman, 1915; van der Dennen, 1995: Ch. 7) or *pseudo-peace* (Garlan, 1975), in which the state of war and the state of peace are virtually indistinguishable because these societies are always *prepared for war* even if they are not *actually at war* (in contrast to state-level societies in which “inter bellum et pacem nihil medium”). In the words of Glover & Ginsberg (1934), “The antithesis between war and peace is really inapplicable to the simple conditions in which these [‘simple’] peoples live. Anything like the organized and aggressive warfare which we find in early history and among the more advanced of the simpler societies can have no place in the life of the simplest societies, for this implies organization, discipline and differentiation between leaders and led which the people of the lowest culture do not possess. But if these do not have war, neither have they peace”. Roscoe (2013: 475), who studied the Yangoru Boiken of Papua New Guinea, verbalizes exactly what I mean by the concept of permanent peacelessness:
There are some singular oddities about the way anthropology approaches war and peace. For one thing, we phrase the issue in binary terms, as though communities are either at war or at peace — either “on” or “off”. This is really not the case: even when they are at war, communities are also always at peace. What I mean by this rather cryptic statement is that political communities, the units that wage war, are spheres of peace, units whose members somehow or another contrive to remain more or less at peace with one another on an ongoing basis. War can and does periodically break out between political communities — different spheres of peace — but even at war, they remain internally peaceful; indeed, their internal unity typically increases, peace being aggressively asserted in service of the common defense.

Such a state of perpetual animosity and low-threshold warfare between tribal warrior societies is also known as ‘endemic’ warfare (or an Hobbesian condition of ‘Warre’). Where head-hunting or revenge, for example, is an important part of the mores, the maintenance of peace even among neighbors is difficult to achieve. Intergroup retaliation, feuds, and war, are practically continuous (Q. Wright, 1942). The Indians of eastern United States waged war for status within the group with the result that it was “insane, unending, continuously attritional, from our point of view and yet it was so integrated into the whole fabric of eastern culture, so dominantly emphasized within it, that escape from it was well nigh impossible” (Kroeber, 1934). Regarding the revenge motive, “wars of small-scale societies often involve cycles of revenge killing” that end “only when on side has been exterminated or driven out, or else when both sides are exhausted” (Diamond, 2012: 147).

Characteristic conclusions regarding warfare in non-state societies are Davie’s (1929: 46): “war plays a prominent part in the lives of most primitive peoples, and is usually a sanguinary affair”, and Freeman’s (1964: 112): “… the ethnographic evidence shows warfare among primitive peoples to have been endemic and, on occasion, internecine… an unending round of death and revenge”.

Nevertheless, peaceful (or probably more aptly “low-level belligerent”) societies, especially ‘true’ nomadic hunter-gatherers, are understood to exist (vide infra).

In general, two types of warfare (broadly defined as more or less violent organized intergroup or intercommunity contest competition) in animals and man have been distinguished: Raiding (“lethal male raiding” including ambush killings and dawn surprise attack – “hit-and-run tactics”), and battle or combat (confrontation of two opposing lines or phalanxes). When a battle is prearranged with the opposing forces occupying firm, fixed positions, it is called a “pitched battle”. In ‘primitive’ societies raiding is the most bloody and lethal form of warfare due to small but rapidly accumulating casualties, and occasional near-genocidal routing (e.g., Bigelow, 1969, 1975; Cheney, 1987; Davie, 1929; Diamond, 2012; Divale, 1973; Gat, 1999, 2015; Keeley, 1996; Low, 1993, 2000; Manson & Wrangham, 1991; Mühlmann, 1940, 1977; Otterbein, 1999; Soltis, Boyd & Richerson, 1995; Turney-High, 1949; Van der Dennen, 1995; Wrangham, 1999; Wrangham & Peterson, 1996; see also Pinker, 2011). Van der Dennen (1995 et seq.) has documented many genocidal massacres in non-state societies. Group extinctions due to chronic warfare between horticultural village communities were, for example, quite common in New Guinea (Hanser, 1985: 180; Soltis, Boyd & Richerson, 1995), as well as exterminations of entire hordes in hunter-gatherer Australia (Chaseling, 1957). The Yanomamö nomohori or “treacherous feast” (Chagnon, 1968 et seq.; van der Dennen, 1995) and massacres in general (Keeley, 1996; Thayer, 2004), might belong to a possible third category, besides the raid and the pitched battle, which Wadley (2003) has suggested to name “lethal treachery”. Lethal treachery is distinguished by the necessity of deceptively
peaceful social interaction between attacker and victim immediately prior to an assault. Since raiding and ambush always contain some element of surprise, treachery, stealth, and *ruses de guerre*, however, most researchers do not feel obliged to distinguish such a separate category.

Peace and war represent the two extremes of a whole array of collective survival strategies, ranging from collective retreat and cultural insulation to offensive, expansionist and/or imperialist war. Many adjacent peoples lived or live in what may be termed a state of permanent peacelessness; not exactly a state of perpetual war but neither a state of perpetual peace. Sometimes originally peaceful peoples are forced by circumstances to wage defensive wars, which, in turn, generates its own dynamics toward an optimal adaptation to a potentially hostile environment. War has high “opportunity costs”, while peace to all price carries with it high ‘existential costs’ in the form of loss of life, territory, vital resources, cultural integrity, etc. Thus most peoples may be seen maneuvering, ‘cybernating’ between Scylla and Charibdis, in a continual effort to reach an optimal balance. The ‘savage’, one might paraphrase Rousseau, is neither noble nor ignoble; he is just utterly human.

Robarchek & Robarchek (1992, 1996), discussing the Waorani in Amazonia (who are probably unique in deliberately and consciously abandoning feuding and warfare), have drawn attention to the often limited options available in a hostile environment: “In such a situation, where warfare is endemic [and rampant], a people’s options are rather limited: they can either flee, fight back, or be overwhelmed. Given the sociocultural environment of the region (and with no safe refuge available), engaging in at least defensive warfare becomes a functional necessity for group survival. Warfare, under these conditions, is contagious; once one group adopts it as a tactic for advancing its ends, others must either take it up or be destroyed” (1992: 197). Similarly, Hallpike (1977: 231) reports of the Tauade of New Guinea: “While it is true that [local groups] had to fight for their own safety and self-respect, this was because, given the general society around them, it would have been suicidal not to have done so. They fought because they had to, and to this extent warfare was functional for the individual [local group], or rather, adaptive. But in relation to the wider society, the pattern of warfare was simply a vicious circle from which there was no escape”.

Evidently, then, one factor intensifying warfare is an aggressive neighbor. Most societies that are frequently attacked not only fight to defend themselves, but also retaliate with attacks of their own, thus multiplying the amount of combat they engage in. Less aggressive societies, stimulated by more warlike groups in their vicinity, become more bellicose themselves, devote more attention to military matters, and may institutionalize some aspects of war making. The military sodalities or clubs of the Pueblo tribes of the American Southwest seem to have been an institutional response to Apache-Navajo aggressiveness since they declined in importance and membership (and in some tribes disappeared altogether) after the Apacheans were pacified by the Americans. With their long experience in defending against raids, the ‘peaceful’ Pueblos were anything but peaceable. The Spaniards found them to be tough opponents initially and valorous and effective allies later in fighting with the nomadic tribes (Simmons, 1979) (Keeley, 1996: 128-9).

Most modern biologically oriented theories of the genesis of ‘primitive’ warfare rest on the assumption that war is a consequence, an offshoot, a product or manifestation of, or at least an outlet for, human aggression. This assumption is in all probability false for a number of reasons (See van der Dennen, 1983), or unnecessary. But this capitalization on aggression has had the unfortunate effect of obscuring an important insight of many less recent anthropologists and ethnologists, namely the insight that fear may play a much greater part in the proximate explanation of primitive war (and the perpetual security dilemma) than aggression or material motives. Whiffen (1915: 61), for instance, writes on the Putomayo River Indians in South America, who lived in a permanent status belli: “This state of endless warfare is based not on avarice but on fear. They fight because they are afraid of each other, and see no protection but in the extermination of their neighbors”. This insight has not been totally lost, however. Also Meyer (1977 et seq.) recognizes the role of mutual fear (Hobbes’s ‘diffidence’) and the perceived threat to each other’s security, leading to preemptive strikes: “[T]he basic motivation in violent encounters between members of distinct groups is not ‘aggression’ impelled by some sorts of drives, instincts, or other appetites, but ‘fear’: ‘fear’ generated by the position of the cultural ‘we-group’ in a threatening universe made up of ‘they-groups’, endangering the social cosmos by their very existence” (Meyer, 1987: 90). Already Thucydides identified the root cause underlying the Peloponnesian War as fear. In contemporary warfare fear, ‘apprehension’, may also be the most common cause (Taylor, 1979).

The state of war between such societies may thus be characterized as endemic war — a relation between societies where war seems to be an end in itself rather than an instrument. Fear as the universal motive behind ‘primitive’ warfare has been most eloquently exposed by Meyer: “The manifestations of collective violence appear to spring from an atmosphere of xenophobia which, anticipating the attack by the stranger, leads to pre-emptive attack” [“Die Manifestationen kollektiver Gewalt erscheinen vielmehr einer Atmosphäre der Furcht vor dem Fremden zu entspringen, die, den Angriff des Fremden antizipierend, diesem zuvorzukommen trachtet”] (Meyer, 1981). Such fear-inspired pre-emptive attack is embedded in the extreme ethnocentrism of ‘primitive’ societies.

The fact that a culture has a high level of intergroup violence today does not preclude a change toward peacefulness in the future (Fry, 2006), as the Waorani example shows. The killing stopped because the Waorani themselves made a conscious decision to end it (Robarchek & Robarchek, 1996). The same may be true of the Tucano (Tukano) subdivisions Baniwa, Curripaco and Wakueneai (R.M. Wright, 1994). After a traumatic defeat and temporary exile from their homeland in the 1860s, the Navaho (Navajo) quickly made the transition from rapacious raiders to peaceful pastoralists (Keeley, 1996: 130). “Even in the absence of defeat, the zeal of expansionist societies tends to abate as they begin experiencing the diminishing returns of overextension or succumb to the attractions of consolidation and exploitation. Military ferocity is not a fixed quality of any race or culture, but a temporary condition that usually bears the seeds of its own destruction” (Keeley, 1996: 130).

In the early twentieth century warfare among the Arawe of the Bismarck Archipelago was given up suddenly and has never reappeared as an institutionalized element of life (Gosden, 2006). Willis (1989) tells of another transformation away from violence toward peace. He explains that the Fipa of Tanzania are a people “who in the middle of the nineteenth century emerged from a period of conflict and civil war to construct a peaceful, orderly, and prosperous
society”. History and anthropology provide various examples of societies in which relationships change from familiar friendship to bitter enmity and back again “with remarkable rapidity” (Keeley, 1996: 158, Fry, 2006).

Although Riches (1987) argued that “to speak of societies as ‘peaceful’ is analytically not helpful, since, as highly abstract categories, ‘societies’ do not act purposively”, I shall nevertheless use the terms ‘peaceful’ and ‘warlike’ as shorthand. Peaceable preindustrial societies constitute a nuisance to most theories of warfare and they are, with few exceptions, either ‘explained away’ or denied. Contending theories of ‘primitive’ war have also tended to severely underestimate the costs of war to the individuals as well as to the communities involved.

Materialist theory, as formulated by Ferguson, is one such exception: “[I]n contrast to the Hobbesian view, we should find nonwar, the absence of active fighting, in the absence of challenges to material well-being” (Ferguson, 1984). Where the costs of initiating violence outweigh the benefits, war is expected to be absent (Durham, 1976; Symons, 1979; Braun & Plog, 1982; Ferguson, 1984 et seq.). There is no theoretical reason to deny the possibility of peaceful societies. Indeed, “there may be alternative peaceable and militaristic trajectories of evolution” (Ferguson, 1984).

The capability to make peace (peaceability) and the readiness to make war (warlikeness) are, it will be argued, not Platonic essences but the outcomes of a rational (Realpolitical) cost/benefit calculus (though the benefits of war or peace to the warrior-participants are not always *prima facie* obvious) and an adaptive response (in the Darwinian sense) to particular sociopolitical ecologies (Dentan, 1992, 1994). It should be borne in mind that peace has its costs too. As Keeley (1996: 159) reminds us: “One social reason for the existence of war is that peace is sometimes too costly”.

“The cost/benefit equation of war is a complex one. The advantages, the potential gains, of going to war apply only to certain patterns of competition and resource distribution. Other conditions may make the peaceful coexistence of neighboring bands an adaptive strategy for all concerned” (Alcock, 1979).

Most peoples seem to prefer peace when they can afford it, i.e., when they can solve the internal problem of the “young male fierce warrior syndrome” (especially prevalent when the warrior role is rewarded with social status, renown, and/or sexual privileges), and the external problem of “being left in peace” by other peoples. Young males are usually the most warlike because they have potentially “the least to lose and the most to gain from successful combat” (Keeley, 1996: 160), including material wealth (spoils and loot, “booty and beauty”, power, prestige (honor, status, renown) and sexual access to both ingroup and outgroup women. These are universally potent incentives. Hallpike (1973) even argued that

Because sexual gratification, love of prestige and power over others, and envy of those who have these advantages, are some of the strongest forces in human nature, men enjoy killing other men. The human race has evolved few more definitive means of proving one’s superiority over an enemy than by battering him to death and eating him, or by burning his habitation, ravaging his crops and raping his wife. The tortuous explanations advanced by academics for the prevalence of violence in primitive societies in some cases disclose their lack of knowledge of human nature.

The ecological roots of peace may be as complex as, or even more so than, the roots of violence and war. There may be as many reasons for peaceability as there are for belligerence: Intercommunity nonviolence may be a response to overwhelming odds; it may be the taming and pacifying effect of defeat; it may be enforced by colonial or imperial powers; it may be the result of isolation and/or xenophobia; it may be due to a negative cost/benefit balance of
war, making peace more opportune under the given circumstances; it may be due to a voluntary decision to abstain from or abandon violence, or to a nonviolent ethic or pacifistic ideology; or some combination of all these factors. As Dentan (1992) reminds us: “[P]eaceability is not disability, not a cultural essence unrelated to a people’s actual circumstances”. Thus, warlike people are quite capable of peacefulness, while peaceable peoples are perfectly capable of intergroup violence under altered circumstances. The (geographically) opportunistic nature of warlikeness and peacefulness is shown by the following example. The Oowekeeno and Haihai belong, together with the Bella Bella, to the Heiltsuk language group of the American northwest coast. The Bella Bella were well skilled in military strategies. The Oowekeeno could easily afford to be peaceful as they were out of the main path of the war canoes, being well protected by the easily defendable Wannock River. The unfortunate Haihais, on the other hand, “had no chance to be peaceable as they were for ever embroiled in and afflicted by attack from both the northern tribes and the Bella Bellas, having to defend against predatory expeditions directed toward their resource base and to protect themselves from these warring tribes who wanted to practice on them in preparation for more serious expeditions” (Hilton, 1990).

If war is so universal and ubiquitous as has been claimed by advocates of the Universal Human Belligerence theorem (see Van der Dennen, 1990, 1995), the mere fact of peace constitutes a problem, and we would have to develop a theory of peace as an abnormal, anomalous condition. Gregor (1990) has actually proposed such a perspective: “Comparative research on the cause of war and peace is based on the hidden premises that peace is an expectable state of affairs in human relationships were it not for conflict. Peace is the absence of conflict, and it is conflict that needs to be explained (Cf. Haas, 1990)”. Gregor’s perspective is the reverse: “Political systems are so volatile and war is so contagious that its existence should occasion little surprise. It is peace that needs special explanation” (Gregor, 1990). Cf. Service (1975): “It is usually idle to talk of the ‘causes of war’; it is the evolution of the various causes of peace that can be studied in the human record” (cf. also M.L. Wilson, 2013: 380, who argued that peace, not war, is the – evolutionary – invention). Jones & Allen (2014: 362) argued for a ‘long’ evolutionary history of warfare: “It is hard to escape the conclusion from the ethnographic and archeological evidence from Europe, North America, South American, Australia, and New Guinea that hunter-gatherers both simple and complex engaged in socially sanctioned lethal conflict between independent polities, suggesting an extremely long history of warfare that can ultimately be traced back to early hominins”.

While evolution suggests the circumstances in which warfare would assist fitness it also suggests conditions in which more peaceful relations between groups may be expected. First, if resources are abundant or alternatives can be acquired at an acceptable cost then groups need not compete for them. Second, if the demand for resources is held in check by other factors, such as a high mortality rate due to disease, parasitism, or predators, and if a resource is widely distributed spatially or temporally it may require either the reciprocal sharing of resources, or migration, in which case competing groups are unlikely to come into contact (Durham, 1976). For example, the absence of war reported among the Netsilik Inuit in the Arctic may be due to the low population densities and great regional variation in food supply that requires migration, as well as the sharing of food resources which is common to this culture, and the relative ease of food storage in arctic conditions (Balikci, 1968). Unfortunately, these circumstances are rare. Only infrequently are resources so abundant or adequate alternatives so available that tensions do not arise, population densities so low for generation after generation, or geographic conditions so propitious that groups can cooperate over resources consistently. Alexander (1979) wrote of those who “interpret as relatively
nonaggressive behavior on the parts of the hunting and gathering societies that remain today in a few places like the Australian [desert] and the Arctic;” they argue that for “99 percent of their history our ancestors lived as these people do”. But this argument fails to recognize that “such people survive today only in marginal impoverished habitats that support only the lowest of all densities of human population and also represent physical extremes that by themselves require cooperation among families for mere survival”. In addition, he argued, “hunter-gatherers survive today only because even the most advanced technological societies have found no way to use their homelands that would make it profitable to overrun or seize them by force”. Alexander gives no credence to arguments that humans have spent 99% of their existence living as Eskimos and Bushmen do today. Instead, the ancestors of Eskimos and Bushmen more likely spent most of their existence in higher population densities where social conflict was more common. Thus, the changing demographics of the groups and their ecological conditions reduced the likelihood of conflict (Thayer, 2004).

Of course, nobody would subscribe to such ahistorical essentializations as either war or peacefulness as the basic nature of humankind, or of certain groups; everyone would agree that fierceness and gentleness do not exclude one another and have both roles to play; nobody would deny that there are biological and environmental and cultural and historical aspects to warfare (Corbey, 2006).

When peace-loving peoples have occasionally refused to fight, they have suffered very painful consequences. They usually disappeared – either slaughtered, enslaved, or driven into remote regions. In Africa, for example, the Manansas were peaceful agriculturalists who fell victim to the warlike Matabele, who were tough nomadic cattle rustlers. When the Matabele came into their land, the Manansas greeted them in the classic manner of pacifists. Throwing their assegais to the ground, they said, “We do not want to fight. Come into our houses”. The Matabele were astounded by this extraordinary behavior and, suspecting some trick, they seized the king of the Manansas and cut out his heart. Holding it to his lips, they said, “You have two hearts”. The Manansas were universally treated with disdain. No less a figure than Dr Livingstone noted that for an African tribe to adopt a policy of peace at any price was to invite disaster. This certainly seems to have been true of the Mananas, who were hounded from pillar to post by the Matabele as well as by their other neighbours, the Bamangwato (Davie, 1929: 49; Holub, 1881: 14-16). “In practically all parts of the world in which human populations have taken up residence, armed readiness has been the sine qua non of survival, from the dawn of man’s history up to the present day” (Stevens, 2004).

A chilling example cited by Diamond (1997) involved the total destruction of the Moriori hunter-gatherer society on the Chatham Islands (in the Pacific) in 1835 at the hands of 900 well-armed Maori agriculturalists from nearby New Zealand. The Maori first learned of the peaceful Moriori from a transient Australian seal-hunter. Excited by the report that the Moriori had no weapons, the Maori immediately organized a seaborne invasion. When the unsuspecting Moriori did not resist, the Maori raiding party slaughtered them with impunity (Corning, 2003). The fate of the Moriori is recounted in Endicott (2013) as follows:

When Maori from Taranaki in the North Island of New Zealand heard of the existence of the Chatham Islands and the Moriori from European sealers and Maori seamen in 1835, 900 Maori commandeered a British ship and went there armed with guns, clubs, and axes (Shand, 1892a,b,c, 1893; Skinner, 1923: 34-35; King, 2000: 53-66). The invaders claimed all the land and the Moriori people as slaves. When the Maori first arrived, about 1000 Moriori met and decided that they would not fight the Maori but
would offer peace, friendship, and sharing of the land and resources instead (King, 2000: 60-66). Some younger men argued that the edict of Nunuku did not apply in these circumstances, but older leaders considered nonviolence to be a moral imperative, necessary for the mana (spiritual power and integrity) of the people. Before the offer of peaceful coexistence could be made, however, the Maori attacked, killing and eating about 300 Moriori and enslaving the remainder. The Moriori population plunged rapidly after that, due to disease, Maori brutality, overwork, and despair (Welch & Davis, 1970-71: cvii; Skinner, 1923: 8; Sutton, 1980: 87; King, 2000: 63-67). The last full-blooded Moriori person died in 1934 (King, 2000: 187).

Knauft (1991, 1994) made a distinction between ‘simple’ and ‘middle-range’ societies, and their concomitant patterns of (collective) violence. He proposed that the overall trajectory of violence and sociality (especially male status differentiation) in pongid and hominid/human evolution may be U-shaped instead of linear. He noted that generalizations about human societal evolution are easily biased by HRAF samples weighted heavily with middle-range societies, which are far more numerous in the ethnographic record than simple ones though they have persisted for a much shorter period of evolutionary time.

Rodseth (1991) and Abler (1991) pointed out that Knauft leaves open the question whether his “simple societies” are simply products of the marginal environments they exploit and the resulting low population densities. Simple foraging societies as known from the ethnographic record may not be representative of such societies in the Pleistocene and may in fact be radically different, precisely because they have adapted to marginal areas outside the “main currents of human social evolution”. The U-shape of human social evolution proposed by Knauft would, Rodseth (1991) suggested, be an illusion created by casting an adaptation to extreme conditions as a global evolutionary stage.

According to Kelly (2000), the origin of war – in the sense of the initiation of warfare in a sociocultural context where it did not previously exist – entails a transition from one form of collective violence to another, rather than a transition from peaceful nonviolence to lethal armed conflict. The transition entails a shift from (1) individual homicide followed by the execution of the killer, carried out by the homicide victim’s aggrieved next of kin and the latter’s supporters, to (2) war (including feud) in which an “unsuspecting relative” or coresident of the perpetrator of an initial homicide is killed in blood vengeance by the homicide victim’s aggrieved next of kin and the latter’s supporters or coresidents, triggering a like desire for vengeance and thus underwriting reciprocating episodes of lethal armed conflict between two social groups or collectivities. The critical change from individual to group responsibility overrides the intrinsic self-limiting features of violence in warless societies.

“War is thus neither universal nor pervasive. Moreover, it is most likely to be rare to nonexistent among unsegmented foraging societies (with little or no dependence on agriculture), and that suggests an earlier prehistory characterized by much more extensive zones of warlessness than the period covered by recorded history” (Kelly, 2000).

According to the Pervasive Intergroup Hostility Model (PIHM) (Fry, 2006), the following assumptions are made about the human ‘warlike’ past (1) Groups consisted of male-bonded patrilineages in common residence. (2) Groups were tight-knit and bounded. (3) Intergroup hostility and warfare were prevalent. (4) Chronic resource scarcity caused wars. (5) More specifically, wars were waged over territory and to abduct women. (6) Military virtues and leadership were valued and prevalent.

This evolutionary scenario might prima face seem reasonable. Despite the apparent plausibility of this scenario, Fry (2006) proposed that the assumptions underlying the PIHM are unrealistic and simply untenable. However, the only societies Fry refers to in order to
refute the PIHM are egalitarian nomadic hunter-gatherers or foragers – the same societies which are shown to be “defeated refugees”, and which are erroneously thought by Fry, Boehm, Sponsel, Kelly, and others, to have been our ancestors. It seems to me that Kelly and Fry here are making the same fundamental ‘mistake’ as did Knauft. “It is a serious error, for example, to suppose that contemporary band-organized hunting and gathering societies are representative of the great bulk of paleolithic hunting and gathering groups. Almost all of the ethnographically classic cases of band-organized hunters and gatherers are marginal or refugee peoples driven into, or confined to, unfavorable environments by surrounding groups of more advanced societies” (Harris, 1968/2001: 156). Similarly, “Contemporary hunter-gatherers cannot be taken as prototypical stand-ins for the human paleolithic way of life” (Kuper, 1994: 72). “We can’t just examine modern-day hunter-gatherers and assume that they represent universal human nature as it was locked into place 50,000 years ago” (Haidt, 2013: 255).

The Myth of the Peaceful Savage

The common notion of humankind’s blissful past, populated with noble savages living in a pristine and peaceful world, is held by those who do not understand our past and who have failed to see the course of human history for what it is… Such foragers as the !Kung embody the myth of the peaceful past because modern foragers are peaceful now. They also embody the myth of the ecologically balanced noble savage, since they are living well below the carrying capacity today. Since these circumstances result from the impact of complex societies on the foragers, foragers today are not representative of foragers in the past (LeBlanc & Register, 2003).

Where does the “myth of the peaceful savage” come from? It is, in a way, a modern extension of the age-old Hobbes-Rousseau controversy (Van der Dennen, 1995). In his War and Peace (1975/1979) Eibl-Eibesfeldt already argued against the “myth of the aggression-free hunter and gatherer societies”: “Sicher ist die oft kolportierte Aussage, Jäger und Sammler wären generell friedlicher als auf höherer Kulturstufe stehende Völker, falsch” (1975: 193). Otterbein (2004) attempted to trace the myth in contemporary anthropological writings. The myth was described by Keeley (1996: 11) as the erroneous belief that ‘primitive’ warfare is desultory, ineffective, ‘unprofessional’, and unserious. Keeley cited three aspects of the myth: the notion of prehistoric peace or the “pacified past” (prehistoric peoples did not have warfare); the belief that hunter-gatherers or band-level societies did not engage in warfare; and the assumption that when war occurred among tribal-level societies it was ritualistic, game-like in nature – with the first wounding the battle would stop.

Malinowski (1920: 10, 12; cf. Numelin, 1950: 83) had declared Trobriand warfare “open and chivalrous”, “with a considerable amount of fairness and loyalty, there being strict rules of conduct which were scrupulously observed” and “rather a form of social ‘duel’, in which one side earned glory and humiliated the other, than warfare”. Following Malinowski’s suggestion anthropologists came to write a body of literature that depicts New Guinean warfare as anything but a functional and non-violent custom (Brandt, 2006). According to Keeley (1996), anthropologists aimed to “Save the Rousseauian notion of the Noble Savage, not by making him peaceful (as this was clearly contrary to fact), but by arguing that tribesmen conducted a more stylized, less horrible form of warfare than their civilized counterparts waged. This view was systematized and elaborated into the theory that there existed a special type of ‘primitive war’ very different from ‘real’, ‘true’ or ‘civilized’ war”. Adding that modern anthropology denied thereby “a brutal reality that modern Westerners seem very loath
to accept” (Keeley, 1996).

But the accumulated facts “indicate unequivocally”, according to Keeley (1996), “that primitive and prehistoric warfare was just as terrible and effective as the historic and civilized version”… “Primitive warfare is simply total war conducted with very limited means” (1996: 175). Guerre à l’ outrance.

Perhaps the most succinct statement of the third aspect of the myth appeared in Naroll (1966): “[S]urprise is not a universally applied military tactic. Some primitive tribes simply line up at extreme missile range and work up from hurling insults to hurling rocks at each other; this tournament-like war usually ends when the first enemy is killed. This kind of combat is a prearranged tryst, like duels under the European code duello”. In their textbook Peace and Conflict Studies, Barash & Webel (2002: 65) formulated the typical modern consensus view as follows: “Warfare among hunter-gatherer bands… only rarely involved slaughter, and often resembled disorganized skirmishes. In other cases, preindustrial warfare was often highly ritualized and organized; nonetheless, the emphasis was typically on individual accomplishments, especially prestige and revenge. Premodern war frequently had little to do with the acquisition of property or anything resembling modern-day political ‘power’. For these warriors, the idea of conquest was virtually unknown”.

Keeley was correct that a “myth of the peaceful savage” developed, but he was incorrect when he attributed it to Hoijer (1942) and to Turney-High (1949: 227), who wrote that “the non-civilized fighter is no soldier, his warfare is not war, and his butchering is futile and primitive”. If a textbook is to be blamed for the myth, according to Otterbein, a much better candidate is Principles of Anthropology, by Chapple & Coon, (1942), which is not cited by Keeley.

The myth of the peaceful savage is embedded in the developmental typology. By definition an evolutionary sequence must show change over time. If war was a monstrous scourge in the twentieth century, war must have been less common and less lethal in the past. Major figures in the field of anthropology writing on warfare subscribed to the evolutionary typology. Ruth Benedict prepared a paper in 1939 that described the fighting of many primitive peoples as being of the “non-lethal species of warfare,” while modern warfare was described as being of the “lethal variety”. In 1941 Malinowski presented a developmental sequence in which the first three phases of war are non-serious; the third phase is armed raids for sport. Malinowski argued that warfare only slowly evolved as a mechanism of organized force for the pursuit of national policies. At approximately the same time, Chapple and Coon (1942) published a textbook in which they argued that primitive war is more closely related to game behavior than to warfare waged by modern nations. The argument is based in part upon the notion that warfare between tribal peoples is often arranged mutually in the same manner that sporting events, such as lacrosse games, are arranged. White (1949) in a similar fashion argued that tribal peoples had nothing serious to fight over (reiterated by Dyer, 1985 a.o.). According to White (1949), “warfare is virtually non-existent among many primitive tribes”. When cultures have progressed to the point where it is worth fighting over hunting or fishing grounds, grazing lands, or fertile valleys, warfare emerges. Newcomb (1960), building upon White’s analysis, delineated four types of warfare, corresponding closely to Wright’s types. Type 1 warfare consisted of brief skirmishes between hunting and gathering bands. Type 2 warfare was designated as ‘primitive’ warfare (Wright’s “social war”). Newcomb informed us (1960) that primitive war was “crude, sportive, brief, generally unorganized conflicts” and that “small bands of warriors can be spared from time to time for a few days or weeks, to engage in the sport of war” (This is an excellent statement of the myth and it is not cited by Keeley).

Another possible – even likely, according to Otterbein – reason for the emergence of the myth of the peaceful savage was the development of cultural relativism. For cultural relativism to
succeed as a liberalizing, humanizing point of view, nonliterate peoples had to be gentle and benign, not savage and brutal. Edgerton (1992) referred to this as “the myth of primitive harmony”. Thus peoples known to have had warfare are described as peaceful. The Arapesh, who were indeed warlike (Fortune 1939), were described by Mead as childlike; her Samoans likewise did not have war, although their history included warfare. The Zuñi, also with a history of serious warfare, were described by Benedict (1934) as Apollonian. There have even been efforts to describe the Yanomamō as unwarlike (Sponsel 1998, 2010).

Another ethnographic classic is *The Tiwi of North Australia*, by Hart and Pilling (1960). Although not a peaceful society, the Tiwi entered the anthropological world as a society with “ritual warfare”. The junior author has spent years trying to dispel the incorrect impression (Otterbein, 2004).


Besides the adherents of the myth of the peaceful savage and the downplaying of the violence of ‘primitive’ war, there is a particular group of anthropologists, called the radical revisionists, who go one step further.

**Radical Revisionists**

Despite the evidence for conflict and violence in aboriginal America, revisionist historians argue that anthropologists have conspired to invent “bloody worlds” by exaggerating the scale of warfare and ritual violence identified with Amerindian societies (Montejo, 1993). Some elements of this revisionist school of thought argue that scholarly misrepresentation is but one facet of a malicious colonialist legacy determined to denigrate and dehumanize indigenous cultures, societies, and histories (Hassler, 1992; Means & Wolf 1995; Montejo 1993,1999a, 1999b; Tlapoyawa 2003) (Chacon & Mendoza, 2007a: 222).

For example, Deloria (1969) holds that Native Americans did not engage in the procurement of human trophies, such as the taking of scalps, prior to European contact; rather, he claims, English colonials introduced the practice of taking scalps. Deloria argues that this was accomplished through the introduction of incentives born of bounties placed on enemy scalps by the English on the eve of the French and Indian Wars of 1754-60. Heizer (1974: 267) in turn reports that “many anthropologists believe that (scalping) was not an aboriginal custom, but was a practice introduced by the French and English, from whence it spread westward”.

The characteristic revisionist perspective on aboriginal America is exemplified by that of Means & Wolf, who describe precontact indigenous warfare in idealized terms by arguing, “Before the whites came, our conflicts were brief and almost bloodless, resembling far more a professional football game than the lethal annihilations of European conquest” (1995: 16; in Chacon & Mendoza, 2007a: 6).

Some revisionists go so far as to argue that documenting Amerindian warfare and ritual violence only serves to promulgate further violence and aggression against indigenous peoples (Means & Wolf, 1995; Montejo, 1999a; cited in Cojti Ren 2004).
Chacon & Mendoza (2007a,b) have identified and defined war and ritual violence, and its origins and affinities in North and South America, in terms of several idealized patterns or dynamics that include the following observations:

1. **The inherent multicausality of organized violence.** The volumes advance a variety of materialistic and nonmaterialistic explanations cited as the causal or primary motivations for warfare and other forms of human conflict and aggression. Moreover, Chacon & Mendoza hold that it is entirely reasonable to assume that human beings may be motivated to do battle as a consequence of multiple or even conflicting factors, conditions, and variables (material and otherwise).

2. **Variance in the reason or rationale for fighting and the intensity of organized violence through time.** The volumes illustrate that the incipient rationale for initiating armed conflict may vary significantly from those reasons that underlie its persistence through time. The intensity of warfare in turn may covary or fluctuate through time irrespective of its initial impetus.

3. **Significant loss of life in tribal warfare.** Clearly, a serious misconception is at work in presuming that tribal warfare was, or is, of little demographic consequence. Some revisionists nevertheless seek to minimize the demographic consequences of nonstate (or tribal) conflict interaction (e.g. Blick, 1988; Means & Wolf, 1995). Several of the contributions to the volumes document the fact that tribal populations may be significantly reduced by way of ‘primitive’ warfare, and other scholars have reported similar findings (e.g., Chagnon, 1988; Keeley, 1996).

4. **Corroboration of European and American chronicles in archaeological evidence.** Despite revisionist claims that seek to dismiss ethnohistorical sources (reporting indigenous warfare) as mere propaganda (e.g., Cojti Ren, 2004; Means & Wolf, 1995; Montejo, 1993, 1999a; Tlapoyawa 2003), contributors to the volumes provide a refutation, as in chapter 8 (vol. 2007a), which reports the extent to which the archaeological record testifies to the accuracy of key ethnohistorical accounts of Southeastern warfare.

5. **Variation in the intensity of indigenous warfare upon contact with state-level societies.** Some studies report that under certain conditions, groups inhabiting the tribal zone experience an escalation of hostilities as predicted by those models of conflict interaction advanced by Ferguson & Whitehead (1992). Chacon & Mendoza, however, found that in the wake of the expanding tribal zone, the opposite may also accrue, and Western influence may diminish preexisting patterns of conflict and violence (Chacon & Mendoza, 2007a: 230-231).

**TENTATIVE EXPLANATIONS OF THE PERMANENT PEACELESSNESS**

(1) **The Security Dilemma.** General Robert E. Lee is reported to have said that “it is a good thing that war is so horrible or else we would grow too fond of it”. The statement by Davie (1929: 147) that “Men like war” is as apodictic as it is general (referring to all men), and obstinately reiterated to the present day. Lately, van Crevel (1991) stated (with a similar universal pretentiousness): “However unpalatable the fact, the real reason why we have wars is that men like fighting, and women like those men who are prepared to fight on their behalf”.

Jane Goodall (1986) observed a great eagerness in young prime male chimpanzees for the behaviors involved in “lethal male raiding” parties, but she also pointed out quite emphatically that there are distinct individual differences in this eagerness. Fox (1991; Cfr. Klineberg, 1964) seems to advance what may be called a Bad Seed or Rotten Apple theory of war: One rotten apple soon spoils the whole basket. Similarly, one or a few percent of hyperaggressive or belligerent males distributed more or less at random throughout the megapopulation would be sufficient to create a rampant war complex among all the demes involved. The “potentials for aggressivity are not uniform but are normally distributed in any
population. Thus, in any naturally occurring population, only about 1% of the individuals will be hyperaggressive” (Fox, 1991). But this one percent might be responsible for the horrors of internecine wars.

There is a much more ‘tragic’ variant of this theory in which no one has to harbor ill will. The expectation or suspicion thereof is sufficient for a rampant war complex to develop. Virulent war complexes do not have to be explained by some evil streak in human nature, but can be understood – at least in part – as the result of a “war trap” (Tefft, 1988, 1990), from which nobody can disengage on penalty of annihilation (Van der Dennen, 1995: Ch. 7). As Keeley (1996: 159) observed: “in a Hobbesian world of war, declaring unilateral peace amounts to committing social suicide”.

Richerson (1995) advanced what he calls the “evolutionary tragedy” hypothesis: Warfare is liable to evolve even if it makes everybody worse off. It results from the perversion of the situation (the perfidious logic of the war ‘game’) rather than that of the actors involved. The only practical way to avoid victimization by aggressors is to deter attack by being conspicuously prepared to fight, and display a credible ability and will to inflict unacceptable damage on would-be attackers.

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Bands, tribes, city-states and nation-states can probably best conceived of as survival units in the sense of Elias (1978; Cf. Van Benthem van den Berg, 1984; Corning, 1983 et seq.): units which have exercised comparatively strict control over the use of physical violence in the relations between its members, whereas at the same time they have allowed, and often encouraged, their members to use physical violence against non-members. Such survival units are, on all levels, trapped in double-bind figurations and processes: they are confronting a security dilemma. Double-bind figurations are formed by “human groups which are interdependent because each of them is without redress, without the chance to appeal for protection to any superior force of to a binding code of self-restraint and civilized conduct, exposed to the possible use of violence by the other group. Wherever human groups are arranged in the form of such a figuration they are with great regularity drawn into a power struggle and, if they form the top of an inter-state hierarchy, into a hegemonial struggle with a strong self-perpetuating tendency” (Elias, 1978).

‘Primitive’ societies, like modern nation-states, are trapped in a security dilemma. They may be said to live in a condition of mutual deterrence, backed up by metaphysical (magic) and intermittent physical (war, hostilities, feud) means. Simple game-theoretical analysis reveals why such a situation most of the time results in an equilibrial stalemate of mutual deterrence (assuming short-term rational choices of actors) even if none of the actors harbors evil intentions or sinister motives (or is equipped with aggressive/violent/belligerent drives, urges or instincts) (Van der Dennen, 1995: Ch. 7).

Preemptive attack in such a situation may have the advantage of reducing uncertainty. Also the advertisement of retaliation, threat, and once in a while actually spreading terror, may enhance one’s credibility as a fearsome opponent, and develop a reputation horrific enough to deter future potential opponents. A people’s reputation of ferocity may be an important deterrence stratagem in the security dilemma of the ‘international’ anarchy, an asset in Alexander’s balance-of-power terms. Such a reputation has to be backed up once in a while by a foray, an ambush, a raid; but it does not necessitate full-fledged warfare. This may be one of the reasons why the peoples traditionally considered to be ‘ferocious’ are militarily rather inept. In Tury-High’s (1949: 23) terms: They did not reach the “military horizon”. Most of them are head-hunting and revenge-raiding peoples.

Notice that no materialist or ecological scramble or contest competition are invoked here: the processes underlying these analyses are psychological: threat perception, credibility,
Deterrence rests upon participants’ fears of the other’s destructive capabilities. Too much fear, however, may be a destabilizing force (van der Dennen, 1995). The security dilemma in which (‘primitive’) peoples find themselves has the formal structure of a Prisoner’s Dilemma (P.D.) in which individual short-term rational behavior leads to a collectively irrational outcome: All parties involved defect and lose (in terms of casualties, destruction of property, costs of war preparations, opportunity costs, etc.). As Gat (2000b: 95) put it “The ‘Prisoner’s Dilemma’ game demonstrates how people under certain conditions are rationally pushed by these conditions to adopt strategies that are not in their best interest”. In evolutionary terms, benefits are often the difference between extreme costs and slightly less extreme costs (Van der Dennen, 2002).

Revenge or retaliation is an active reaction to an injury, arising from a competitive and, hence, potentially conflictual basic state or relations. However, as Hobbes saw (Leviathan, 13), the basic condition of competition and potential conflict, which gives rise to endemic suspicion and insecurity, invites not only reactive but also pre-emptive response, which further magnifies mutual suspicion and insecurity… The other side, however, faces a similar security problem and take similar precautions. The fear, suspicion, and feeling of insecurity are mutual and natural, even in the absence of a concrete hostile intent on the part of the other, let alone if some such intent exists... As a result of all this, measures that one takes to increase one’s security in an insecure world often decreases the other’s security, even if this was not intended, and vice versa. One’s strength is the other’s weakness… Although both sides on the Security Dilemma may be motivated by defensive concerns, they may choose to actively pre-empt, that is, take not only defensive precautions but attack the other side in order to eliminate or severely weaken him as a potential enemy. Indeed, this option in itself makes the other side even more insecure, making the Security Dilemma more acute. Warfare can thus become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The fear of war breeds war (Gat, 2000b: 97-99).

In a relatively stable socio-ecological environment (in which each society knows its and others’ place, numerical strength, retaliatory capacity, etc.) to be on the alert and be prepared to defend itself may be a beneficial strategy resulting in a kind of peace through insulation with only sporadic and incidental flares of overt violence. In this case, which has the formal structure of an iterated P.D., diplomacy and peace become viable options. In such an iterated P.D. situation, when both parties know each other more or less intimately, and expect future (reciprocal or mutually beneficial) interactions, mutual suspicion and xenophobic fear can give rise to mutual caution and diplomatic maneuvering, but probably only if there also is a higher (e.g., tribal) authority to stop the private-enterprise revenge raiding, or relax the obligations of the blood feud (and the concomitant male ideal of the macho warrior, and material rewards and social, and especially sexual, privileges attached to the warrior role).

“The Mohave Indians of the Colorado River valley are by reputation a warlike tribe” Stewart (1947) related, “although my informants insisted that the people as a whole were pacifically inclined. It was asserted that, while war was disliked by a majority of the Mohave, battle was the dominant concern of the kwanamis [‘brave men’], who were responsible for the recurrent hostilities and over whom there was no effective control” (Stewart, 1947)6.

As Goldschmidt (1994) pointed out, the problem of internal dissatisfaction with existing peace treaties among preindustrial societies is a recurrent one. The problem is caused partly by (a) distrust and fear; and (b) inability to restrain the (entrepreneurial raiding of the) warriors. “Even when the population is war weary” Goldschmidt (1994) concluded, “even
when there is a genuine need for peace, the peace is fragile precisely because there remain
those who feel that their masculinity, by which we mean their social identity, is lost if they do
not press their cause”, that is, the hatchet will not be ceremonially buried, when there is no
acceptable face-saving device (peace with honor) for the ‘fierce’ warriors.
Nevertheless, even in a situation of chronic insecurity, the acceptance of mitigating rules of
combat, of a common law of war and peace, is in accordance with enlightened self-interest:
“Die Annahme bestimmter Kampfesregeln entspricht schließlich einem wohlverstandenen
Selbstinteresse” (Mühlmann, 1940: 113-14). The psychological need for rules of war springs
from that “natural dislike of man either to be killed or to kill one of his own species” (Q.
Wright, 1942). Rules for war mitigation and a common law of war and peace can, Mühlmann
holds, gradually develop (only) in a situation of hereditary enmity.

How can this state of permanent peacelessness be explained? Helbling (2006b: 121) proposed
that tribal war can be explained by two structural conditions: (1) the anarchic structure of the
political system consisting of politically autonomous local groups, and (2) the relative
immobility of local groups, i.e., their dependence on locally concentrated resources.
The first structural precondition in the explanation of warfare is the anarchic system in which
local groups interact, as Thomas Hobbes (1651), but also Sahlinns (1968), Hallpike (1973),
Koch (1974), Colson (1975), Spittler (1980a,b), Keeley (1996) and others have argued.
Conflicts between local groups can be settled either by peaceful or by warlike means. The
reason why conflicts between local groups lead to war is that there is no superordinate,
centralized power (adjudication) such as a state that could prevent violent settlement of
conflicts between local groups and punish those who break agreements for peaceful conflict
resolution. This impossibility of precluding violence through bilateral agreements ultimately
forces each group to use violence in the first place, in order not to fall victim to the violence
of others (Helbling, 2006b: 121).
The second structural condition responsible for the prevalence of warfare in tribal societies is
their dependence on locally concentrated resources, such as fields, herds, pasture or fishing
grounds. If local groups depend on locally concentrated resources, they cannot afford to move
away and thus avoid armed confrontation with adjacent groups, without incurring high
opportunity costs: this would entail losing property, forgoing harvests and risking starvation.
Where these two structural conditions exist, wars can break out at any time. They therefore
explain the permanent state of war, i.e. constitute the preconditions for the likelihood of war
in tribal societies.
A tribal society thus constitutes an anarchic system of autonomous local groups dependent on
locally concentrated resources. This structural framework also represents an incentive system
in which each local group pursues its own interests in interacting with others, i.e., it causes a
specific form of strategic interaction between local groups. The logic of the warlike strategic
interaction, resulting from the two structural conditions may be described as a prisoners’
dilemma or a security dilemma.

It may be assumed that politically autonomous local groups would prefer to (co-
operate and to) settle their disputes in a peaceful, non-violent way, because they could
avoid high losses of human life and resources. (According to the logic of the
prisoners’ dilemma, co-operation between the groups would provide the highest
collective gains for them.) However, because bilateral agreements between local
groups aiming at settling conflicts peacefully are neither sanctioned nor enforced by a
superordinate power, none of the groups involved can be sure that the other groups
will keep such agreements. Hence, it is too risky to pursue a peaceful strategy
unilaterally, because a one-sided peace strategy would be interpreted by the other
groups as a sign of weakness and this would encourage them to attack. This is because a bellicose strategy not only brings higher gains (by decimating the other groups or expelling them from their territory, and by capturing booty), but it also helps to reduce the highest possible risks, by being prepared for surprise attacks, and so deterring enemies. The adoption of a bellicose strategy is all the more necessary as local groups are dependent on locally concentrated resources and therefore cannot opt for withdrawal, as an alternative to war. The aim of war is thus to deter enemies, to decimate them and weaken them by stealing their women, their animals and their land, in order at the same time to gain strength. To get rid of them – by annihilating them or driving them out into unfertile, disease-stricken areas – is even better… Thus the two structural conditions create a warlike environment in which local groups have to survive. The mutual mistrust and reciprocal threat of force ultimately compel each group to take steps to ensure its survival. The conflicts, leading to war in an anarchic ‘state of war’, are themselves a result of this anarchic system. It is thus not an innate human propensity for aggressiveness (the Hobbesian position has sometimes been misrepresented in that sense) which propels collective violence, but fear [i.e., Hobbes’s “diffidence”] (Helbling, 2006b: 122).

It is thus not astonishing that warlike behavioral ideals, norms and values, as well as corresponding modes of socialization, aiming at rewarding courageous behavior and punishing cowardice, correlate with the occurrence of war. The military success of a local group also depends on the motivation and skill of its adult men in war. It is only by such norms and values, as well as war rituals and protective amulets, that reluctant men are motivated to overcome fear, to participate in a war and to muster the courage and determination to fight, as Harrison (1993) shows for the Manambu (see also Goldschmidt, 1997). But despite all these cultural incentives there are still many reasons for a man not to participate in war: bad omens, such as certain birds’ song, bad dreams and so on, that allow warriors to stay at home (Goldschmidt, 1989). Even staunch tribal warriors dislike war: they fear war-related risks and suffer from war trauma (Knauf, 1999; Keeley, 1996). Meggitt (1977) mentions this “Hobbesian view of war” among the Mae Enga: “Fear is probably a more potent force in shaping human and social destiny than bravery or entrepreneurial skill…. A climate of suspicion and distrust appears to be a common characteristic of loosely structured or acephalous societies, which like the Enga espouse a fiercely egalitarian ideology” (Gordon & Meggitt, 1985).

And one Yanomamö is quoted accordingly: “We are fed up with fighting. We don’t want to kill any more. But the others are treacherous, and one cannot trust them” (see also Chagnon 1977). This is exactly what the prisoners’ dilemma is all about (Helbling, 2006b: 122).

The logic of the security dilemma causes an “arms race” between groups, and mandates that each group attacks pre-emptively and tries to decimate, weaken or rout its enemies, because if a group does not attack at a favorable moment it risks being attacked at an unfavorable moment (Waltz, 1960). There is no way out of this security dilemma, and groups that behave differently risk being defeated, routed or even annihilated. The fact that sometimes an enemy’s land is occupied, wealth is stolen or women are abducted does not indicate that these resources are scarce. Rather, it is a means of weakening the enemies (or allies) and of strengthening one’s own group at the same time (Helbling, 2006b: 125-6; cf. Gat, 1999, 2000, 2006; Wrangham & Peterson, 1996).

No serious wars will break out as long as two adversaries are of about even strength and in a stalemate situation. In this case only limited fights will occur, in which the adversaries mutually test and demonstrate their strength and their determination (strength x determination...
= ‘formidability’), as well as the reliability of their allies. But if one of the groups has become weaker (because it has lost its allies), the stronger group will immediately escalate the fight and try to rout the other (Vayda, 1976 on the Maring). Coalitions may also be so exhausted after a war of attrition with high losses that no further gains can be expected from continuation of the war (Helbling, 2006b: 127).

Allies, as Wiessner (2006) observed of the Enga, are a mixed blessing. On the one hand, the number of allies has an important impact on the outcome of the fight. On the other hand, allied deaths incur great costs to the host clan, particularly if the enemy tries to incite tension within an alliance by targeting and killing allied men (see also Strathern & Stewart, 1999). Moreover, allies may have their own motives for assisting, for example, the desire to fight out their own grudges on the land of another or to weaken a threatening clan in somebody else’s fight. Furthermore, after the war allies have to be appeased and compensated for men lost, else war will break out between allies and hosts.

Among the Mount Hagen tribes of Highland New Guinea, allies were also, in general, very capricious (Vicedom & Tischner, 1943/48, Vol. 2: 157), defining loyalty largely in economic terms. Except in the case of volunteers and of sibs belonging to the same ‘Stamm’ (1943/48, Vol. 2: 154-55), allies required pay for their services, and alliances were often transitory. Vicedom and Tischner speak of a “hired relationship” (1943/48, Vol. 2: 156), and point out that allies dissatisfied with the compensation paid to them might “go over to the former enemy side” in order to “take vengeance on their former allies” (quoted in Berndt, 1964: 196).

Among the Huli, warfare hinged on alliances formed by the small local descent groups (Glasse, 1959a: 285), but because dissension almost inevitably developed between them these alliances did not last long. Glasse adds, “Revenge defines enemies and allies, but when the fight is over, the principles of redress divide the allies who fought as one” (1959a: 274), thus hindering the formation of large and powerful groups. Allies became such not only for kinship reasons but also because they found pleasure in fighting (1959a: 286). However, after parishes had been laid waste and men, women, and children killed (the maximum number of deaths being about 18 on each side, plus injuries), peace was negotiated by neutrals or by men with relatives on both sides, an arrangement involving compensatory mortuary payments. Responsibility lay with the instigators and was framed in individual terms, the main brunt falling on the two descent groups, which were obliged to pay for the losses of their own allies. Enemy compensation, however, was paid only occasionally to prevent the continuation of war and feud (1959a: 286-87). Payments to allies could lead to conflict when claims were “undervalued, overlooked or completely rejected” (1959a: 287-88). Each death in a war thus involved the instigators in a heavier responsibility and forced them to seek peace, a major controlling force in all Huli fighting (Berndt, 1964: 195).


Steward (1968: 334), Turney-High (1949), and Wolf (1987: 136). As Service (1966: 60) recapitulates: “Warfare is exceptional at the band level of society”. Helbling (2006a: 77-115) makes a strong case that ‘true’, nomadic hunter-gatherer societies (Wildbeutergesellschaften), without agriculture, do not have warfare in their repertoire (He lists [p. 90, Table I.4] the Andaman Islanders, BaMbuti, Copper Inuit, 'Kung San, Semang, Siriono, Slavey, Tiwi, Walbiri, Yahgan, and Yolngu [Murngin]), although these societies are/were not free from interpersonal violence, revenge killings, and ‘shoot-on-sight’ group encounters. Helbling (2006a: 86-87) states that one or more of these misunderstandings underlie the notion of warlike hunter-gatherers: (1) the definition of ‘true’ hunter-gatherers is extended to include sedentary fishing and equestrian societies; (2) a definition of war is used that includes interpersonal violence and feuding between families (e.g., Ember, 1978; Gat, 2000; Q.Wright, 1942); and (3) the coding of the ethnographic data as well as the tabulation of the frequency of war is often questionable. Fry (2006) and Fry & Söderberg (2013) presented similar arguments.

In the meantime, bioarchaeological evidence has been found that warfare was part of the repertoire of intergroup relations among prehistoric hunter-gatherers. The human remains from the site of Nataruk (West Turkana, Kenya) record the intentional killing of a small band of foragers some 10,000 years ago (Mirazón Lahr et al., 2016). The extreme violence of this massacre may have been typical rather than a brutal exception. “Nataruk may simply be the evidence of a standard antagonistic response to an encounter between two social groups at that time” according to Mirazón Lahr. This evidence is fully compatible with my “phylogenetic continuity” theory.

(2) Parable of the tribes. Secondly, what makes permanent peacelessness endemic is Schmookler’s (1995) Parable of the Tribes explanation (the dynamics of the interaction of contiguity and contagion):

[N]o one is free to choose peace, but anyone can impose upon all the necessity for power. This is the lesson of the parable of the tribes.
Imagine a group of tribes living within reach of one another. If all choose the way of peace, then all may live in peace. But what if all but one choose peace, and that one is ambitious for expansion and conquest? What can happen to the others when confronted by an ambitious and potent neighbour? Perhaps one tribe is attacked and defeated, its people destroyed and its lands seized for the use of the victors. Another is defeated, but this one is not exterminated; rather, it is subjugated and transformed to serve the conquerors. A third seeking to avoid such disaster flees from the area into some inaccessible (and undesirable) place, and its former homeland becomes part of the growing empire of the power-seeking tribe. Let us suppose that others observing these developments decide to defend themselves in order to preserve themselves and their autonomy. But the irony is that successful defense against a power-maximizing aggressor requires a society to become more like the society that threatens it. Power can be stopped only by power, and if the threatening society has discovered ways to magnify its power through innovations in organization or technology (or whatever), the defensive society will have to transform itself into something more like its foe in order to resist the external force (Schmookler, 1995: 21; italics in original).

There are four possible outcomes for the threatened tribes: destruction, absorption and transformation, withdrawal, and imitation. In every one of these outcomes the ways of power are spread throughout the system.
The parable of the tribes is a theory of social evolution which shows that power is like a contaminant, a disease, which once introduced will gradually yet inexorably become universal in the system of competing societies. More important than the inevitability of the struggle for power is the profound social evolutionary consequence of that struggle once it begins (Schmookler, 1995: 22).

A pertinent case is the Numic expansion in the North American Great Basin analyzed by Sutton (1986, 2014). Numic populations (Comanche, Monache, Northern Paiute or Paviotso, Shoshone, Southern Paiute or Chemehuevi, and Ute) on the periphery of their territories were usually at war with, and expanding against their non-Numic neighbors. The application of military force was consistently applied in the known expansions. Numic groups rarely fought among themselves (the late Ute-Comanche enmity being a notable exception). Where such data exist, they often illustrate a similar military method on the part of the Numic populations: isolated groups of the enemy were attacked with overwhelming force and destroyed when possible (Sutton, 2014: 162). The Numic populations were only halted or pushed back by coalitions of greater size and/or better weapons. Other more or less violent population expansions are the Bantu and Zulu expansions in Africa, the Han Chinese in Asia, Lapita in Oceania, Aymara, Quechua (Inca), Aztec, Maya, Mapuche and Huiliche, Carib, Chibcha, Jese-speaking, and Tupi (Guaraní, Tupinamba) expansions in South America.

(3) The competitive exclusion principle. Another factor in the explanation of permanent peacelessness was highlighted by Fog (2013). In ecology and niche theory, the competitive exclusion principle (Hardin, 1960) says that complete competitors cannot coexist indefinitely. As also Jochim (1981: 198) explained: “One major generalization in the ecological literature is that intraspecific competition tends to be more severe than interspecific competition”.

If we apply the competitive exclusion principle to human societies, then we cannot expect two social groups in close proximity to live in peace if they are adapted to the same environment and depend on the same resources. The two competing groups may merge, separate, differentiate, or fight. But they may not coexist indefinitely unless something prevents them from fighting, such as geographic barriers, technical difficulties, or third party intervention (Fog, 2013).

One does not necessarily need the Freudian phallic symbolism to acknowledge that the males of the human species are fascinated by weapons. Andreski (1954), and Tinbergen (1976) pointed out that lethal weapons fostered the concept that it is advantageous to kill the enemy, since a dead enemy does not return to fight again. Baer & McEachron (1982) and McEachron & Baer (1982) made it clear that the development of weapons lowered the costs of attacking while increasing the costs of being attacked. Thus, there was a selection pressure to develop pre-emptive strike or attack-before-being-attacked behavior (cf. Bingham & Souza, 2009).

There is a long-standing principle in evolution that the greatest natural competitor of any animal is another member of the same species. This is because conspecifics share almost exactly the same requirements and, when resources are limited, must compete for the same resources. Within groups, the dominance system and genetic interrelatedness (kinship) tend to control and modulate aggressive competition. Between conspecific groups, it is quite a different story. When one group encounters another over a limited resource, each group has a number of options. If troop A is using a limited resource and troop B arrives, troop A can (1) avoid troop B by retreating, (2) try to ignore troop B, (3) cooperate with troop B, or (4) compete with troop B. If the resource is easily available, it might pay troop A to retreat and avoid any possibility of conflict. However, in the long evolutionary run, this is a self-defeating strategy.
Sharing a resource (options 2 and 3) is likely to occur when it is not very limited or extremely difficult to defend. If the resource is really limited, sharing is very unlikely. When A and B share a resource, this is equivalent to creating a larger group, AB, which automatically creates problems. First, the resource would have to be divided among more group members, thus lowering the inclusive fitness of every member in both groups. The reason, of course, is that individuals in group B are unlikely to be related to those of group A. Thus, sharing leads to a decrease in inclusive fitness of everyone involved. Second, there is the problem of social structure; group AB does not have one, it has two distinct organizations since no individual in group A has any rank in group B and vice versa. If exploiting the resource requires any kind of organization, it is likely that there will be rank-order conflicts to determine the appropriate structures.

If conflict is inevitable, it makes better evolutionary sense for the troops to determine ownership of the resources as groups, rather than having both conflict and decreased inclusive fitness. Once started, selection for conflict and weapons technology rapidly gained momentum by leading into a positive feedback system: Better weapons led to increased levels of group conflict. Conflict selected for (among other things) enhanced mental capacity in the form of increased learning capacity, improved communications, the emergence of the ability to plan, have foresight, improve technology etc. This increased mental capacity in turn not only created better weapons through an improving technology, but made the group a better fighting unit, and thus a more dangerous adversary. These factors in turn increased the selective pressure for conflict — and the cycle began again. The feedback system would have had other effects as well. Conflict tends to select e.g., for better organized and/or larger groups.

Baer & McEachron (1982) further propose that the evolution of weapons had the effect of making unrelated individuals far more dangerous to one another, and that this, in turn, reduced intergroup transfer of individuals and made nucleus ethnic groups much more closed. Weapons would have altered the costs and benefits of armed violence since they could be developed faster than physiological protection against them would evolve. Weapons could also be thrown, thereby removing the need for the attacker to be in close proximity to the attacked. Thus, the development of arms would have lowered the cost of attacking while increasing the costs of being attacked. In doing so, xenophobia and antagonism toward strangers would likely have increased as well. This enmity would work to reduce intergroup transfer of individuals, which, in turn, would reinforce out-group enmity. Alexander (1971) proposed that intergroup conflict would select for greatly increased capacity to recognize relatives, friends and enemies. According to McEachron & Baer, the xenophobic attitude would remain, in the form of emotional tendencies and reinforcement, even after intergroup conflict ceased to be selective. These emotional tendencies would then initiate conflicts on their own (see van der Dennen, 1995: Ch. 6).

(4) War for women and territory. A further reason for permanent peacelessness might be the co-evolution of high genetic relatedness and cohesive solidarity within groups, and explosive hostility and offensive warfare for the seizing of reproduction-enhancing resources (mainly women and territory) between groups. One study comprising data from 44 South American societies (Walker & Bailey, 2013) found that women represented the second most important reason for raids (retaliation was number one), with an average of approximately 0.6 women being captured per incidence of between-group violence ($n = 187$). Another study investigating the Pueblo peoples of the late pre-Hispanic US southwest even finds evidence that the impact of ‘raiding for women’ was strong enough to result in biased sex ratios between neighboring communities (Kohler & Kramer Turner, 2006), as Rusch (2014: 11/21) noted. As Darwin already observed: “With savages, the women are the constant cause of war”
Lehmann & Feldman (2008) developed a population-genetic model for the co-evolution of costly male belligerence and bravery when war occurs between groups of individuals in a spatially subdivided population. Belligerence was assumed to increase an actor’s group probability of trying to conquer another group. An actor’s bravery was assumed to increase his group’s ability to conquer an attacked group. The authors show that the selective pressure on these two traits can be substantial even in groups of large size, and that they may be driven by two independent reproduction-enhancing resources: additional mates for males and additional territory (or material resources) for females. This has consequences for our understanding of the evolution of intertribal interactions, as hunter-gatherer societies are well known to have frequently raided neighboring groups from whom they appropriated territory, goods and women (Lehmann & Feldman, 2008).

War is a violently aggressive interaction between groups of individuals, and it would not be possible if the groups were unable to form cohesive units of cooperating individuals. Within-group cooperation is the basis of between-group conflict (Bigelow, 1969, Turchin, 2003). Sun Tzu (6th century BC) was perhaps the first to make this point. Pre-state societies are characterized by small group size and limited gene flow between groups, which leads to significant genetic relatedness between members of the same group, a necessary condition for genetically based altruism to evolve (Hamilton, 1970, 1971, 1975). Hamilton (1975) further speculated that high relatedness within groups, coupled with the development of language allowing for sophisticated collective action, would result in the development of cohesive solidarity within groups (i.e., helping behaviors) and explosive hostility between groups (Lehmann & Feldman, 2008).

It has been repeatedly stressed that warfare in hunter-gatherer societies might be driven by the prospect of obtaining reproduction-enhancing resources from other groups (e.g., Chagnon, 1988; Durham, 1976; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974, 1975; Gat, 1999 et seq.; Richerson & Boyd, 2005; Turchin, 2003; a.o). Lehmann & Feldman’s results suggest that two very different types of reproduction-enhancing resources can drive the evolution of male belligerence and bravery. First, the two traits may evolve when only males from the conqueror groups obtain additional mates through conquest. In their model, this occurs when the males from the conqueror groups replace those from the conquered groups and then mate with conquered females. Because males tend to be related within groups, this results in both direct and indirect fitness benefits to males that may offset their cost of expressing belligerence and bravery. Second, when females from the conqueror groups are likely to obtain more territories to reproduce, male belligerence and bravery can also evolve, even if the males obtain no fitness benefits by conquest. In their model, this occurs when females, who are likely to be related to the belligerent and brave males of their group, replace the females of the conquered group and subsequently produce offspring. This results in an indirect selective pressure on male belligerence and bravery, which again can offset the direct cost of expressing these traits in males. Although Lehmann & Feldman’s formalization does not take into account all types of reproduction-enhancing resources that can be obtained by force (e.g. taking food, goods or slaves to the deme of the conqueror group), it demonstrates that male coalitional aggression can be an adaptation to the conditions of limiting resources for both sexes. Their model is closely related to the simulations of Choi & Bowles (2007) for the co-evolution of helping and parochiality when warfare occurs between groups. Their model also reinforces Hamilton’s (1975) conjecture that relatedness within groups can result in the development of within-group coalition and between-group hostility.

Those authors that I (van der Dennen, 1995: ch. 4) have classified as belonging to the
“ecological-demographic” school (e.g., Andreski, 1954, 1964; Bernard, 1944; Bouthoul, 1951 et seq.; Davie, 1929; more recently: Diamond, 1992 et seq.; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974 et seq.; Harris, 1975; LeBlanc, 2003, 2014; LeBlanc & Register, 2003; Read & LeBlanc, 2003; Turchin, 2003) consider periodic resource scarcities as a result of either population growth or environmental deterioration or both (resource stress and carrying capacity limitations) as the cause of war generally, or, at least, as an important determinant.

(5) Ethnocentric-xenophobic universe. A further reason why non-state level societies live in permanent peacelessness is because they inhabit an ethnocentric-xenophobic universe (“cultural pseudospeciation”: Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1979, 1982, 1988; Erikson, 1966; Wilson, 1978). The ethnocentric-xenophobic conception of the world is explained by Mühlmann (1977: 846; see also van der Dennen, 1995: ch. 6; Thayer, 2004) as follows:

Among primitive tribes, there is always present the possibility of a latent hostility, which does not always break out, however, into actual combat. This possibility is based on an ethnocentric conception of the world as comprised of simple kinship alliances, clans, tribes, and confederacies. An ingroup and an outgroup (“we” and “they”) with their corresponding inward and outward moralities [Manichean dualism], are strictly distinguished, so that friendship, solidarity, and peace exist, for the most part, only inside the ingroup, whereas xenophobia and readiness for battle prevail in attitudes directed outward. Whoever belongs to the outgroup is essentially an alien; friendly and peaceful relations with him are not excluded but have to be purposely established through certain rituals. Among these groups, military conflicts arise less from the wanton urge to attack than they do from a readiness for aggression issuing from an atmosphere of fear, tension, feelings of injury, frustration, and offense to their complex of honour and prestige. Well-defined causes and goals for war are seldom encountered – with the exception of blood revenge, with its goal of mere reprisal, which in turn is answered by reprisal, and so on (theoretically) ad infinitum.

Ethnocentrism, the belief in the superiority of one’s own cultural group or society (ingroup) combined with derogation of other groups (outgroups), is probably universal. It has been observed in virtually all preindustrial as well as industrial societies; it can be experimentally induced very easily by mere categorization; and its nonhuman equivalent has been observed in other socially-living animal species. Ethnocentrism, and its concomitant xenophobia, results in the splitting of the moral universe in a Manichean dualism (We [the ingroup] are good and superior; they [the outgroups] are bad and inferior). “It is not just the seeming universality of ethnocentrism that makes us think it uneradicable but rather that it has been traced to its source in individual psychology, and the source is the individual effort to achieve and maintain positive self-esteem. That is an urge so deeply human that we can hardly imagine its absence” (R. Brown, 1965: 534; cf. Horowitz, 1985).

Hostility toward strangers is probably ancient, given its presence in most primates (van Schaik, 2016: 348). As in chimpanzees (Goodall, 1986), hostility between human groups seems to be the default condition.

There is an analogy, according to Rosenblatt (1964), between immunological reactions of the body and the ethnocentric reactions of the individual or of a society.

Just as the body is better prepared to avoid destruction by foreign substances as a result of a generalized tendency to resist the impingement of foreign substances, so an individual or a society may be better prepared to avoid destruction by aliens as a result
of a generalized tendency to distrust, avoid, or reject apparently foreign individuals. The disadvantage of severe damage or destruction, whether likely to occur or not, is so much greater than whatever advantages contact with things alien confers on one, that a psychological or biochemical paranoia is the preferred strategy for survival. Where one failure to anticipate the malevolence of an alien person or substance may be fatal, organisms that must acquire defensive reactions to each specific harmful person or substance are less likely to survive during a given period of time than organisms prepared to be defensive against all alien persons or substances (Rosenblatt, 1964).

Also Barash & Lipton (1985) postulated an adaptive significance of (mildly) paranoid thinking. In situations of strong intergroup competition, they explain, the payoff for vigilance, suspiciousness, and aggression could be substantial. He who takes responsibility for the consequences of his aggression, and feels guilty or remorseful, would be far less successful than his colleague who murders without a second thought. In a fiercely competitive situation, both natural and cultural selection operate in favor of the individual who competes without internal conflict and self-doubt (In addition, the paranoid feels no internal conflict whatsoever, and might therefore be more successful as a leader, provided, of course, that his delusions are not especially flagrant.)

Another reason for paranoid thinking is that self-deception can be adaptive when it gratifies self-esteem, and transfers responsibility for behavior from oneself to others. Accordingly, biological evolution can account for the development of mental mechanisms such as projection and denial, which prevent cognitive dissonance, even at the cost of self-deception. All too often nationalism and patriotism become intolerant chauvinism and militaristic jingoism. Barash & Lipton’s thesis is that because of our biological ancestry, given certain historical and cultural factors — notably conditions of stress or trauma — the policies and practices of nations may come to be dominated by paranoid attitudes, which in turn result in self-perpetuating cycles of aggression and war.

Similarly, Shaw & Wong (1989) contend, mechanisms which prompted appropriate behavior on the first encounter with potentially dangerous predators/strangers would be favored through selection over alternate mechanisms where behavior required experience with strangers. Indeed, the costs of not suspecting strangers, and being wrong, would have been so high that natural selection would not likely have left defensive behaviors to an open-minded experimental strategy alone. Flohr (1987) makes a similar point with respect to nonhuman animals. Cognitive appraisals of threats would not have been limited to imminent danger but to any special circumstances that might have upset the status quo. As Thomson (1979) and Fromm (1973) point out, objects of our fear and anxiety need not be causal antecedent conditions. Rather, they can be anticipated events which might or might not happen. “Thus, the evolution of weapons which could be thrown, combined with selection for increased intelligence in human predation, might well have produced ‘free-floating’ anxiety states or paranoia toward any potential predators, including other nucleus ethnic groups, clans, tribes, and so on. A genetically coded aversion toward strangers would have enabled individuals to avoid attack more readily or immediately than would learning alone, and by avoiding injury and death, survival would be enhanced, leaving more offspring from these individuals. Over time, those with the genetically coded aversion toward strangers would come to prevail in the population” (Shaw & Wong, 1989).

MacDonald (1992) has probably explained the rationale underlying the paranoid stance most clearly: From an evolutionary perspective, he says, it would appear to be adaptive to exaggerate negative stereotypes about a genetically segregated group, or accept negative information based on minimal evidence, or to develop a generalized negative belief about an out-group which is based on the behavior of only a small minority of the out-group. Such a
perspective can be seen to conform to a simple cost/benefit analysis: Members of Group A benefit by erring on the side of preventing the error of rejecting a negative proposition regarding members of group non-A, when it could be true. In the language of statistics, people are proposed to behave as if attempting to minimize the probability of a Type II error: If the hypothesis is “Members of Group A are disloyal”, people appear to be greatly concerned about making the error of rejecting this proposition when in fact it could be true. They place less emphasis on making a Type I error, which is the probability of accepting the proposition “Members of Group A are disloyal” when in fact they are loyal. The cost/benefit reasoning is that making a Type II error could be extremely costly, while making a Type I error costs little or nothing.

The general principle here is that if one knows that at least some members of a group are deceivers, but does not know exactly which ones, the best policy it to assume that all are deceivers if this policy has no negative consequences.

Such a strategy also makes good evolutionary sense for the explanation of the overperception of threat. An organism contemplating "sine ira et studio" every new situation arising in its immediate environment probably would not survive its first encounter with a predator. To be overcautious, overperceptive of threat or oversensitive to even minor signs of danger carries with it high costs in terms of vigilance (time/energy budget), sheltering, hiding, fleeing, etc., but these costs are insignificant compared to the costs of making the error of being not cautious enough. Such an error is fatal and final. An evolutionary strategy of being overcautious — jumping to conclusions given the slightest indication of danger — thus pays off in terms of survival and reproductive success, and may therefore be expected to be selected for (On the other hand, it may be argued that humans evolved as Tit-for-Tat strategists; i.e., cooperate on the first move, and subsequently reciprocate in kind).

A similar reasoning may apply to the advantage of the superiority-delusional aspect of the ethnocentrism syndrome. A study of Yuman warfare by Dobyns et al. (1957) concludes with the following general hypothesis: “We suggest that this basic postulate of moral superiority is a functional prerequisite for any tribal society plagued with hostile neighbors. Without such a basic postulate, and the expression of cultural themes to reinforce it constantly, members of a tribal society probably could not resist conquest”.

According to Koestler (1967) the built-in schizophreniology of the human triune brain (e.g., MacLean, 1990) provides a physiological basis for “the paranoid streak running through human history”.

“In order to understand what makes us go to war”, Tinbergen (1968) contends, “we have to recognize that man behaves very much like a group-territorial species”. As a social, hunting primate, the human being must originally have been organized on the principle of group territories. Having thus implicated group-territoriality in the evolution of human warfare, Tinbergen goes on to delineate other preconditions: The upsetting of the balance between aggression and fear (to which he adds the somewhat arcane assertion: “and this is what causes war”), is due to at least three other consequences of cultural evolution: the invention of long-range weapons which make killing easy, sophisticated indoctrination, increased population pressure, and other factors. In a later article (Tinbergen, 1976) he contends: “For a long time the step towards actual killing must have been prevented by the evolution of protective, cultural codes. But modern man, i.e., man from at least 10,000 years ago, has taken the disastrous step to war by using his unique capacity for foresight and experience, and recognising that under certain circumstances killing does pay, because a dead man will not return to fight again”. In order to account for this transition, Tinbergen discusses what might be called a process of ‘emancipation of violence’, i.e., ‘aggressive behavior’ in the service of a number of different functional and motivational systems; and he introduces the concept of super-motivation. Man is, allegedly, the
only mammal to blur the sharp dividing line between intraspecific aggression and interspecific predation: “[T]he enemy is to the warrior not merely another human being; he is at the same time a dangerous predator, a parasite, and/or an obstacle to be removed”. Thus, war, insofar as the enemy is dehumanized and ‘pseudospeciated’, becomes interspecific killing. Tinbergen points out that interspecific forms of agonistic behavior, in contrast to intraspecific forms, have either very weak inhibitory mechanisms or none at all. No holds are barred in hunting down a foreign species.

Ethnocentrism-cum-xenophobia, pseudospeciation and ‘super-motivation’ (the “tribalist sentiments”) should best be considered not as direct causes of conflict and war, but rather as facilitators, providing the violence of warfare with an extra lethal, brutal and cruel intensity.
The “ethnocentric mandala”. This diagram from Sahlins (1965) illustrates the different types of what he called “social reciprocity” in primitive cultures. The information in the lower left quadrant has been added by Alexander (1975) to suggest how kin selection and evolutionary principles accord with reciprocity, as practised by human groups. The information the lower right quadrant has been added by me (van der Dennen, 1995: 481) (diagram adapted and modified from Alexander, 1975, 1979).

(6) **The evolved psychology and universal motive of revenge.** As I mentioned before, revenge is the most prevalent and universal motive in the raiding-type warfare of non-state societies. It has often been noted that revenge is the motor behind the continuity of raiding; in virtually all societies “the wars being a succession of ‘pay-back’ affairs rooted in long-
forgotten feuds”, as Leahy & Crane (1937: 156) wrote about the peoples of Highland New Guinea (who never before had contact with ‘civilization’). Pay-back affairs rooted in long-forgotten feuds and resulting in never-ending perpetual cycles of revenge and counter-revenge, fueled by the evolved psychology of vengeance. The underlying rationality of retaliation in kind has been explained by Chagnon (1988): “At first glance, raids motivated by revenge seem counterproductive. Raiders may inflict deaths on their enemies, but by so doing make themselves and kin prime targets for retaliation. But ethnographic evidence suggests that revenge has an underlying rationality: swift retaliation in kind serves as a deterrent over the long run. War motivated by revenge seems to be a tit-for-tat strategy in which the participants’ score might best be measured in terms of minimizing losses rather than in terms of maximizing gains”.

The revenge motive in feuding and warfare can be understood as an instrument of retributive justice or ‘balanced reciprocity’ (the attempt to restore the legal/moral/cosmic order), as an instrument of politics (a balance-of-power mechanism, deterrence), and as a psychological device (a ‘flight-from-grief’ and ego-restoration device; ‘sweet revenge’). The preponderant majority of accounts of warfare in ‘primitive’ peoples concerns petty feuding: unending cycles or spirals of revenge and counter-revenge. Reciprocity, both positive and negative, is the basis of all social relations and interactions, and “tit is returned for tat” is the negative of “one good deed deserves another”.

It is contended that the emotional-motivational revenge complex evolved (in the Darwinian sense) as a response to the fundamental cost/benefit structure of enduring social relations among potential rivals, competitors, and enemies. Or, in other words, as a strategy to annihilate what is perceived to be threatening to our existence, our kin, and our clan or ethnie, even though the apparent costs (in human lives, in suffering, in material resources) are tragically large, but less so than the (biological) benefits (personal and community survival) (van der Dennen, 1995, 2003).

As the perceptive analyst of war in non-state societies Turney-High (1949: 150) observed: “Revenge, or the hope of revenge, restores the deflated ego, and is a conflict motive with which mankind must reckon with universally”. The powerful positive affect associated with measured retaliation – the sacred duty, the spiritual fulfillment, the icy satisfaction of revenge – may well represent “the human psyche’s evolved response to the fundamental cost-benefit structure of enduring social relations among potential rivals” (Daly & Wilson, 1988). “Thus, the instinctive desire to hit back is a basic emotional response that evolved precisely because those who hit back... were generally more successful in protecting their own by destroying their enemies and/or by creating deterrence against them and vis-à-vis other people” (Gat, 2000: 77; cf. Davie, 1929; Ghiglieri, 1999: 194-5; Keeley, 1996; Lopreato, 1984; Murphy, 2000, 2003; Murphy & Hampton, 1988: 117, 139; Spencer, 1897; Tylor, 1871, 1909; among many others).

(7) Warrior ethos. Wherever non-state societies provide good warriors with not only material (such as booty and loot) but also immaterial rewards such as status, prestige, power, honor and glory, and especially sexual privileges and increased access to women (“booty and beauty”), a system of values develops which might be called the “warrior ethos”.

One of the most common motivations found in the war patterns of primitive societies is the association of ego-validation of manhood with valor and ferocity in combat. Along with this goes the assignment of at least some prestige and power to the successful warrior. There are great variations among stateless societies in the degree to which they have a warrior ethos, but it seems to be very common and is functional for societies which regularly engage in war to develop such a value system. Elevation of bravery and courage to the highest places in the hierarchy of values
seems almost an automatic function of war itself, even in societies where peace is valued most highly.
The relationship between war honor and the rewards of social status in these societies is often clear-cut, helping to perpetuate systems of socialization which create powerful motives of self-sacrifice and bravado. Social prestige has repeatedly fed on death in human history (Kennedy, 1971). Hoijer (1929) already noted that “The career of a warrior is the one most highly regarded and best rewarded in primitive societies everywhere”.

“Man’s desire for emulation and invidious comparison have been noted by many writers...
Civilized warriors have also fought for glory. Psychologists and psychiatrists have no more than scratched the surface of man’s search for prestige and ego-expansion. We know the wish for recognition is strong, and that its fulfillment will be sought in whatever field of endeavor society permits. Certainly war has been a convenient device for this type of wish fulfillment” (Turney-High, 1949: 145).

“Men like war” Davie (1929: 147) stated somewhat apodictically.

They often fight for the love of excitement or the mere lust of fighting. While it is true, as someone has said, that anyone will fight when he is mad enough, it is also a fact that men will fight when they are not aroused, but just for the fun of it. War offers diversion and relief from ennui. It provides a mode of escape from the monotony of a dull existence. Primitive life seems to afford scanty amusements and means of recreation; the savage is so engrossed in a severe struggle for existence that his life leaves little room for diversion. Hence men like to fight. The most exciting things they know are hunting, herding, and warfare. These are the occupations they enjoy, and their pursuit affords a considerable measure of satisfaction and pleasure. War also furnishes a ready means of bringing distinction to one’s self, for the military virtues have ever been honored and extolled. The women prefer men who have given proof of their prowess, they receive the returning warrior with songs of praise, they feast him and crowd around to listen to his exploits. All this appeals to man’s vanity and gives him additional motives for fighting.

Such a situation may easily lead to some kind of hypertrophication of bellicosity and the “warlike spirit”. For example, Barnes (1962: 9) suggested that “In New Guinea a greater emphasis appears to be placed on killing for its own sake rather than as a continuation of group policy aimed at material ends”.

The important point, from an evolutionary (reproductive success) perspective, is that good hunters, wrestlers, as well as reputed warriors have more women, more choice of women, and/or more direct access to women. For example, reports about the South-American Yanomamö (Chagnon, 1968 et seq.; Low, 1992, 1993; Rusch, 2014; Slurink, 2002), the Mundurucu (Murphy, 1956; Durham, 1991), the Jivaro (Karsten, 1923; Siverts, 1975; McCarthy, 1994; Gottschall, 2008), the Mehinaku (Gilmore, 1991; Gregor, 1979; Slurink, 1999, 2002), the Aché (Kaplan & Hill, 1983, 1985; Slurink, 2002, 2014; E.A. Smith, 2004), the Ayoreo and Quicha (McCarthy, 1994; Gottschall, 2008), the North-American Blackfoot (Ewers, 1958; Denig, 1961; Low, 1993), the African Masai, Samburu, and Dodoth (McCarthy, 1994; Gottschall, 2008), the Meru (Fadiman, 1982), and many other tribes indicate that success in warfare and other types of violent encounters was a major predictor of the number of offspring a male may have.

Most famously, Chagnon found that Yanomamö unokais, men who had killed, had roughly twice as many wives and three times as many children, on average, as men of the same age who were not unokais, Chagnon also cited anecdotal evidence that unokais had more affairs and produced more illegitimate children. The most prolific unokai was Shinbone who had
forty-three children by his eleven wives. Thanks in no small part to his prolific son, Shinbone’s father had, by his fourteen children, 143 grandchildren, 335 great-grandchildren, and 401 great-great-grandchildren at the time of Chagnon’s last census. In one village, 90 percent of the residents were descendants of Shinbone’s father (Gottschall, 2008: 70)

In many of these and similar hunter-gatherer and horticulturalist societies from all over the world, the privilege of marriage was reserved to the fiercest warriors, and those victorious in many fights were allowed to marry several women. Furthermore, victorious warriors were the most desired marriage partners for the women, a fact that again lends itself to an evolutionary account (Meyer, 2002: 44-45; cf. Escasa, Gray & Patton, 2010; Johnson & Thayer, 2016; Rusch, 2014; Rusch, Leunissen & van Vugt, 2015; von Rueden, Gurven & Kaplan, 2011; Wrangham & Glowacki, 2015). “If the patterns of culture emphasize military preeminence, the women are not far behind urging the male to fight” (Turney-High, 1949: 152).

The evidence on the reproductive success of successful warriors is controversial, however. For the Yanomamö, for example, Albert (1989), Ferguson (1989), Fry (2006) and Lizot (1989) denied such a relationship. The same is true of Robarchek & Robarchek (1998) for the Waorani, Moore (1990) for the Cheyenne, and Glowacki & von Rueden (2015) and Glowacki & Wrangham (2015) for the Nyangatom ‘battle raid’ leaders. Helbling (2006b: 116-17) concludes that the “proposition of a relative reproductive success of aggressive men is, thus, not confirmed”. Yet, there is, I submit, more evidence in favor of the proposition than the evidence refuting it.


Low (1992: 166) concluded in her study of women’s status in non-state societies: “Women seldom hold public political office; whether they are contributing greatly to the subsistence base, whether they control other real resources, they are seldom politically powerful in any formal sense”. One of those ‘seldom’ cases are the Creek, a confederacy of tribes once ranging throughout the southeastern and southwestern USA. In the eastern part of the Creeks’ range, particularly near the eastern Siouan area, women were frequently chiefs (Swanton, 1928b: 696, 700). Though this was ‘uncommon’ towards the west, Swanton commented that “some of the women in the western tribes became war leaders”. Women at least sometimes were awarded the rank and title of warriors (Swanton, 1928a: 421; cited in Low, 1992: 166). Keeley (1996: 35) summarized the available evidence as follows:

Women have very rarely engaged in combat, but they have often played auxiliary roles in mobilization and logistics. Before hostilities commenced, they might shame cowards, taunt the hesitant, and participate in dances of incitement. Among some groups, women have accompanied war parties to carry weapons and food. During combat, they might serve as a cheering section, supply first aid, or collect spent enemy missiles to resupply their own warriors. In some cases, either by choice or by necessity (such as when the enemy breached their fortifications) some women might actually fight. For example, female warriors were apparently not unusual in northern South America. In general, though, women’s role has been to maintain the home front, tend gardens and stock, and nurse the wounded. While war may be everyone’s business, it has usually been men’s work (Keeley, 1996: 35)

The male warrior hypothesis
This line of reasoning converges with new theoretical development such as “parochial altruism”, and the so-called “male warrior hypothesis” which was presented by Van Vugt (2009, 2011; Van Vugt, De Cremer & Janssen, 2007; Van Vugt et al., 2008; McDonald, Navarrete & van Vugt, 2012) as follows: The social science literature abounds with examples of human tribalism, the tendency to categorize individuals on the basis of their group membership and treat ingroup members benevolently and outgroup members malevolently. It is argued that this tribal inclination is an evolved response to the threat of coalitional aggression and intergroup violence that were endemic in ancestral human environments (and are still common today). Hypothetically, intergroup conflict has profoundly affected the psychology of men in particular — the male warrior hypothesis (Van Vugt, 2009).

Also circumstantial evidence, as for instance found by Chang, Lu, Li & Li (2011) underscore the link between mating and war, supporting the view that sexual selection provides an ultimate explanation for the origins of human warfare.

The male warrior hypothesis implies that if men’s psychology is designed in ways that facilitate success in intergroup conflicts, evidence for the workings of the mechanisms should be apparent in the thoughts, emotions, motivations and behaviors relevant to intergroup conflict among men in modern societies. McDonald, Navarrete & van Vugt (2012), presented the relevant evidence.

Altruism — benefiting fellow group members at a cost to oneself — and parochialism — hostility toward individuals not of one’s own ethnic, racial, or other group — are common human behaviors. The intersection of the two — which Choi & Bowles (2007: 636) termed “parochial altruism” — is puzzling from an evolutionary perspective because altruistic or parochial behavior reduces one’s payoffs by comparison to what one would gain by eschewing these behaviors. But parochial altruism could have evolved if parochialism promoted intergroup hostilities and the combination of altruism and parochialism contributed to success in these conflicts. Game-theoretic analysis and agent-based simulations show that under conditions likely to have been experienced by late Pleistocene and early Holocene humans, neither parochialism nor altruism would have been viable singly, but by promoting group conflict, they could have evolved jointly.


Gat identified the “root cause” of war as follows: “The interconnected competition over resources and reproduction is the root cause of conflict and fighting in humans, as in all other animal species. Other causes and expressions of fighting in nature, and the motivational and
emotional mechanisms associated with them, are a derivative of, and subordinate to, these primary causes, and originally evolved this way in humans as well” (Gat, 2006: 87; italics in original). The motivational complex, according to Gat, includes the quest for power and glory (or more or less equivalents rank, status, honor, esteem, prestige), acquisitiveness (territory, women, resources, commodities), revenge, cannibalism, bloodlust, etc., but also fear of other groups and the quest for security. It is important to understand that there is a deep rationality underlying our innate evolution-shaped responses. Part and parcel of this evolved motivational complex is “deadly aggression”, which functions here as a shorthand for fighting, killing, feuding, warfare, etc. This “deadly aggression” is treated as a unitary propensity, even though “there is no evidence that a widespread unitary aggressive instinct exists” as the founding father of sociobiology, Edward Wilson wrote (1978: 103).

**War as an adaptation?**

Van Schaik (2016: 345) has argued that chimpanzee warfare seems to be an adaptation. Empirical data support the idea that there is a benefit to the male chimpanzees winning between-group contests (Wilson, 2013). First, the attacks prevent males from other communities from mating with the community’s females or attacking and killing their own community. Second, males (as a collective) gain reproductive success through expansion of territory. This is obvious if the males of the losing community are eliminated. But the attacking males also benefit in the less drastic case, where one community gains territory at the expense of the other (Mitani, Watts & Amsler, 2010), because the females of the expanding community experience higher birth rates (Williams, Oehlert, Carlis & Pusey, 2004) and are in better condition. Furthermore, the costs appear to be reduced because attacks are timed very carefully when there is a major asymmetry in party size, such that the risk to the attackers is minimal. This would support the idea that the tendency for chimpanzee males to engage in lethal between-group violence when the conditions are propitious (low risk) is adaptive. Moreover, between-group violence is pervasive, found in all communities subject to long-term study (Wilson, 2013). Overall, then, to the extent that such hypotheses can ever be tested satisfactorily, chimpanzee warfare seems to be an adaptation (van Schaik, 2016: 345). The same logic applies to early hominid warfare in the form of forager raiding (Gat, 2006; Wrangham & Glowacki, 2012; Pandit, Pradhan, Balashov & van Schaik, 2016: 142), but extensive cultural evolution may have turned warfare into a maladaptive enterprise, by favoring it in novel conditions where it is no longer adaptive (an example of mismatch). We can therefore only fall back on the argument of universality and costly design as strong indicators of warfare as an adaptation in humans (van Schaik, 2016: 346).

Why is there not more warfare in animals generally? Although violent, war is essentially a cooperative enterprise because it involves a coalition, traditionally virtually exclusively of males (in humans and chimpanzees), who join together in a high-risk collective fight. Such high-risk cooperation is rare among animals generally (van Schaik, 2016: 337). In many group-living animals, Willems & van Schaik (2015: 625-626) explain, effective collective action is readily achieved and a group’s resource holding potential is simply a monotonically increasing function of group size. In other species (including nonhuman primate species), however, the competitive ability of a group is often undermined by the collective action problem (CAP: Olson, 1965), also called the recruitment problem or free-rider problem, which emerges whenever collective action creates a public good (e.g., a communal territory) and the selfish interests of group members are not highly aligned. In this scenario, natural selection will favor free riders over cooperators, as these reap the benefits of access to the good without incurring (their fair share of) the costs of producing it (Hawkes,
1992; Nunn & Lewis, 2001), thereby subverting group-level cooperation. Thus, even where ecological conditions are such that effective group territoriality would be in each individual’s interest, CAPs may still prevent its manifestation. Although CAPs have been described in other group-territorial species (Heinsohn & Packer, 1995; Bonanni, Valsecchi & Natoli, 2010), they appear particularly prevalent across the primate taxon (van Schaik, 1996; Nunn, 2000; Kitchen & Beehner, 2007; Willems, Hellriegel & van Schaik, 2013) and were indeed first described in human societies (Olson, 1965) (Willems & van Schaik, 2015: 625-626).

A genetic basis for warfare?
Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1975) hypothesized that war would have selected for aggression and militant bellicosity (Kampflust), but also for intelligence and cooperation, as emphasized earlier by Bigelow (1969, 1972, 1975): “(Der Krieg) hat sicher selektiv in Richtung auf Aggressivität hin gezüchtet... Der Krieg hat damit die Auslese von Kampflust und Aggression zumindest für eine lange Zeit der menschlichen Geschichte begünstigt. Der Mensch wurde aber in diesem Zusammenhang nicht nur auf Kampftüchtigkeit, sondern auch – wie Bigelow betont – auf Kooperationsfähigkeit und Intelligenz hin selektiert, und zwar in der Konkurrenz der Gruppen” (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975: 217).
This kind of reasoning has recently been expanded by LeBlanc (2014: 41-42):

A good argument can also be made for a genetic basis for warfare, which leads to the question: Has there been enough time for selection to have taken place for warfare-related traits? Even if one considers only the Late Stone Age, there were at least 50,000 years, and more realistically at least ten times that long, available for human foragers to evolve behaviors selected by warfare. But even the last 50,000 years is 1,000 to 2,000 generations, and this is plenty of time for selection. There has also been enough potential for selection. With death rates from warfare of at least 5 percent and often 15 percent or even higher for men and perhaps half to a third of that for women, this is more than enough selection pressure for excelling at warfare. This does not mean that violent behavior was specifically selected for, but that any behavior that has gone on that long and results in that much differential survival can have resulted in strong selection for whatever relevant traits were adaptive. Such traits as a desire for revenge, a desire to win, fear of strangers, and the ability to see the world in terms of “them versus us” could all have been selected for. Again, not all selection would necessarily have been for what we might call aggressive behavior. There could also have been selection for the ability to form strong alliance groups or the desire to protect group members (LeBlanc, 2014: 41-42).

Wrangham (1999; Crofoot & Wrangham, 2010: 190) suggested that for chimpanzees the psychological mechanisms underlying success in intergroup competition, pointing in the direction of innate predispositions for war, might include the experience of a victory thrill, an enjoyment of the chase, a tendency for easy dehumanization (or its equivalent for non-human primates) and deindividuation, ready coalition formation, and sophisticated assessment of power differentials in the context of intergroup conflict. Some of these emotions and psychological mechanisms are clearly shared with chimpanzees. Others may be more strongly pronounced among humans: the capacity for subordination of individual interests to those of the group, and the capacity for dehumanization of opponents (van Schaik, 2016: 348).

Whatever the genetic basis for warfare, if any, may turn out to be, fear of death and injury, reluctance to fight and cowardice are rampant on the battlefields of forager and tribal
societies. Many ethnographers have reported that the warriors are anything but courageous and heroic. Most dislike war, fear the risks of the raid or the battlefield, even suffer from nightmares and war traumas (e.g., Campbell, 1983: 164; Goldschmidt, 1997: 50, 1989; Gordon & Meggitt, 1985: 147; Harrison, 1993; Helbling, 2006b: 123, 2011: 163, Keeley, 1996; Knauf, 1999; Meggitt, 1977: 33; Mühlmann, 1953: 24f). “Taking this meta-preference for peace even in warlike societies into account, it is not surprising that men first have to be motivated to engage in an unavoidable war” (Helbling, 2006b: 117).

Helbling (2006a,b) has argued that most of the factors mentioned above are consequences rather than causes of tribal warfare.

**PEACE AS THE NORMAL CONDITION**

Peace is the normal human condition, in the sense that most human groups (from bands to nation-states), for most of the time, are not fighting each other (Dentan, 2001, 2003; Evans Pim, 2010; Ferguson, 1989; Fry, 2006, 2012; Gregor & Sponsel, 1994; Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg, 1915; Keeley, 1996; Nordstrom, 1997; Sponsel, 1996; Turney-High, 1949; Van der Dennen, 1995; Wrangham, 1999).

Sponsel (1996) argued, in contrast to Keeley (1996), that human history is “relatively free” of systematic evidence of violence and that “nonviolence and peace were likely the norm throughout most of human prehistory”. Thayer (2004) commented that Sponsel may be correct that the norm is peace. But this does not speak to the causes of violence and war. After all, large predators like lions or crocodiles spend most of their time resting, but this is not the behavior that most concerns the zebra or buffalo.

“The question has been raised whether the traditional view of early society as one of constant warfare is really justified by the facts. There is, in fact, no doubt that to speak of a state of war as normal is in general a gross exaggeration” Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915) concluded in their extensive survey of some 650 ‘primitive’ peoples. Similarly, Q. Wright (1942), who reanalyzed these data, stated: “No general golden age of peace existed at any stage of human history nor did any general iron age of war. Neither the Rousseauian nor the Hobbesian concept of natural man is adequate”.

In even the most warlike societies, the vast preponderance of time is spent in the pursuit of ordinary, peaceful activities (Gregor & Sponsel, 1994). Also Keeley (1996) and Wrangham (1999) observed that peace is the ‘normal’ condition in the sense that most societies and states are not at war most of the time. “However frequent, dramatic, and eye-catching, war remains a lesser part of social life… there can be no dispute that peaceful activities, arts, and ideas are by far more crucial and more common in even the most bellicose societies” (Keeley, 1996: 178).

The unsentimental military analyst Turney-High (1949: 186, 207, 226) proved, in several parts of his work on ‘primitive’ war, to be a perceptive and keen psychologist. He observed that “primitive war, in spite of the dancing about, honors-counting, scalping, and head-hunting, was remarkably tame... In all but a few areas the bloodiness of primitive war has been greatly exaggerated... Cold-blooded slaughter has really never been approved by the bulk of mankind. All have understood the amenities of peace to a greater or less degree. Civilized and savage men understand that war requires regulation and that human death is full of mana, which is a fearsome thing... Peace, then, seems to be the normal situation in the minds of even warlike peoples”.

In discussing the Inevitability Belief (i.e., the belief that war is ‘natural’ and, therefore, inevitable), Ferguson (1989) noted:
[T]he claim for universality [of war] can only be advanced by relying on several dubious procedures: letting one cultural subdivision with war represent a broader cultural grouping which includes some groups without war; letting war at any point in time count, and disregarding what may be much more typical periods of peace; and when these fail, falling back on the untestable assertion that a peaceful people might have had war before the Westerners arrived. Even if we focus on societies where warfare is an undisputed occurrence, periods of active warfare involving a given group usually are relatively brief. The vast majority of humans, living or dead, have spent most of their lives at peace. So one can agree with Hobbes that politically autonomous groups have the potential for war, but this tells us nothing about why real war occurs. Contrary to the Hobbesian image, peace is the normal human condition.

Also Keeley (1996: 144) observed: “warfare, whether primitive or civilized, involves losses, suffering, and terror, even for the victors. Consequently, it was nowhere viewed as an unalloyed good, and the respect accorded to accomplished warriors was often tinged with aversion... At some level, even the most militant warriors recognized the evils of war and the desirability of peace”; e.g., Apache (Opler, 1983), Jalé (Koch, 1983), Jivaro (Karsten, 1967), and Kapauku (Pospisil, 1963). Even the fierce head-hunting Jivaro of South America regarded their incessant warfare as a curse. Auyana men in New Guinea declared that life was much better after pacification because now one could go out to urinate in the morning without fear of ambush and one could eat a meal without anxiety about raids (Robbins, 1982: 189; Edgerton, 1992; Keeley, 1996). Or, as Diamond (2012: 148) observed for the New-Guinea tribes in general: “Despite the excitement and the prestige of tribal fighting, tribespeople understand better than anyone else the misery associated with warfare”.

Additional evidence of a the universal preference for peace is the ease with which some of the most warlike of tribal peoples accepted colonial pacification or, in the new conditions wrought by European contact, pacified themselves, like in many areas of Melanesia and among the Kalinga of the Philippines (Dozier, 1967; Fadiman, 1982; Robbins, 1982; Rodman & Cooper, 1983). “In all these cases, changes made either warfare significantly more costly or peace substantially more profitable (or both)” (Keeley, 1996: 160).

When a police post was established among the Dugum Dani of highland Irian Jaya in 1961, Karl Heider, who was then conducting field research among these people, predicted that pacification would only ‘rechannel’ their violence. Heider was convinced that warfare was so central to Dani life that if it were abolished, the result would be an increase of within-group violence, including suicide, which he thought of as a form of hostility directed inward. Heider was wrong, as he later freely admitted. For two years following pacification, there were no suicides and no increase in within-group violence. What is more, the Dani never complained to him about the police-imposed prevention of their presumably all-important practice of warfare. The Dani, it seems were not as devoted to the practice of warfare as Heider had believed... Other societies gave up traditional practices just as willingly. Although the highlanders of Papua New Guinea were among the most warlike people ever known, like the Dani many populations gave up warfare as soon as Australian police patrols appeared, and sometimes they remained completely pacified as long as a single European was present (Heider, 1970; Howlett, 1962; as recounted by Edgerton, 1992: 140).

For complex pacification processes in general, see: Bodley (1983), Ferguson (1990), Helbling (2006a: 71-73), Koch (1983), and Rodman & Cooper (1983). We have more detailed information on the Iban of Sarawak (Pringle, 1970; Wagner, 1972), the Cordillera peoples of
the Philippines (H.Fry, 1983; Jenista, 1987; Scott, 1975, 1982), the Waorani (Robarchek & Robarchek, 1996, 1998; Yost, 1981), the Kwaio of Malaita (Keesing, 1980, 1992), the Nuer (Hutchinson, 1996, D.Johnson, 1981 et seq.; Kelly, 1985), the Mae Enga (Gordon & Meggitt, 1985, Meggitt, 1977), and the Mount Hagen peoples (Connolly & Anderson, 1987). Needless to say that many of these pacification attempts resulted in massacres and genocidal wars (e.g., the Herero in Namibia, the North American Indians, the Tehuelche in Argentina, the Australian Aborigines, the Tasmanians, etc.).

“No generalization on basic attitudes towards war and peace is possible for nonliterate peoples as a whole. There have been those whose attitudes were almost completely pacific while peoples like the Blackfoot considered fighting their chief delight. By contrast, war has sometimes been conceived of as a sorrow inherent in the universe which must be accepted” (Turney-High, 1949: 205).

The semiagricultural Omaha, though Plainsmen, had essentially pacific attitudes. They considered aggressive war a disintegrating force. The mysterious *wakanda*, the great cosmic force, had decreed the existence of war, hate, and vengeance, and man must submit. Rites were said to control war and the turbulent, ambitious men who liked it, but the control was feeble. War to such people was a necessary evil which they practiced efficiently, but the Omaha did not revere it as an end in itself, as their purely bison-hunting neighbors tended to do. The old men strove to spread the paramount doctrine of peace and order within the tribe. War was secondary, and its real function was protective. Aggression was considered more troublesome than beneficial. Since war is life-wasting and marriage life-creating, it was inconsistent with “natural law” for a man on or about to go on the warpath to marry (Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 211, 325, 402: Turney-High, 1949: 205-6).

Holsti (1913: 61), after having reviewed part of the literature cited above, concluded:

> To sum up, the facts which we have brought forward have made it clear that savages, instead of having really warlike qualities born into them, have on the contrary often had to stir these up through scorn, through the appeals of kinsmen, through exhortations, through the fear of punishments, through promises of rewards, and through superstitious beliefs or other considerations, as of unavoidable duties vested in them, and finally through careful preparations and special customs in connection with the opening as well the carrying on of hostilities. Moreover, primitive man, relying upon his superstition, has often avenged injuries in a nonwarlike way.

In brief, human males, like chimpanzee males, are no heroic warriors “by nature” (Wrangham & Glowacki, 2012).

**FIERCE PEOPLES? HEALTHY COWARDICE?**

Many peoples traditionally considered to be ‘fierce’ or ‘ferocious’ are, as Turney-High (1949) noticed, militarily rather inept. Even such tribes as the Iroquois, Mohave, Yanomamö, Karankawa and Plains Indians, who traditionally have (had) a reputation of extreme warlikeness, may actually ill deserve such a reputation.

There is, for example, considerable evidence that the Iroquoian Confederacy started as an attempt to establish peace and to live in harmony with the neighboring peoples (Bigelow, 1969; Crawford, 1994; Davie, 1929: Dellenbaugh, 1901; Dennis, 1993; Dye, 2013; Fry, 2012, 2013; Hale, 1883, 1897; Holsti, 1913; Kuhn & Sempowski, 2001; Kupchan, 2010; Leechman, 1956; Morgan, 1851; Numelin, 1950: 245-8; Richter, 1983; Snow, 1994, 2007; Stearns, 2014; Turney-High, 1949; Wallace, 1994). Leechman (1956) described what may have been a universal first step toward civilization in these words: “The chief purpose of the League of the
Iroquois was to stop the fighting among the tribes and bring about universal peace, and they fought like demons to attain this goal. It sounds like a most contradictory way of going at it, but at times the best way to make somebody stop fighting is to fight him till he does stop” (quoted in Bigelow, 1969). “It was the boast of the Iroquois that the great object of their confederacy was peace – to break up the spirit of perpetual warfare, which had wasted the red race from age to age” (Morgan, 1851).

Among the original Iroquois – the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca (later joined by the Tuscarora) nations – archaeology and ethnology clearly document chronic feuding, warring, and cannibalism before the creation of the peace system put an end to the carnage within the new confederacy. Since its beginning in the second half of the 15th century, the Iroquois Confederacy (‘Hodenosaunee’), also known as the League of Peace, “proved remarkably durable, maintaining the peace among the Iroquois for over three hundred years” (Kupchan, 2010; quoted in Fry, 2012). Whereas the Iroquois still engaged in external warfare after the confederacy was formed – they exterminated the Hurons, among other depredations (Hunt, 1940; Service, 1968) – the main goal was to maintain peace, security, and unity within the confederacy. Dye (2013: 142-3), for example, stated: “Peace systems, such as the League of the Iroquois, were based on the confederation of interdependent policies who sought cooperation, trust, and peaceful behavior as a strategic necessity, while doling out considerable violence to their enemies through mourning wars which sought captives for condolence rituals (Richter, 1983)”.

Many subdivisions of the Yanomamö of Venezuela and Brazil, who were dubbed “the fierce people” for their warlike ways, were, and are, according to Ferguson (1992) and Sponsel (1996), not nearly as violent and belligerent as those described and made (in)famous by Chagnon (1968 et seq.). Other ethnologists who have conducted field research among the Yanomamö, have found Chagnon’s reports of violence inapplicable to the people they studied (Albert, 1989, 1990; Albert & Ramos, 1989; Colchester, 1985; Good, 1991; Lizot, 1985; Ramos, 1987, Smole, 1976; see also Fry, 2006 and Sponsel, 2010). But most of these sources are suspect and none of them produced data on their own, unlike Chagnon.

Among the Yanomamö even the boldest warriors professed a preference for peace, and hatred for the fear and privation of endless war (Ritchie, 1996). Similarly, in tribal New Guinea, where rates of violent death were among the highest recorded anywhere, war was considered “a rubbish way of doing things” (Strathern & Stewart, 1999). As one Papuan Kapauku tribesman put it, “War is bad and nobody likes it. Sweet potatoes disappear, pigs disappear, fields deteriorate, and many relatives and friends get killed. But one cannot help it. A man starts a fight and no matter how much one despises him, one has to go and help because he is one’s relative and one feels sorry for him” (Pospisil, 1971; quoted in Goldschmidt, 1994, Keeley, 1996 and Gottschall, 2008).

In the few studies on combat motivation in nonstate societies it was found that even in extremely warlike societies such as the Yanomamö (Chagnon, 1968, 1977), Abipon (Dobrizhoffer, 1822), Creek (Adair quoted in Swanton, 1909), etc. boys fear pain and personal danger, and that elaborate training and indoctrination is required to turn them into “fierce warriors”. And even then men may fake illness and find other excuses to stay home or desert from a raiding party, or to call the whole enterprise off at the last moment (Goldschmidt, 1988, 1989; Ferguson, 1992, 1994). Goldschmidt presented a number of examples of such “healthy cowardice”.

Raiding parties among the Yanomamö usually include 10 to 20 men, but not all men go on all raids and some men never go on raids. An enemy village might be as far as 4 or 5 days’ march away. Many raiding parties turn back before reaching their
destination, either because someone has a dream that portends disaster, or because the enemy group is not where it was believed to be. In all but the most determined raiding parties, a few men drop out for reasons such as being “sick” or “stepping on a thorn”. Chronic dropouts acquire a reputation for cowardice and often become the subject of frequent insult and ridicule, and their wives become targets of increased sexual attention from other men (Chagnon, 1988). And later Chagnon writes: Many raids end in failure and the raiders retreat without so much as shooting an arrow. On some raids they wait for hours for someone to come out, but the enemy is wary. They might shoot a volley of arrows over the roof of the village, hoping one of them will hit someone, and then flee. Sometimes they find that their enemy's village is deserted and go home. Sometimes they are detected before reaching the village and retreat. Sometimes someone in the raiding party has a bad dream that portends disaster, and they decide to abort the raid. Nevertheless, these desultory raids, over a long time, can lead to staggeringly high death rates, even though the number of victims per raid might be small (Chagnon, 1996: 221).

Similarly, Elkin (1938) wrote on Australian tribes: “Not infrequently a local group sets out full of vim and boastfulness to go some distance away to attack another tribe, but some days later returns in ‘ones’ or ‘twos’ or ‘threes’ and so on, without having sighted the group in the other tribe whom they set out to annihilate… as they got away from their own tribal territory, they passed into country of unknown totemic heroes and spirit-centres some of which might be lethal to those who did not know how to approach them”.

Peace and sexual and cultural selection
There exists probably another avenue for the perpetuation of peace in peaceful societies (and, reversely, the perpetuation of warlikeness in warlike societies). That is that the “modal peaceful personality” in a peaceful society will *grosso modo* be more reproductively successful than ‘deviant’ personality types through the mechanism of sexual selection, just as in belligerent societies the warlike modal personality type will be more reproductively successful than ‘deviant’ personality types (as documented, for example, by Chagnon in Yanomamö society, but doubted by Fry [2006]). Furthermore, peaceful societies are expected to generate more peaceful myths and rituals, which in turn select for peacefulness through easier indoctrinability for peace, and consistently provide non-violent models (cultural selection).

Boyd & Richerson (1985) have suggested that between-group selection may have favored rituals that are particularly effective in binding a group together. They are not suggesting that the content of a myth or ritual is genetically specified. Their point is, rather, that a culturally transmitted trait can also be selected. If a human group is successful because of its system of (peaceful versus warlike) ritual, this has two effects: by cultural selection, it causes the spread of a particular set of (peaceful versus warlike) beliefs, and by genetic selection if favors individuals who can be strongly influenced by those beliefs (and probably by any other
ritually enforced beliefs). In other words, there is between-group selection for culturally inherited systems of belief that favor the success of groups, and there is individual selection for the genetically inherited ability to be influenced by ritual, i.e., (peaceful versus warlike) indoctrinability (Maynard Smith & Szathmáry, 1995).

According to Lumsden & Wilson (1983), there are limits to the benefits of particular traits: more is not necessarily better. Many circumstances exist in human life in which moderation is beneficial and excess destructive. Aggression is a prime example. The forces that lead to moderation and diversity can be seen at work in the Yanomamö. As the raids continued and embroiled still other tribes, the fiercest men, the waiteri, were steadily killed off. Seen from the vantage point of evolutionary biology, the conditions were ideal for the genetic evolution of moderated aggression and a diversity of mental devices for managing conflict.

**PRUDENT FEUDERS**

There are a number of instances of tribal communities that do not support individual members in their personal vendettas against outsiders for fear that such revenge actions may escalate intercommunity violence which would prove detrimental to the collective interests of the whole community. In certain instances the community may even turn a murderer over to the victim’s kin (A. Moore, 1978).

For example, among the Anggor of New Guinea, “Any Anggor man who distinguishes himself as an inordinately violent or abusive person, vis-à-vis insider or outsider, runs a serious risk of being classified maroat hahon ‘man of faulty consciousness or conscience’. Such a man may become socially isolated and may ultimately be treacherously murdered or ‘set up’ for ambush by his own co-villagers, with his own clansmen turning a blind eye” (Huber, 1975: 649). Similarly, Pospisil relates of the Kapauku of New Guinea: “The injured man may disobey the advice of a tonowi [big man] and start the war on his own, thus forcing his community and even his confederacy into a conflict without an acceptable ethical reason and against the will of the headman, as well as that of the majority of the people. If he does this and is known to be a dishonest man and a confirmed criminal, he may risk capital punishment passed upon him in a secret sentence by the tonowi” (Pospisil, 1964: 90). The same is true for the Koita (Seligman, 1910) and the Batainabura (Watson & Watson, 1972). Hanser (1985: 108) comments: “Mit Beratungen und der Konzentration von Entscheidungen auf wenige Führungs-persönlichkeiten, gelang es zwar sicher nicht, einen Großteil potentieller Kriege zu vermeiden, aber wahrscheinlich waren diese Faktoren zumindest imstande, die von der Gruppe nicht erwünschten Feindseligkeiten zu unterbinden; d.h. es gelang, ein mehr oder minder beträchtliches Maß jener Konflikte, die Gefahr liefen, unkontrolliert zu eskalieren, durch Intervention zu absorbieren”.

Sally Moore (1972) has argued that in situations of homicidal ‘self-help’ nonliterate people consider kin units such as patriclans to be corporate entities that share corporate liability. In the classical case, any adult male member of a first group can legitimately avenge a homicidal grievance against a particular individual in a second group by killing any of that group’s adult males. When one of their members has become incorrigibly reckless in the matter of actions likely to invite such homicidal retaliation, there are three ways to avoid unnecessary feuds: (1) They may send the culprit into exile; (2) they may renounce the clan’s responsibility to avenge him, giving other clans a free license to hunt him down; or (3) his own clan may put him to death (S. Moore, 1972; Boehm, 1985, 1986). “A clan system of collectivized self-defense and liability ‘works’ only if clan members are reasonably prudent in committing homicides or in otherwise stimulating members of other clans to kill them. Too much heroic aggressiveness can embroil a clan in so many feuds that it faces serious decimation or cannot earn its subsistence. Warriors living in feuding societies (such as the Pathans or Pashtun and Montenegrins) are aware of these costs, and mostly they
behave accordingly – that is, prudently. They try to be as aggressive as honor demands, but also try not to initiate feuds recklessly or pointlessly” (Boehm, 1986). According to Hanser (1985: 105), the Jalé of New Guinea used a trick to fulfil the obligations of the blood feud without letting it escalate into a war: “Koch zeigte auf, wie es den Jalé gelang, durch eine Strategie des minimalen Risikos einen solchen Widerspruch aufzulösen; wie sie einerseits die Blutrachepflicht genügen konnten, andererseits jedoch die Entstehung eines Krieges zu verhindern wußten. Den Jalé war der tückische Zirkel bewußt: Konflikte dehnen sich leicht über die ursprüngliche Ebene der Beteiligten aus; neue Konflikte sind vorprogrammiert durch das Hinzutreten von Bündnispartnern, die, wenn sie einen Schaden erleiden, von den Unterstützten Entschädigung erwarten. Deshalb übten die Jalé beispielsweise ihre Rache nicht stets am Täter und dessen Verwandten aus. So vergalt en den Tod eines Verwandten oder Mitresidenten durch die Tötung eines bei den Feinden lebenden Fremden, eines Immigranten, weil dessen Tod meist nicht gerächt wurde” (Koch, 1974: 150).

**PEACEFULNESS DOES NOT EQUAL PUSILLANIMITY OR ‘GENTLENESS’**

When Gregor (1990) tried to find comparative data to complement his study of the relatively peaceful Xingu communities, he was frustrated by the minimal number of peaceful peoples he could find. He wrote: “The societies that come closest to fitting the model of the truly peaceful culture are small in scale and primarily hunters and foragers. This conclusion is in keeping with research on war by Wright... and others who have positively associated war with community size and cultural development. Peaceful peoples also tend to be geographically isolated... In most instances, however, peaceful societies appear to achieve their status by evading rather than solving the problems of intertribal relations”. Isolation, splendid or not, seems *prima facie* to be the most prominent condition for peacefulness. So much so, in fact, that Mühlmann (1936, 1940) virtually identified peaceful peoples with *Rückzugsvölker* (litt. evading/retreating peoples). Also Q. Wright (1942) argued “that the most primitive people, isolated and uncorrupted by contact with higher cultures, often have neither war nor brutality in their mores”.

Why could Gregor find so few peaceful peoples? One of the reasons might be simply because his criteria were wrong. In order to classify a people as ‘peaceable’, some scholars (e.g., Bonta, 1993, 1996) demand not only absolute proof of the absence of intercommunity warring and feuding, but also the absence of every trace of intragroup violence, aggression, and even conflict. They quite unrealistically require these societies to be ‘gentle’, harmonious and pusillanimous in all walks of life.

But, as Turney-High (1949: 208-9) already observed: “Such warless people have by no means been friendly and pacific. They have not been ignorant of how to shed human blood, nor have they abhorred it. Neither have they been without social institutions which formalized man-killing... Field ethnology no more demonstrates that a warless people are per se a kindly one than it shows that a monogamous tribe is sexually chaste”.

**BELLICOSITY DOES NOT EQUAL AGGRESSION**

The conspicuous absence of intergroup violence in mammals generally – only relatively few species, mainly primates and social carnivores, apparently have mastered the art, as Van der Dennen (1995: Ch. 3) could establish – is the major argument against a simple and naive aggression-warfare linkage. All these mammalian species do have inter-individual aggression (agonistic behavior) in their behavioral repertoire, but very few have war or its nonhuman equivalent (the “lethal male raiding” of the chimpanzees of Gombe as described by Jane Goodall, Wrangham and others is the most convincing example). If war were just another manifestation of aggression, intergroup agonistic behavior should be much more widespread
in the animal kingdom than it actually is. Tooby & Cosmides (1988) argued that specific Darwinian algorithms must be involved to account for the sophisticated coalitional psychology supposed to be operative in male chimpanzees and humans. Whatever function aggression or violence may serve in the life of the individual or the small group, Malinowski (1941) already observed, it does not serve the same function between political units. Wars between bands, tribes, states or similar political entities are not just magnified quarrels between individuals. Warfare is not just simply aggregated individual aggression.

In an interview (*Psychology Today*, Nov. 1974: 90), Lorenz stated: “If I were to write *On Aggression* again, I would make a much stricter distinction between individual aggressivity within a society and the collective aggressivity of one ethnic group against another. These may well be two different programs. They appear to be different in animals. The behavior patterns of animals seeking status and fighting for rank order are entirely different from the behavior pattern of the whole group fighting another group. I may have been wrong in not distinguishing precisely enough between these two factors”.

For example, the behavioral patterns in intergroup aggression in chimpanzees are strikingly different from those in intragroup aggression as Goodall in an interview on the West German Radio (1986, as cited in Vogel, 1989) relates: “The most severe fighting is fighting between chimps of different communities. And these fights are different from intra-community fights in two ways. First of all they last much longer, and all of those that we have seen have been gang attacks, that is two or more males, up to five males, attacking a single victim jointly, and they have been very much longer than the fights that we have seen between members of the same community. Fights between members of the same community last at the most three minutes, usually they are less than one minute. Fights on members of another community last up to twenty minutes. And secondly the patterns of aggression in inter-community fighting are sometimes different and we have seen patterns otherwise only observed in meat eating contexts, such as tearing off strips of skin from the victim, twisting limbs as so trying to dismember the victim, and even drinking his or her blood. Those we see in killing and hunting of large prey animals. Never ever have we seen them in fights between community members”.

To these observations might be added that after intergroup violence in chimpanzees there is no – never – reconciliation behavior, in contrast to intragroup, interindividual violent episodes (e.g., Low, 1993; Adang, 2000).

Recently, Lopez (2016: 105-6) once again reminded us that “an adaptationist explanation for warfare, as a type of coalitional behavior, must begin with the recognition that individual-level aggression is fundamentally distinct from (although related to) coalitional-level aggression… Very few species demonstrate this behavior, which in part suggests that the necessary adaptations that enable such behavior are absent”.

Montagu (1978) made a distinction between intragroup or intergroup ‘aggression’ and implies that these two kinds of ‘aggression’ may vary independently: “When reference is made to aggressive societies we have to be quite clear whether the reference is to intragroup or intergroup aggression”. There are societies in which intergroup aggression is high but in which intragroup aggression is low, as among a number of New Guinea peoples. There are some societies in which aggression is high both within the group and between groups, as among the Yanomamö. There are societies in which both inter- and intragroup aggression is low, as among the Toda of Southern India, and there are some societies in which both inter- and intragroup aggression are nonexistent, as among the Tasaday of Mindanao, in the Philippines” (Montagu, 1978) (The Tasaday have in the meantime been exposed as victims or perpetrators of a hoax; e.g., Berreman, 1991).

The only reasonable criterion for peacefulness is the presence or absence of offensive war or warlike behaviors (which implies that it is an intergroup phenomenon), and not the presence
or absence of any and all forms of intragroup violence, or aggression, or conflict, as I argued in my *Origin of War* (1995). “Ideally, codes for warfare should carefully distinguish reciprocating collective armed conflict from one-sided attacks, since being subject to attack does not indicate any propensity to war” (Kelly, 2000: 167).

The confusion rests on the, mostly implicit, assumption that war in some unspecified way is the result of the collective outpouring of accumulated “raw aggression”. According to Kennedy (1971) and numerous other authors (see Van der Dennen, 1986, 1995), aggression is obviously correlated with, and an integral aspect of, war, but there is no simple cause and effect relationship, and as White (1949) and others have long contended, there is probably more evidence to support the proposition that war produces aggression than the reverse. Ember & Ember (1992, 1994) found empirical evidence that among preliterate peoples socialization for aggression is more likely to be a consequence than a cause of war. The major finding consistent with this scenario is that socialization for aggression seems to decrease after warfare ceases because of pacification (Ember & Ember, 1994). “The lack of covariation between low homicide rates and the absence of warfare undercuts the logic of seeking to account for the character of peaceful (or warless) societies through recourse to child socialization practices” (Kelly, 2000). Knauft (1987) detailed the difficulties that the ethnographic data on the !Kung, Semai, Central Eskimo, and Gebusi pose for theories that attempt to link child socialization to the incidence of lethal violence. Secondary socialization may be much more closely related to the incidence of war than early childhood socialization (Knauft, p.c. in Kelly, 2000).

Grudges of ‘unemployed’ warriors after coercive pacification have sometimes been (mis)construed as evidence of some kind of innate bellicosity. There is, furthermore, a strong androcentric bias in the accounts relating aggression and warfare in primitive societies: “with a sleight-of-hand extension of man into Man... Woman is either ignored or presented as innately less aggressive than man. The arguments for a biological difference in the sexes in this regard are far from conclusive, but in cases where such a difference is put forward, the general conclusions of humanity’s aggressive nature are not revised” (Howell & Willis, 1989).

Fuentes (2013: 92) recently wrote: “From the fossil and archeological record, and the comparative primatological datasets, we can see that human warfare is an evolutionarily recent phenomenon. It is best seen as emergent from social structures, ecologies, and histories rather than being reflective of specific adaptive patterns of aggression and competition. It is not a basal human aggression that results in warfare or a basic human egalitarianism that results in peace”.

If it is indeed the case that warfare is an emergent cooperative, collective behavior pattern in humans and chimps, and not simply aggression-writ-large, then the musings of Fry and many others about aggression and its ritualization and restraint (e.g., Fry & Szala, 2013; Verbeek, 2013) are largely irrelevant to the explanation of war and of peace.

**The Paradox of Nonviolence and Extreme Brutality**

Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1975: 281-82) argued that socialization of the human aggressive potential, and the ability of self-control, can only occur through experiences with aggressive behavior. He states:


“On the world scene, there is increasing evidence that there may be a negative correlation between the amount of experience in childhood with aggressive behavior that falls short of
serious damage and the amount of violence that may erupt in that society. Those societies
where children receive no training in limited conflict with others have the least experience in
halting destruction and killing once it starts”.

Dazu ein Beispiel. Die Semai sind wegen mangelnder Aggressivität bekannt. Sie bestrafen
ihre Kinder nicht und verabscheuen Gewalt. Als sie jedoch durch kommunistische Kämpfer
Verluste erlitten hatten und man eine Semai-Truppe zum Kampf einsetzte, waren sie geradezu
trunken nach Blut. Dentan (1968, S. 59) beschreibt die Situation wie folgt:

“Many people who knew the Semai insisted that such an unwarlike people could never make
good soldiers. Interestingly enough, they were wrong. Communist terrorists had killed the
kinsmen of some of the Semai counterinsurgency troops. Taken out of their nonviolent
society and ordered to kill, they seem to have been swept up in a sort of insanity which they
call ‘blood drunkenness’. A typical veteran’s story runs like this: ‘We killed, killed, killed.
The Malays would stop and go through people’s pockets and take their watches and money,
we did not think of watches or money. We thought only of killing. Wah, truly we were drunk
with blood’. One man even told how he had drunk the blood of a man he had killed”.

Interestingly, some thirty years later, Dentan (1999: 419) revisited these people and their
reputation of peacefulness – which, as Dentan gradually found out, is rooted in a much less
peaceful past – in an article called “Spotted Doves at War”. He says:

“Semai in these histories do not say they are against war because of their ‘cultural values’,
just that they do not have the weapons or cultural experience to wage one. Thus, they may
need cleverness or Malay magician leaders. But, once committed to violence, they become
extremely dangerous. The mindless, no-holds-barred style of guerrilla warfare – “like spotted
doves” – seems appropriate for people who, having no tradition of waging war, have no rules
for how to conduct a war. This inexperience with organized violence may in part account for
the extreme brutality of Semai at war, when they say they suffer bnuul bhiip, intoxication by
blood, and become ruthless killers of anyone they encounter (e.g., Dentan, 1995). Only
warlike people, I suspect, wage ‘civilized’ wars; spotted doves do not understand the Geneva
Conventions. Undermine the self-discipline that daily Semai life requires, and you don’t have
any chivalric code, no cost-benefit analysis, no “no hitting girls or people with glasses”.
Anything goes (cf. Knauft, 1987)”.

The ‘dove metaphor’ seems out-of-place for people who consider doves to be ‘birds of peace’.
Dentan (1999: 423) explains: “The reputation of doves as birds of peace in the West comes
from the biblical narrative of Noah. That story in turn probably reflects the fact that doves
were cheap sacrificial animals, as opposed to sheep or oxen, and thus the common medium
for approaching Yahweh. In the natural world, mating doves engage in bloody battles, often
until the loser is pecked to death. In the story, fighting like doves means fighting mindlessly,
without the rules that for Malays, as for other piratical feudal peoples like the English, set
standards of propriety in the manner of contesting with equals or slaughtering defenseless
people. Tataa’ Manah’s comparison of Semai guerrilla warfare to the battles of mating doves
suggests the cold butchery that accompanies a state of mind that Semai call ‘blood
intoxication’ bnuul bhiip (Dentan, 1995)”.

‘PRIMITIVE’ WAR AS A POST-CONTACT PHENOMENON

The effects of contact with ‘civilized’ states and colonialism in the warfare patterns of
‘primitive’ peoples have, according to a groups of so-called Tribal Zone anthropologists, until
recently, not sufficiently been acknowledged. Virtually all over the globe such contact has
exacerbated warfare within and among nonstate societies to a degree we are only beginning to
realize (e.g., Blick, 1988; Ferguson, 1992a,b; Ferguson & Whitehead, 1992; Sponsel, 1994).

“Accepted wisdom even now holds that ‘primitive’ cultures are typically at war and that the
primary military effect of contact with the West is the suppression of ongoing combat. In fact,
the initial effect of European colonialism has generally been quite the opposite. Contact has invariably transformed war patterns, very frequently intensified war and not uncommonly generated war among groups who previously had lived in peace. Many, perhaps most, recorded wars involving tribal peoples can be directly attributed to the circumstances of Western contact” (Ferguson, 1992). A consequence of this is, as he explains elsewhere (Ferguson, 1990), a systematic exaggeration of images of warlike behavior in supposedly “first contact” accounts.

“It becomes increasingly fashionable and politically more correct to explain away violence and warfare in native societies as something that post-dates colonialism and the undesirable effects of capitalism on native cultures” (Chagnon, 1996). This is based on the assumption, as Chagnon pointed out, that primitive man in the state of nature is cooperative, non-violent and altruistic.

If Australia is a unique continent-size, isolated laboratory, Tasmania is even closer to the ideal of isolation and backwardness, the backwater of backwater. There were an estimated 4,000 Tasmanians when the Europeans arrived, and their population density was among the lowest there is. Still, lethal raiding and counter-raiding took place among their groups (Plomley, 1966: 968-969; Roth, 1899: 14-15; Jones, 1974: 328; Ryan, 1981: 13-14). The same is true of the Baliem Valley tribes when these were first discovered in the nineteen seventies (Leahy & Crain, 1937), and who, like the Tasmanians, never had contact with ‘civilized’ societies before. Most (Tribal Zone) anthropologists are well aware of the evidence for extensive and brutal warfare in the Tribal Zone before contact and take care to mention it, albeit very briefly (Gat, 2000).

Also the Polar Eskimo, completely isolated until very recently provide a counterexample to the recent theory that contact with Western civilization and its material goods inevitably turns peaceful tribesmen into Hobbesian berserkers (Keeley, 1996: 30).

Contrary to the assertions of the Tribal Zone anthropologists, the possibility cannot be excluded, however, that ‘civilized’ states sometimes have been instrumental (and successful) in the (coercive) pacification of many tribal peoples (e.g., New Guinea: Wiessner, Tumu, Tumu & Pupu, 2007). After noticing Blick’s (1988) and Ferguson’s (1990) contact hypothesis, Sponsel (1996) stated: “It should also be noted that contact with Western societies has sometimes led to the pacification of societies in which warfare was formerly endemic (Rodman & Cooper, 1979; Robarcheck & Robarcheck, 1989; Scheffler, 1964; Willis, 1989)”. It is true that the expansion of colonial states created new constellations of conflict as well as new forms of war, as Ferguson & Whitehead (1992) have shown. However, numerous archaeological findings and ethno-historical data (Knauft, 1999) indicate that this proposition, according to which tribal wars are caused by the expansion of states into the Tribal Zone, is wrong (Helbling, 2006b: 119). Even the less radical version of this theory – claiming that wars did not emerge for the first time but intensified in the tribal zone – seems to be one-sided. The interaction of tribal groups with expanding states had different effects. As well as intensifying warfare it also reduced warring in many regions, or even stopped it altogether (Helbling, 2006b: 119). Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that the politics of all colonial states ultimately aimed at pacifying warlike tribes and at establishing a monopoly of power, which they always achieved sooner or later (see Bodley, 1983). The bioarchaeological findings presented by Gordón (2014) clearly debunk Ferguson’s contention that violence in indigenous South America was a product of European intrusion (Jones & Allen, 2014: 357). Keeley’s (1996: 21) verdict on the Tribal Zone hypothesis already dealt the death-blow:
This hypothesis attributes an exceptional potency – indeed, a peculiar radioactivity – to civilized people and their products. Were there never epidemic diseases before Western contact? Were there never uncivilized items of trade that excited the practical appetites of primitive consumers and were worth fighting over? Did new weapons never diffuse to modify prehistoric warfare? Were there never population movements or expansions before civilization? If any of these conditions existed before civilized expansion, then, by these arguments, the causes of war should also have existed. As we shall see in the following chapters, there is evidence that such things happened before civilized observers soiled the preliterate world. In this case, the tribal-zone hypothesis would be reduced to the claim that civilized contact merely brought some new weapons to fight with and new items to fight over to prestate regions, not the more general reasons for fighting or the institution of war itself.

Most neo-Rousseauian are vague about what they suppose the precontact situation to have been. Their assertions that “wild violence” and carnage were caused by civilized contact imply they imagine that precontact conditions approached Rousseau’s primitive peace.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PEACEFUL PEOPLES

‘Simple’ human societies, according to Knauft (1991, 1994) place great emphasis on generalized reciprocity and far less on balanced competition or negative reciprocity. Concomitantly, collective military action or warfare tends to be rudimentary or absent. This contrasts in aggregate terms with more complex, sedentary, horti- and agricultural societies, among which subsistence and demographic intensification are associated with increasing property ownership and status inequality, and increasingly competitive politicoeconomic and military rivalry (e.g., Fried, 1967).

Accordingly, we should be able to find a number of such ‘simple’ societies without war, or with only rudimentary war, in the literature. Swanton (1943) surveyed the anthropological literature and found that there were about as many societies that were peaceable as warlike. Leavitt (1977) found war absent or rare in 73% of hunting and gathering societies (n=22), 41% of simple horticultural (n=22), and 17% of advanced horticultural societies (n=29). On the other hand, Otterbein (1970), in a sample of 50 societies, found only four or five to have engaged “infrequently or never” in any type of offensive or defensive war. Four of these groups had recently been driven by warfare into isolated refuges, and this isolation protected them from further conflict. Such groups might more accurately be classified as defeated refugees than as pacifists (Keeley, 1996). Ross (1983) found twelve societies engaged in warfare “rarely or never” out of a sample of ninety societies. Also Jorgensen (1980) identified seven peaceful societies in his study of north-western North America. According to Textor’s (1967) A Cross-Cultural Summary, in a sample of 45 societies, “warfare is prevalent” in 34 and “not prevalent” in the remaining 9. The nine societies without prevalent warfare are the Ainu, Andamanese, Aranda, Lapps, Semang, Vedda, Yahgan, and Yukaghir (Fry, 2006). Spencer (1876), Holsti (1913), Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915), Van der Bij (1929), Benedict (1935), Q.Wright, (1942), Numelin (1950), Textor (1967), Fabbro (1978); Bonta (1993, 1996, 1997), Van der Dennen (1995), Sponsel (1996); Kelly (2000), Fry (2006), Helbling (2006a); Bonta & Fry (2006); Baszarkiewicz & Fry (2008), Evans Pim (2010), and Fry & Söderberg (2013) among others, presented inventories of a great number of peaceful peoples. Among these are:

Central Californians (Mission Indians), Columbians of the Plateau, Copper Eskimo (Inuit), Dogrib, Gosiute, Greenland Eskimo (Inuit), Hopi, Hudson Bay Inuit (Koksoagmyut), Kawaiisu, Karok, Mandan, Monache, Montagnais-Naskapi, Paiute (Kaibab), Panamint,
Papago, Point Barrow Inuit, Polar or Central Eskimo (Inughuit), Pueblos (Taos and Tewa), Salish (Columbia), Sanpoil, Saulteaux, Shoshone (Battle Mountan and Hukundika), Similkameen, Slave (Slavey), Wenatchi, Yahi, Zuñi [North America],

Aguitequedichaga, Apinayé, Aurohuaco, Bara, Carib, Cayapa, Cayua, Choroti, Cuna, Curetu, Guato, Guayqui, Huichol, Island Arakw, Kuikuru, Machiguenga (Matsigenka), Maku, Napo, Ninaquiquila, Panaré, Paumari, Pemon, Piaroa, Puri, Siriono, Tarahumara, Tehuelche, Trio, Waiwai, Warao (Warru), Waorani (Waura), Xinguanos, Zapotec, Yahgan [South America],

Ainu, Akha, Alangan Agta, Ami, Andamanese, Badaga, Baiga, Bajau Laut (Sama Dilaut), Batak Agta, Batek, Batti, Birhor, Bodo, Buid (Taobuid), Chewong, Chukchee, Dhimal, Gayo, Gond, Han, Hanunóo, Hunza, Iraya Agta, Irula, Jahai, Kadar, Kazak, Khalka, Kota, Kubu, Kurumba, Ladaki (Ladakhi), Lamba, Lapps (Saami), Lepcha, Malapandaram (Hill Pandaram), Mamanaa Agta, Mangyan, Mentaweian Islanders, Mishmi, Nyaya (Naikens), Nganasan, Palawan Agta, Paliyan, Punan (Penan), Samoyed, Semang/Semai, Sherpa, Subanun, Sulod, Tagbanua (Tagbanuwa Agta), Tanala, Temiar Senoi, Tenae, Tetur, Tiruray Agta, Toala, Toda, Tofalar (Tofa, Tuba, Karagasi), Vedda (Veddhah), Wana, Yakut, Yami, Yanadi, Yukaghir [Eurasia],

Barea, Dorobo, Fipa (Wafipa, Ufipa), Guanches (Canary Islands), G/wi, Hadza, Ju’/hoansi (Ju/wasi; formerly !Kung), Hadza, Kongo (Bakongo), Mandaeans (Subba), Mbuti (Bambuti), Ndjavi, Nubians, Thonga (Bathonga) [Africa],

Aranda (Arunta), Ararafus, Arapesh, Australian Aborigines generally, Fore, Gebusi, Hagahai, Ifaluk, Kapingamarangi, Mardu (Mardudjara), Moriori, Pesechem, Rotuma Islanders, Sio, Tahitians, Tanna Islanders, Tapiro, Tikana (New Ireland), Tikopia, Timorini, Tiwi, and Wape [Oceania].

My inventory deviates somewhat from other lists of allegedly peaceful peoples because my criteria (mainly the absence of offensive warfare) are different from those applied by the other authors, who focus mainly on intrasocietal absence of ‘aggression’ or conflict behavior generally, or presence of ‘harmony’, etc. (which excludes the Balinese, Fiji Islanders, Samoans, Solomon Islanders, Tahitians, and Toraja, a.o. from my list). Furthermore, my inventory excludes cenobites (i.e., non-ethnic, religion-based, and contemporary peace groups, such as Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, Quakers, Jains, etc. – these are not ethnies sensu stricto), as well as contemporary nation-states (such as Koreans, Thai, Norwegians, etc. included in Textor, 1967; Bonta, 1993, 1996; and Fry, 2006).

The evidence of a substantial number of peoples without warfare, or with mainly defensive and/or low-level or ‘ritualized’ warfare (i.e., seldom exceeding the level of petty feuding or desultory skirmishes) does not support the view of universal human belligerence. It does not support the equally erroneous view of universal peaceability either. Rather, it supports Mühlmann’s (1940), Dentan’s (1992), and Van der Dennen’s (1995) view that peace as well as war are the results of illuminated and opportunistic self-interest in the political arena, “an adaptive response (in the Darwiniian sense) to particular political ecologies” (Dentan, 1992). It is also in accordance with the ultimate cost/benefit calculus of evolution, in which reproductive success is the only currency.

Van der Bij (1929) concluded that primitive peoples were peaceful because they were primitive. Steinmetz (1929: 28), on the other hand, concluded that primitive peoples were primitive because they were peaceful (“Die Völker, welche nich kämpfen und am wenigsten
aggressiv sind, bleiben auf der niedrigsten Stufe stehen”). Steinmetz thereby reiterated the statement by Gumplowicz (1892: 126) that peaceful peoples “bleiben auf der Stufe der Affen” [remain on the level of monkeys]. Gumplowicz, by the way, admitted that ethnology offered numerous examples of such peaceful peoples, without giving any explanation of why and how these monkey-like peaceful peoples had been able to survive in so warlike a world as he envisaged: “Die Völkerkunde bietet uns unzählige Beispiele solcher ‘friedlichen’ Völker… sie sind die vollkommensten Affen” (quoted in Holsti, 1913: 70).

Even highly nomadic, geographically isolated hunter-gatherers with low population densities are not universally peaceable, however. For example, “many Australian Aboriginal foragers, including those living in deserts, were inveterate raiders (Meggitt, 1962; Harris, 1989)” (Keeley, 1996: 29).

Fabbro (1978) analyzed five peaceable primitive societies, including the Semai, the Siriono, the Mbuti, the !Kung, and the Copper Eskimo. To these ‘traditional’ groups, Fabbro added two literate peaceful communities for reasons of comparison, the Hutterites and the Islanders of Tristan da Cunha. Contemporary peace groups, such as Hutterites and Amish, living in permanent communities based on a common religion, are also called ‘cenobites’.

A peaceful society, according to Fabbro’s criteria, is one that is not involved in internal (i.e., intracultural) collective violence; one that exhibits relatively little interpersonal violence; one that provides no special role for warriors; and one that has values and sanctions precluding violence as a means for resolving conflict. Peaceability should not be confused with pacifism, which is only one genre of peaceability (Dentan, 1992).

McCauley (1990) presented the results of a study of the Semai and two other peaceful societies, the Buid of the Philippines, and the South American Xingu River conglomeration of tribes. Various combinations of the peaceable communities mentioned above were also present in the analyses of Gregor (1990), Dentan (1992, 1994), and Fry (2006). Gomez et al. (2016) list zero “number of individuals dead by interpersonal violence” for the Bakairi, Gainj, Tristan da Cunha Islanders, Mbuti, Mi’kmaq, Moriori, Orang Asli, and Siriono. From the combined analyses of this rather small sample a number of patterns emerge:

- All peaceful societies are essentially small, local, face-to-face, communities with very low degree of social stratification, and relatively open and egalitarian decision-making. According to Kelly (2000), these ‘warless’ societies are typically ‘unsegmented’ societies, without a level of organization beyond the local community. “Warfare is typically rare to nonexistent within and between unsegmented foraging societies inhabiting environments characterized by low resource density, diversity, and predictably at densities below 0.2 persons per square mile” (Kelly, 2000).

- The ‘traditional’ societies do not maintain an exclusive monopoly over an area of land. Other groups may come and go, and in times of shortage an incumbent band may share the food and water resources with another less fortunate group (e.g., Fry, 2006). “Among certain Australian Aborigines, the Ona of South America, or the Ju’/hoansi, resource use is granted to outsiders if permission is sought ahead of time (Birdsell, 1971; Cooper, 1946; Lee, 1979; Myers, 1982; Wheeler, 1910; Williams, 1982)” (Fry, 2006). But conflicts within these groups are also partly responsible for personnel changes, fission being used as a dissociative conflict resolution procedure.

- The ‘traditional’ societies produce little or no economic surplus. Material inequality between individuals on a long-term basis is impossible because there is no surplus to appropriate. As a corollary, leadership remains on the level of personal authority rather than coercive power.
Peaceability and nonviolence among ‘primitive’ peoples and cenobites seems to stem from (a psychology of) defeat: “Defeat tamed them... those that survived did so by learning virtues of political accommodation or withdrawal from temporal affairs” (Barkun, 1986; see also Abler, 1991; Alexander, 1979; Bigelow, 1969; Dentan, 1992, 1994; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974; Ember & Ember, 1992; Freeman, 1964; Gregor, 1990; Harris, 1968; Helbling, 2006b; Keeley, 1996; Kelly, 1995; Kuper, 1994; LeBlanc & Register, 2003; Livingstone, 1968; Mühlmann, 1936, 1940; Otterbein, 1970; Pinker, 2011: Pitman, 2011; Rodseth, 1991; Service, 1962, 1966, 1968, 1975; Sipes, 1973; D.L. Smith, 2007; Symons, 1979; and Thayer, 2004). Service called these “cultures of defeat” and Muehlmann named them Rückzugsvölker; Freeman (1964: 112) speaks of “submissive adaptation”. Or, as Bigelow (1969: 198) put it “their ‘peacefulness’ was imposed on them by force”. According to Keeley (1996: 31) “almost all the peaceful agricultural groups could be characterized as defeated refugees, ethnic minorities long administered by states, or tribes previously pacified by the police or by paramilitary organs of colonial or national states”. “Islets of peaceability” can arise as an adaptive response to defeat by neighboring peoples when there are relatively unpopulated areas (called ‘refuges’ or ‘enclaves’) to flee to (Dentan, 1992). As Gregor (1990) noted when decrying the scarcity of peace, the most common peaceable societies are one that could evade the problem of intertribal relations by fleeing conflict, because they lived in very sparsely settled regions and were isolated from intimate contact with others by oceans, desert wastes, mountain barriers, unhealthful swamps, and dense forests. “Unfortunately, preserving peace by flight from conflict has not been a strategic option available to most societies” (Keeley, 1996: 150). A number of anthropologists (e.g., Barnard, 2011; Bicchieri, 1972; Boehm, 1999, 2012, 2013; Butovskaya, 2013; Endicott, 2013; Fry, 2006, 2011, 2013; Fry & Söderberg, 2013; Fry & Szala, 2013; Gardner, 2013; Marlowe, 2005, 2010; Narvaez, 2013) have argued that these defeated, pacified, subordinated, enclaved and/or otherwise marginalized societies (existing nomadic forager societies) are models or analogs of human ancestral populations (the ancestral type of nomadic band), thus promoting the notion of our ancestors as paragons of ‘original’ peacefulness.

Many of the peaceful societies develop what Gregor (1990) called an ‘antiviolent’ value system; cultural norms and ideologies which discourage both intra- and intergroup violence (an important component of which seems to be Gelassenheit at least among cenobites). Nonviolence is supported by stigmatizing quarreling, boasting, stinginess, anger, and violence, and by according prestige for generosity, gentleness, and conflict avoidance. This value system is supported by supernatural beliefs (McCauley, 1990). Howell & Willis (1989) suggested that peacefulness is “cosmologically constructed and morally embedded in a cosmological universe of meaning”. In other words, in peaceful societies, the aspects of belief systems that devalue physical aggression and/or promote harmonious relations are integral parts of the larger cultural cosmologies, and such world views are critical to the maintenance of peace. This point is emphasized by Bonta (1996), who concluded that a “nonviolent belief system is the single most important variable for keeping the peace” (Fry, 1999). A fair number of nomadic hunter-gatherer societies have nonviolent values. For example, “The Sanpoil, at the geographic center of the Plateau, emphasize no other value in life more than pacifism.... Warfare is virtually unknown to them and has been since time immemorial. No living man can recount an instance of conflict even from traditional history” (LeBlanc & Register, 2003). Gardner (1966) provided examples of hunter-gatherers who are nonaggressive both internally and externally: the Paliyan, Kadar, Malapandaram, Semang, Yanadi, Siriono, and Ju’/hoansi (!Kung). Fry (2006) expanded this list of nonaggressive and nonwarring
nomadic hunter-gathers by adding the Birhor and Nayaka (Naikens) of India, certain Canadian Inuit groups, the Greenland Inuit and Polar Eskimos, the Jahai of Malaysia, the Mbuti of Africa, the Vedda of Sri Lanka, and the Saulteaux of North America.

- Peaceable ‘refugees’ tend to be insulationist and xenophobic. Lacking the oppositional frontier processes that create peaceable ‘refugees’, cenobites need specific mechanisms to maintain the boundaries between their people and the ‘others’ by means of physical isolation. Peaceable peoples like Semai contrast themselves with the peoples they fear, creating a counterculture. The antiviolent value system is embodied in a contrast between the peacefulness of the ingroup and the violence of outsiders. Outsiders are bloody, violent, dangerous, ugly, evil, animal-like and, in a real sense, less than human. Children are warned against outsiders and, especially, about behaving like outsiders. Apparently, “hating violence requires violent people to hate” (McCauley, 1990).

- Related to the ethic of nonviolence, the favorite strategy of many peaceful societies accordingly is conflict avoidance, dispersal and separation (intra- as well as intersocietally). Bonta (1996) reported that among the peaceful Malapandaram, Birhor, and Paliyan peoples, among others, communities can split apart in response to an internal conflict, and individuals may transfer into other bands to avoid conflict escalation. Another type of avoidance involves movement of the entire group to avoid another group. The peaceful Amish, Hutterites, and Mennonites, as well as some nomadic hunter-gatherers such as the Chewong, Semai, Semang, Kubu, Siriono, Hill Pandaram, and Hare simply avoid strangers by moving to a different location (Bonta, 1993, 1996; Forbes, 1885; Fry, 1999, 2006; Hobhouse, 1956; Holmberg, 1969; Krech, 1991; Morris, 1977; Sandbukt, 1988).

- Prescott’s (1975) cross-cultural findings support the thesis that deprivation of body pleasure (somatosensory deprivation) throughout life – but particularly during the formative periods of infancy, childhood, and adolescence – are very closely related to the amount of warfare and interpersonal violence. It has been noted time and again that peaceable communities generally manifest an enormous gusto for concrete physical pleasure – eating, drinking, sex, laughter – and they generally make little distinction between the ideal characters of men and women. Particularly, they seem to lack the ideal of brave, aggressive, macho-type masculinity (e.g., Gorer, 1968; Glad, 1990). Similarly, Fromm (1973) analyzed 30 ‘primitive’ cultures. His analysis resulted in the distinction of three different and clearly delineated social systems: destructive, nondestructive-aggressive, and life-affirmative societies. In the latter social system (consisting of 8 societies: Aranda, Arapesh, Bathonga, Mbutu, Polar Eskimo, Semang, Toda, and Zuñi), the main emphasis of ideals, customs and institutions is that they serve the preservation and growth of life in all its forms. There is a minimum of hostility, violence, or cruelty among people, no harsh punishment, hardly any crime, and the institution of war is absent or plays an exceedingly small role. Children are treated with kindness, there is no severe corporal punishment; women are in general considered equal to men, or at least not exploited or humiliated; there is a generally permissive and affirmative attitude toward sex.

- The gender-equality characteristic of many egalitarian band-level societies is not a necessary correlate of peacefulness among enclaved peoples, although the two phenomena can co-occur. Although there are exceptions, many peaceful societies have an egalitarian form of social organization, including a high degree of gender equality. For example, the Buid, Canadian Inuit, Chewong, Copper Eskimo, Ju/wasi, !Kung, Mbuti, Piaroa, Semai, and Siriono, among others (Fry, 1999). According to Sponsel (1996): “[T]he idea that there is a positive correlation between gender equality and nonviolence/peace is sustained by ethnographic cases like the Semai, Chewong, Buid,
and Piaroa, among others (Howell & Willis, 1989; see also Adams, 1983; Burbank, 1987; Divale & Harris, 1976; Lee, 1982; Mitscherlich, 1987; Rosenberger, 1973; Turnbull, 1982; and Whyte, 1978).

The differences in child-rearing practices between the ‘traditional’ and the cenobite societies are open to a number of possible explanations. Cenobites generally are more authoritarian with children than are peaceable ‘refugees’ like the Semai, and they approve the spanking and whipping of children as corporal punishment of last resort (Dentan, 1992, 1994). Enculturating nonaggression or nonviolent socialization (e.g., Montagu, 1978; Irwin, 1990; Bonta, 1996) may be a relatively minor factor in the creation of peaceability (e.g., Knauf, 1987; Riches, 1987; Dentan, 1992; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1993; Ember & Ember, 1994; Kelly, 2000), though some cross-cultural studies find a positive correlation between harsh socialization practices and bellicosity (e.g., Levinson & Malone, 1980; Ross, 1992).

None of the peaceful societies would seem to operate on the premise that its members would automatically refrain from violence (even though aggressive models are absent). Even the most peaceful of these societies employ various forms of social conditioning and indoctrination to constrain and deflect the tendencies to resort to violence, as well as community inducements to discourage violence, and instructions in the virtues and arts of nonviolent conflict resolution. Tribal cosmology, rituals, legends, religious and ethical concepts and precepts reinforce the nonviolent norms of the society. And social ostracism is typically inflicted on individuals who violate these norms (S.Brown, 1994). The fear of evil ghosts is an important mechanism of social control in the service of nonviolence and peaceability. As Helbling (1998) writes about the Alangan Mangyan of the Philippines: “Die Angst (limo) vor den bösen Geistern ist ein wichtiger Mechanismus der sozialen Kontrolle und verstärkt die Motivation zu friedfertigen Verhalten”. The same has been found for the Semai (Dentan, 1968; Robarchek 1979), and the Buid (Pennoyer, 1976; Gibson, 1983).

In nonstate societies people clearly recognize the danger of quarrels and feuds. They attempt to prevent them, and to avoid becoming involved in them when they do occur, because of conscious recognition of personal danger. Parents tell their children about the consequences of improper behavior: social control rests on the fear of violence. Colson (1974) suggested that whether or not folk beliefs about past violence are true, they are thought to be true and are repeated as cautionary tales. The anthropologist may see “people apparently behaving with kindness, generosity, and forbearance, avoiding disputes and sharing resources, tolerant of each other’s foibles”, but this is the result of fear: “Anthropologists have a liking for paradoxes and it should therefore be no surprise to us if some people live in what appears to be a Rousseauian paradise because they take a Hobbesian view of their situation: they walk softly because they believe it necessary not to offend others whom they regard as dangerous” (Colson, 1974).

Finally, besides internal and external conflict avoidance and a high degree of social harmony, cooperation and nonviolent conflict resolution through negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication, low-conflict societies are characterized by various constellations of strategies such as conventionalized disputes and channelling of conflict into ritual (e.g., song contests, buffeting contests, head-butting bouts, arm wrestling, etc.); shaming, shunning and public harangue; absence of disciplinary punishment and/or belief in supernatural agencies as punishers; psychocultural practices which build security and mutual trust; informal social controls (gossip, ridicule); anger management and internalization of self-restraint (see especially Black, 1990, 1993; Bonta, 1993, 1996, 1997; Evans Pim, 2010; Fry, 1999, 2006, 2012; Levinson, 1994; de Rivera, 2009; Roberts, 1979; Ross, 1993; Sponsel, 1996, 2010; and Sponsel & Gregor, 1994). It
should not be forgotten, however, that anger management does not equal pacifism. “The way in which Inuit and other hunter-gatherers manage feelings of anger is indeed impressive, and can be said to constitute a social or even a moral achievement. However, it should not be understood as a virtue in and of itself. The qualities in hunter-gatherers that inspire and impress those from other kinds of societies exist for good, material reasons. The Inuit are not pacifists… hunter-gatherers are capable of high levels of individual and, at times, collective aggression, and will use murder to achieve their ends. It is the coexistence of so many non-violent and socially harmonious characteristics along with a capacity for violence that is remarkable” (Brody, 2001: 324-5; italics in original).

Many societies have a high degree of interpersonal harmony, while being at the same time quite warlike intersocietally, and vice versa. Theoretically, internal and external conflict dimensions may vary independently, although Fry (2006) argued that external peace and internal harmony tend to concur. Younger (2008) also found a positive correlation between interpersonal violence and warfare in precontact Polynesian societies. Societies that have a high degree of interpersonal harmony also tend to be the ones that do not fight wars. Societies on the high end of the internal conflict scale developed by Ross (1985 et seq.), such as the Jivaro or Somali, have frequent violent conflict and internal warfare both within and between communities of the same society. Societies at the middle of this scale, such as the Kikuyu have regular conflict, but internal warfare and the use of physical violence in local disputes is less common. At the low point are societies where conflict itself is milder and physical violence infrequent. The Mbuti Pygmies, Semang, and Papago fall here.

Of more general and practical interest are ethnographic or historical instances in which peace was maintained even though contact between different cultural and social groups was close and sustained (Keeley, 1996: 150). Gregor (1990; Gregor & Robarchek, 1996) nominated as such an example the multiracial society of the Upper Xingu Basin in Brazil, comprising some 1,200 people of four different language groups living in ten politically independent villages (Auétí, Bacaíri, Camayura [Kamayura, Kamaíyura], Custenau, Kalapalo, Kuikuru, Matipí, Mehinacu [Mehinaku], Nahukwa [Nafukhuá], Trumai, Waura [Wauja], Yawalapiti [Yaulipiti], a.o.). For more than a century, aside from rare intervillage homicides and a few feuds, no wars or raids have occurred among these villages. The Xinguans case clearly demonstrates that interethnic harmony and intercultural appreciation are not preconditions for peace. A workable peace can be forged and maintained between highly ethnocentric, mutually suspicious, and factious groups. What interethnic peace appears to require is a minimal and practical tolerance by the different parties for the harmless differences between them: one’s own group lives the right way and lets others live their own irrational, erroneous way (Keeley, 1996: 157). It is also probable that the Xinguans are all examples of a particular species of peaceable society we have previously encountered: defeated refugees (Keeley, 1996). Helbling (2006b: 130) even stated that “The alleged peacefulness of the Xinguans, thus, turns out to be an optical illusion: they do not form a peaceful tribal society, as Gregor & Robarchek (1996) maintained, but a permanent alliance between local groups of different ethnic origins in a sanctuary”.

Is the presence or absence of warfare related to type of social organization? A number of studies suggests that the answer is yes (Fry, 2006).

Sociopolitical complexity and warfare do go hand-in-hand (Haas, 2001; Hobhouse et al., 1915; Johnson & Earle, 1987; Leavitt, 1977; Malinowski, 1941; Simmons, 1937;
Reyna, 1994; van der Dennen, 1995; Wright, 1942; Ember & Ember, 1997: 5, reach the mixed conclusion that “foragers in the ethnographic record had warfare fairly often on average, but they do seem to have had less than nonforagers”). After reviewing cross-cultural studies on this topic, van der Dennen (1995: 142) expresses that “one of the most consistent and robust findings is the correlation between ‘primitivity’ and absence of war or low-level warfare, or in other words, the correlation between war and civilization”. Reading the trends in the worldwide archaeological record, Jonathan Haas (2001: 343) correspondingly concludes that “the level, intensity, and impact of warfare tend to increase as cultural systems become more complex”.

After examining some 35 hunter-gatherer societies in Murdock’s (1981) Standard Cross-Cultural Sample, Fry (2006) concluded: “The essential finding is that all the complex hunter-gatherers and all the equestrian hunter-gatherers make war; whereas a majority of the simple hunter-gatherers do not. It appears that both social complexity and adoption of the horse greatly increase the chance of warfare” (italics in original).

On the other hand, Otterbein (1968) has demonstrated that the frequency of warfare is not related differently to different levels of sociopolitical complexity (cf. Cohen, 1984; Service, 1962).

The 52 Peaceful Societies investigated by Melko (1973) are not really societies (in the ethnological sense) but particular historical periods of particular civilizations (such as the Han and T’ang dynasties in China) without major internal physical conflicts. Yet, some of his findings may be summarized for reasons of comparison.

- No one form of government, no one economic system, no one structure of society, no one system of education seems to be essential to peace.
- Moderate powers seem to have had the advantage over great powers in maintaining peace. They are strong enough to resist attack, but not strong enough to become overextended. Small powers that have been successful in maintaining peace have refrained from interfering in the affairs of their neighbors. Great powers seem to succeed in attaining peace only if they conquer all other great powers within range.
- Peace is the normal internal condition for a society. Conflict involving physical fighting is exceptional. When it occurs, most people involved in it are not fighting most of the time. Most people in most places in most periods of history have not been killed or injured in war.

**PART II: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES OF PEACEMAKING**

**Table 1: A Typology of Peace:**

**DISSOCIATIVE (SEPARATIVE OR NEGATIVE) PEACE**

Peace by isolation; accomplished by

1. geographical distance; insurmountable barriers; large no-man’s lands;
2. absence of technical means of telecommunication;
3. conscious insulation, ‘splendid isolation’, and non-intervention policies

Peace by extermination or annihilation

Peace by flight and migration
Peace by defeat or stalemate peace

Peace by incorporation or subjugation (*debellatio*)
   (1) conquest and annexation of the territory of the vanquished and/or
   (2) subjugation of the population resulting in (a) slavery; (b) vassalage; (c) tribute; (d)
   satellite group; (e) colonization; or (f) assimilation

Peace by war-weariness
Peace by deterrence

**ASSOCIATIVE (SOCIATIVE OR POSITIVE) PEACE**

Peace through union by means of
   (1) fusion; (2) alliance; (3) federation and confederacy

Peace by convention
   (1) Armistices, truces, and cease-fires;
   (2) peace treaties, covenants and ceremonies
Means to enforce peace treaties: (a) intervention by invisible powers (magic, religion);
   (b) hostages; (c) cautions and guarantees; (d) military occupation or reprisals

Institutions for safeguarding peace:
   (1) Sanctuaries, asylums and refuges
   (2) Neutrality
   (3) *Treuga Dei*

Institutions and conventions tending to counteract or mitigate war:
   (1) Connubium; exogamy and intermarriage
   (2) Arbitration and mediation by religious authorities or third parties
   (3) Permanent international jurisdictions
   (4) Commercium; trade
   (5) Diplomacy; messengers, heralds, ambassadors, envoys, couriers
   (6) Intercommunity rites and feasts; corroboree, etc.
   (7) Hospitality
   (8) War substitutes (e.g., potlatch)
   (9) Personal union (blood-brotherhood, pseudokinship and friendship)
   (10) Formal declaration of war
   (11) Fixing time and place of battle in advance
   (12) Post-battle compensation, indemnification and reparation

*Ius in bello*:
   (1) Inviolability of certain persons (women, children, arbitrators)
   (2) Inviolability of certain places: refuges; neutral areas; tabooed times
   (3) Use of special, sublethal weapons (e.g., arrows without points or shafts: California), or special tactics (e.g., the custom of counting coup in Plains warfare)
   (4) Expiatory combat; judicial duels; sham battles
   (5) Chivalry and courtesy in battle

Many authors have discussed *ius in bello*, peace-restoring, peace-keeping institutions and practices, and/or typologies of peace, for example positive versus negative peace (e.g., Fry, 2006, 2012; Galtung, 1965, 1968; Gilissen, 1961; Gregor, 1990; Holsti, 1913; Mühlmann,
Negative or dissociative peace in a pure form is based on minimal relationships: “Good fences make good neighbors” (see Galtung, 1968). War presupposes contact between political entities. When these entities live apart and separated without any mutual contact, problems of war or peace are nonexistent. Other classic forms of negative peace are peace by deterrence (Gregor, 1990); peace by annihilation or ‘peace of the graveyard’; peace by incorporation or subjugation; peace by defeat or stalemate-peace; and peace by war-weariness or exhaustion (Oliver, 1989).

Positive or associative peace depends on the exchange of goods, services and peoples. One of the effects of exchange is to create loyalties which are divided by both territory and bonds of interest, such as kinship and economics. These competing allegiances attract a natural constituency in favor of maintaining peaceful relations. Moreover, exchange may lead to the creation of a common culture. Parallel institutions in different societies may generate a consensus of values and stimulate interdependence (Galtung, 1968; Gregor, 1990).

Most of the strategies, institutions, customs and conventions of positive peace are well-known in our contemporary repertoire of peacekeeping efforts. I shall review here a number of strategies and conventions tending to mitigate war among ‘primitive’ peoples which may be less self-evident.

**Pitched or Ritual Battle (Mock Combat)**

My own research (van der Dennen, 1995) fully agrees with Low’s (1993, 2000), Keeley’s (1996), Gat’s (1999) and Otterbein’s (2004) research that the principal forms of warfare in stateless societies are (1) lethal raiding; and (2) pitched battle (also called ritual, ritualized, prearranged, regulated, formalized, ceremonial, conventional, or ‘agonal’ combat). This is not a trivial issue since many anthropologists (e.g., Sponsel, 1996: 95) and military historians (e.g., Keegan, 1993: 121) do not consider raiding and routing (the disorganized panic following a decisive defeat) to be ‘true’ acts of war. Van der Dennen’s research also corroborates the findings by Davie (1929), Bigelow (1969) Divale (1973), Low (1993, 2000), Keeley (1996), Otterbein (1999), and Gat (1999) among others, that raiding is the most preponderant and the most deadly form of warfare because of (1) small but cumulative casualty figures; and (2) the near-genocidal massacres in which raids and routs may result. Raids are typically conducted with stealth and treachery (surprise attacks) and may be precipitated by perceived imbalances of power. Pitched battles (in hunter-gatherer and horticulturalist societies), on the other hand, tend to be ritualized and relatively ‘bloodless’, sometimes looking more like a rough male sport with clamorous fun than a ‘real’ battle. These ritual combats are not, however, harmless pastimes (as commonly asserted in the anthropological literature), but may be understood as representing the first phase of a process of continuous mutual assessment (a “sequential assessment game” in game-theoretical terms). Conventional combat may more appropriately be regarded as a low-cost means of assessing the (numerical) strength and determination of the adversary. Vayda (1971) provided empirical evidence for the idea that ritualized warfare (pitched battle) may rapidly change into a bloody massacre if the odds change at the moment one party realizes its numerical or technological superiority.

The pitched battle – “This courteous assemblage of opposing sides, lined up and mentally measuring each other” as Wrangham & Peterson (1996: 73) put it – is the least bloody and lethal form of ‘primitive’ warfare (often boiling down to a few dyadic duels), and simultaneously the most clamorous, vociferous and emotional spectacle, abundant with magnificent display, showing-off of superb callisthenic skills, and torrents of verbal insults, invectives and obscenities; in short, an excellent show of ferocity, ending as soon as the first
casualty has occurred. It also appears to be the most ritualized, regulated and conventionalized form of warfare (even the identity of the casualty-to-be may be preordained). Often in ritual battles of this kind, the warriors are impressively painted or tattooed and/or exuberantly dressed or gorgeously decorated with fancy headdresses and other paraphernalia (indeed, sometimes the decorations are so elaborate and extravagant that these seem to emphasize their ineptitude as warriors). Regularly occurring pitched battles were generally found among ‘advanced’ tribal people with fairly dense populations, such as in highland New Guinea.

According to Divale’s (1973) classic description, pitched battle in preindustrial societies consists mainly of a multitude of individual duels. Such a pitched battle, which involved anywhere from a few dozen to a few thousand warriors, was generally conducted in a prearranged area or no-man’s land along the borders of the warring groups. Each army was composed of warriors, usually related by marriage, from several allied villages. Even though large numbers of warriors were involved, there was little or no organized, concerted, military effort; instead, multiple individual duels were engaged in. The lined-up warriors shouted insults and obscenities at their opponents and hurled spears or fired arrows. In spite of the huge array of warriors involved in these pitched battles, little killing took place. Because of the great distance between the opposing warriors and the relative ineffectiveness of ‘primitive’ weapons, combined with a young warrior’s agility to dodge arrows, direct hits rarely occurred. Since the parties are communicating verbally a release of tension may occur and reconciliation may result, particularly since a neutral third party is commenting on the event. Standing on a hill nearby, its members shout to the fighting parties how bad it is for brothers to fight, and that the dispute should be settled by an arrangement. Only if this fails does an escalation take place (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1986).

Among some Californian Indian societies, agility in dodging arrows was highly praised and young warriors pranced about. The women often came to watch these wars and would sing or goad their men on. Women (and sometimes even children) also retrieved spent enemy arrows so that their husbands could shoot them back at their foes (Divale, 1973: xxi). The fighting often stops for the day after one side has exacted a death, with the losers mourning their loss and the other side celebrating its victory within sight of each other. Or the opposing parties retreat after having sustained some casualties, or simply because of imminent nightfall, which makes the brave warriors return to the safety of their homes before the evil spirits of the night catch up with them (Divale, 1973: xxii). There are often deliberate steps taken to ensure that the killing does not get too efficient. There are Californian Indian peoples, for instance, who are well aware that arrows with flights are more accurate and always fit feathers to its hunting arrows — but leaves them off its war arrows (Kroeber, 1925).

The most elaborate description of such a highly formalized set-piece ‘battle’, accompanied by elaborate ritual off the battlefield, is Rappaport’s (1967) account of the minor or “nothing fight” of the Tsembaga Maring of New Guinea. In the minor or nothing fights of the Tsembaga Maring the offended party issues a challenge, after which allies are recruited and a battleground is selected and cleared. The clearing operation involves both sides but these avoid any encounters in advance of the appointed hour for the fight. At that time the sides line up to shout insults and obscenities at the enemy, and to fire arrows and sometimes throw spears at each other (some informants claimed that hand-to-hand weapons were not even brought to the scene of the fight).
Roberts (1979: 117-20) summarized Rappaport’s account: The “nothing fight” is preceded by ritual preparations designed to secure the protection of the ancestors and other supernatural agencies. Then the two sides line up opposite each other within bow-shot behind large shields and fire is exchanged with arrows and throwing spears. These static encounters often continue over a number of days, with the respective combatants retiring at nightfall. Because both sides keep their distance and light weapons are used, serious injuries or fatalities are seldom sustained during the “nothing fight”.

Large shields form a barricade from behind which the men pop out to shoot, then leap back to safety. But some men deliberately exposed themselves to enemy fire to show their bravery; casualties were not numerous and deaths were infrequent, “for the unfletched arrows of the Maring seldom kill”. Rappaport suggests that such minor fights may serve to end a quarrel before it gets out of hand. They permit time for “tempers to cool while satisfying the bellicose imperatives of manhood” (Rappaport, 1967: 121-2).

When the “nothing fight” takes place between two segments occupying a single territory, it may be the full extent to which hostilities go. Tempers have an opportunity to cool during set-piece exchange, less enthusiastic allies may damp down the martial ardor of the principals, or sufficient wounds may be inflicted by the side issuing the challenge to enable them to feel that the wrong has been redressed. Under such circumstances some kind of agreement may be reached in the course of shouted exchanges between the combatants themselves. Alternatively non-aligned neutrals may prevail on the combatants to desist. Rappaport describes occasions on which neutrals brought the fighting to an end by stoning the combatants or physically interspersing themselves between the battle lines.

If the hostilities do not cease with the “nothing fight”, the “true fight” follows. But even in the “true fight” a static battle might continue for weeks on end without decisive advantage to either side. Over this period intermissions are taken by agreement where essential gardening operations or unfavorable climatic conditions demand them. There is a further break whenever a fatality is inflicted while the necessary ritual procedures are undertaken. Rappaport suggests that these set pieces typically continue until both sides feel there has been sufficient killing and a truce is then called. More rarely, the fighting is ended with a rout and dispersal of one side. This generally occurs where allies desert, leaving one side with an obvious numerical advantage which encourages them to break away from the set piece and overrun the enemy. With the calling of a truce a sustained period of peace is assured (Roberts, 1979: 117-20; see also Turney-High, 1949; Howell, 1975; Vayda, 1976; and Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975: 244-50).

Another graphic description of pitched battle among ‘primitive’ peoples has been given by Hart & Pilling (1960) on the Tiwi, a polygynous and gerontocratic tribe of northern Australia. The Tiwi case also illustrates that a people having ritualized war is not necessarily ‘peaceful’

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator was hit.

As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night — by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband — but when the war party left the next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new
Conflicts between local groups (‘clans’) or regional groups (‘tribes’) among the Aboriginal Murngin (Warner, 1930-31, 1937) could also lead to face-to-face confrontations, or battles, whose place and time were normally agreed upon in advance (these ritualized “war games” were called *gaingar*). Here as well, the combatants hardly ever closed in on each other. The two opposing dispersed lines stood at spear-throwing distance, about fifty feet, hurling spears at one another while dodging the enemy’s spears. “Obviously there is a certain amount of bluff in the conduct of the combatants on some occasions... few killings ever result” (Warner, 1930-31: 467). The *gaingar* obviously serves as a means of drastically ameliorating the damage ensuing from all-out warfare, and to deliberately limit conflict (Boehm, 2013: 331-2; Fry, 2009).

Among early American Indians quite similar practices occurred in California and in the Northern Plains. In prearranged fights among the Maidu of California both sides lined up out of arrow range, women and children behind the chiefs of both sides standing together on a knoll to watch the fun. When all was ready, the young men of the ‘defendants’ advanced within range, unarmed. A volley of arrows was released against them. But because the men had been trained as artful dodgers since boyhood, no one would be hit. While they retired to get their weapons, the children of the attackers ran out to pick up the arrows for reuse. Next their fighters advanced to be shot at. So it went for hours, until at last some tired leaper was struck. At this, his side, defeated, broke and ran. The victors chased them with yells of triumph. Those who were caught were pummeled. Then it was over. Everyone returned to the battlefield. The women brought forth food, and both sides together enjoyed a peace feast—or was it a picnic? The victors paid compensation to the losers for having wounded their man (Breysig, 1907; Kroeber, 1925; Hoebel, 1949).

Open face-to-face fighting among the Alaskan Inuit (Eskimo) was only entered into under conditions of clear superiority or when the sides accidentally bumped into each other, mainly *en route* to a raid (cf. Otterbein, 1999). Both Nelson and Burch agree that in such cases a missile fight began: “the early stages of these confrontations were rather ritualized affairs in which the men jumped about with stiff-legged movements and taunted one another, arrows nocked and poised for firing” (Burch, 1974: 2-4, 10-11; see also Nelson, 1899: 327-9; Oswalt, 1967: 185-8; Gat, 1999: 569).

Somewhat more serious but hardly more dangerous were the early fights on the Northern Plains. When a group of Cree joined with the Blackfoot to make war on the Shoshones, about 1725, they spent a few days in speeches, feasting, and dancing before marching off to meet the foe. The Shoshones were ready for them. According to the account of Sankamappee, the Cree chief “Both parties made a great show of themselves. After some singing and dancing, they sat down on the ground and placed their large shields before them, which covered them. We did the same... Theirs were all placed touching each other... Our headed arrows did not go through their shields, but stuck in them; on both sides several were wounded, but none lay on the ground; and night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other”. And this was a battle in which some 800 men took part. Such behavior is “rudimentary warfare”, according to Hoebel (1949), who relates the above stories, but it hardly deserves to be called ‘war’. The lack of pre-battle military organization, as well as the virtual absence of any
discernible tactical coordination, command-structure organization and strategic anticipations of the violence clash itself, also led Turney-High (1949) to characterize such ‘wars’ as ‘submilitary’, and hardly deserving the name.

The ‘game’ perspective
In the past, many anthropologists viewed these pitched battles and, noting the small number of casualties, concluded that much or all of primitive warfare was a ritual or game (e.g., Arnd, n.d.; Malinowski, 1941; Chapple & Coon, 1942: 616, 628-634; White, 1949: 131; Benedict, 1959; Newcomb, 1960: 328-329; Naroll, 1966: 17; Divale, 1973: xxi-xxii; Montagu, 1976; Krippendorff, 1985; Keegan, 1993: 98-99; Dawson, 1996: 13-24, among many others). As, for example, Dyer (1985: 6) wrote recently: “[I]t is an important ritual, an exciting and dangerous game, and perhaps even an opportunity for self-expression, but it is not about power in any recognizable modern sense of the word, and it most certainly is not about slaughter”.

Warfare among egalitarian societies, as also Service (1975) pointed out, is seldom a pitched and bloody affair. When a battle does take place it is more noisy than bloody. “Throughout the world, primitive battles – whether they last a few hours or a few days – are commonly terminated by agreement after each side has suffered a few serious casualties. These various features of prearrangement, elaborate dress, catcalling, long-distance skirmishing, and low casualties give primitive battles their ritualized allure” (Keeley, 1996: 60). However, this ‘game’ perspective is now questioned (Divale, 1973).

Many ‘primitive’ combats were indeed little more than firefights and, sometimes desultory, back-and-forth skirmishes unless one side broke rank. When one of the contending parties panicked and broke rank, the clubs, axes, and lances of the routing victors were used to dispatch any enemies caught (sometimes they were temporarily stunned or mutilated to be dealt with - tortured, sacrificed or cannibalized - later on), and the subsequent rampage by the victors through the losers’ territory often claimed the lives of many women and children as well as men. One Maring clan of 600 people in New Guinea lost 2 percent of its population in the rout that followed its loss of 3 percent of its people in the preceding battle (Keeley, 1996).

Cultural evolution phenocopies natural evolution?
According to Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1979) there are similarities between phylogenetically and culturally evolved patterns of ritualization, which is, he contends, not particularly surprising. The selection pressures in both cases operate along similar lines. In general these patterns have to fulfill the criteria of being conspicuous, redundant, unmistakable and at the same time fairly simple as signals. Mimic exaggeration by emphasis of movement amplitude, simplification, rhythmic repetition, fusion of elements into new patterns and emphasis by additional structures of adornment are also principles in the cultural evolution of ritualistic behavior. No wonder human rituals appear to be highly stylized.

Davie (1929: 179-80, 191) considered the sparing of women and children in war to be the beginning of a common law of war and peace. Efforts to confine armed conflict to the fighting male population has also been observed by Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1986: 513) to be part of the institutionalization of rules of warfare that help to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. Cultural evolution, he submits, here phenocopies ritualizations that in the animal kingdom repeatedly led from damaging fights to tournament-like contests.

In intergroup violence conventions are sometimes established to restrict killing to the combatants, to spare the civilians, to allow a warrior to surrender and to ban particularly destructive or lethal weapons. This is not just an invention of the ‘civilized’ (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1986; van der Dennen, 1995; 1998 for review).
Howell (1975) has argued that there are at least three kinds of ‘war’: (1) conflictive, marked especially by balance of forces and tendency toward resolution; (2) without conflict, due to lack of balance of forces or “no effective resistance”; and (3) nonconflictive, the “kind in which neither side is particularly interested in a more or less permanent disengagement”. It is the latter “which is so widely distributed in the anthropological literature, and the type which may be described as a kind of game with moderately high stakes” (Howell, 1975: 689). His approach is reminiscent of Rapoport’s (1960) distinction between ‘fight like’ and ‘game like’ wars; Coser’s (1965) distinction between conflict as a means and conflict as an end, or realistic and nonrealistic conflict; Speier’s (1941) distinction between ritual, instrumental and genocidal wars; and Van der Dennen’s (1995) distinction between wars of calisthenics, wars of coercion, and wars of carnage.

The Tsembaga Maring, as we have seen, distinguish between minor and serious fights, as do numerous other peoples: many societies all over the world distinguished between some kind of conflictive, issue-related ‘real’ war and something akin to the game-like “minor fight” (or “nothing fight” as the Maring called it, which was regarded as primarily recreative (Kroeber, 1925; Davie, 1929; Hoebel, 1949; Turney-High, 1949; Andreski, 1968; Vayda, 1976; Van der Dennen, 1995 for review). The Iroquois distinguished between “general war” or “public war” which was sanctioned by the council and was waged in the name of the nation, and “private war” or “little war” which might be initiated by some entrepreneurial warrior bent on glory (Fenton, 1978: 315). This is also a fairly common distinction among ‘primitive’ peoples generally.

Ritual combats and prearranged battles has been reported of the Mae Enga (Meggitt, 1977; cf. Arnd, n.d.; Krippendorff, 1985: 43; Wranham & Peterson, 1996: 73); Dugum Dani (Heider, 1970); Bokondini Dani (Ploeg, 1978); Wiligman Dani (Broekhuijse, 1967); Grand Valley Dani (Matthiessen, 1962; Gardner & Heider, 1968; Carpenter, 1974); Maring (Rappaport, 1968, 1971; Vayda, 1971, 1976; Harrison, 1973), Huli (Glasse, 1968), Mount Hagen tribes such as the Mbowamb (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975), and Kiwai (Landtmann, 1927) of New Guinea; the Tausug of the southern Phillipines (Kiefer, 1970); the Kalinga of Luzon (Dozier, 1967); the Australian tribes in general and the Tiwi in particular (Wood, 1870; Hart & Pilling, 1960) and Murinbata (Falkenberg, 1962; Galtung, 1965); the Fijians (Wood, 1870); the Rotuma Islanders (Gardiner (1898); and Society Islanders (Wood, 1870); the Kofyar (Netting, 1973); The Pondo (Hunter, 1936); the Azande and Zulu (Burrows, 1899; Mazrui, 1975); the Nguni tribes and Higi of Africa (Otterbein, 1967, 1985); the Californian and Columbian Indians in North America such as the Maidu, Yuma and Maricopa (Kroeber, 1925; Forde, 1931; Goldschmidt, Foster & Essene, 1939; Stewart, 1947; Hoebel, 1949; Turney-High, 1949; Sturtevant & Heizer, 1978); the tribes of the Oasis area in Mexico (Beals, 1932; Driver, 1961); and the Caribs and Arawaks (Wood, 1870) to mention but a few. Dodge (1882), Hoebel (1949), Marian Smith (1951) Secoy (1953) and Ewers (1975) describe long conventional contests between approximately equal numbers of warriors on the western Plains. For example, the Piegan (Blackfoot) and Shoshone Indians, who engaged in large-scale battles on foot before the use of horses spread to the American plains, used to form lines facing each other that were just barely within arrow range and shoot at their opponents while taking cover behind shields three feet in diameter. Though they also had more lethal weapons – lances and battle-axes – they never closed in to use them unless they had overwhelming numerical superiority (Walker, 1972: 261; Dyer, 1985: 9). The actual battle of the Assiniboin was no more than a mildly dangerous game. The shrieks were horrible, especially if a warrior fell. His friends howled and tried to get his body, while the foe screamed in exultation. Actually very little damage was done if the parties were about equal. If the warriors remained bunched, the technique was to snipe the strays. Neither side wished to attack unless there were
plain chances of an overwhelming smother. Otherwise the action degenerated into a boasting and feather-waving parade punctuated with mutual insult, no doubt a very fine thing to witness (Adair, 1775: 382-88; Turney-High, 1949: 124).

According to Tefft (1975, 1988, 1990; Tefft & Reinhardt, 1974) such restricted (Tefft used the term ‘restrictive’) wars enable political communities to pursue their economic and political interests relatively free of maladaptive consequences. These wars, being largely wars of redress, are limited in duration and destructiveness. Tribes involved in such conflicts often have institutionalized checks limiting the levels of intertribal violence (cf. Langness, 1973). For example, Polopa (Papua New Guinea) adversaries place restrictions on the magnitude of their retaliatory raids to prevent warfare escalation (D.Brown, 1979). The Bete of the Western Ivory Coast regulated warfare between villages with similar restrictions (Balandier, 1986). The Meru of Mt. Kenya have established rules of war which protect all private property except livestock from confiscations in raids (Fadiman, 1980). The Ilongot of the Philippines went so far as to place a ban on all feuds and raiding to prevent total devastation to their populations following the Japanese occupation, a period during which the Ilongot suffered serious population decline (Rosaldo, 1980).

Divale, Chamberis & Gangloff (1976) proposed an alternative explanation of the Tefft and Tefft & Reinhardt findings that internal war (i.e., war between groups within the same culture) was correlated with the presence of peacemaking mechanisms, and external war (war between culturally different societies) with their absence. They suggest that internal war is of a regulatory nature while external war is a struggle for survival between two or more societies fighting for space in the same ecosystem. If internal war is regulatory, it follows that there should be many mechanisms to regulate it (i.e., peacemaking mechanisms) or to stop it for long periods (i.e., stable peace). If external war represents a struggle for survival between two societies trying to occupy the same niche, it follows that there can be no compromise or mechanism to regulate it. Such functional (regulatory) explanations have been seriously questioned, however (see van der Dennen, 1995).

**Multiphase war processes as assessment and escalation**

There are many misunderstandings about ‘primitive’ war. On the one hand, Dyer (1985: “pre-civilized warfare... was predominantly a rough male sport for underemployed hunters”; p. 10) and many others such as Montagu (1976), consider ‘primitive’ war to be a relatively harmless pastime because it was ritualized to a large extent. On the other hand, Keeley (1996) argued the exact opposite position: ‘primitive’ warfare was even more lethal and destructive than its contemporary counterpart because it was not ritualized at all: “Primitive war is ‘war to the knife’, guerre à l’outrance” (Keeley, 1996: 176). These two extreme positions may be reconciled by taking into account the following observations.

In a number of recent anthropological studies of warfare, different grades of violence have been distinguished, separate causes have been sought for fighting at each grade, and, in some cases, escalations from grade to grade have been noted (e.g., Warner, 1930; Chagnon, 1967 et seq.; Otterbein, 1968). Vayda (1971 et seq.) describes such a multiphase war process operating among the Maring of eastern New Guinea. The significant features of this process include the following:

1. The later phases of the process, that involves heavy mortality and sometimes leads to territorial conquests, cannot occur unless preceded by periods of weeks or months marked by rather ritualized hostilities in which mortality is low;
2. Escalations from phase to phase in the war process are not inevitable;
3. The causes of entry into war are not the same as the causes of escalation from one phase to another of the war process. Fighting for blood revenge, magical trophies, or sacrificial victims can become something else if there is escalation to the later phases.
This insight, that relatively ritualized agonistic war may escalate into instrumental or even genocidal war, is Vayda’s most valuable contribution to the study of preindustrial warfare. A war of calisthenics may escalate into a war of coercion or a war of carnage, in a process of constant assessment and testing of disparities between the belligerents. The battle itself functions as an ‘ordeal’. Alexander (1971, 1987) makes the same point as Vayda: ferocious opponents testing out the opposition, before deciding whether an all-out conflict is or is not in their self-interest.

Maring warfare requires considerable explanation, which Vayda attempts to supply. ‘Nothing’ fights occurred, he says, when slights and offences accumulating during a peaceful cycle eventually merited revenge: they might be as mild as an insult or as serious as murder, with rape, abduction or suspicion of spell-casting somewhere in between. The point of the nothing fights was twofold: to test the military strength of the opposition but also to negotiate. Much of the shouting was from mediators, who urged peace. These mediators were often allies, for whom clansmen always looked when war was in the air. They provided an impartial voice, but also evidence of the extra strength available to a party if the other insisted on preceding to ‘true’ fighting (Vayda, 1976: 9-42; Keegan, 1993: 100; cf. Berndt, 1962; Rappaport, 1967; Heider, 1970; Koch, 1974; Meggitt, 1977; Hallpike, 1977; Paula Brown, 1978; and Lewis, 1995).

Also Otterbein (1999: 294; 2000: 800) concluded: “Battles, in which warriors confronted each other along a line, were a means of testing the strength of an adversary, while ambushes and raids on settlements were the means of killing large numbers of enemy… Ritual war, if it ever has occurred, would be only one component of the basic warfare pattern”.

Durham (1976) suggested a selectionist explanation of the multiphase war process. Selection (i.e., natural plus cultural selection) may favor the use of low-cost ‘assessment’ tactics in the early phases of war. This strategy would allow the participants to assess the capability and motivation of their opponents without an immediate risk of large losses. Escalation would be expected only where earlier, less costly tactics seem insufficient to ensure net gain or where increased belligerence is necessary to prevent large losses to an escalating opponent. Finally, belligerents may actually be able to redefine the situation and the war aims, and expand their potential resource benefits in the course of conflict.

**Battle-type warfare as failed raids**

Battle-type warfare occurs in many primate species and some other group-territorial mammals, such as social carnivores. Battles result mainly from chance encounters by primate groups, failed raids or surprise attacks and chance encounters in ‘primitive’ peoples, and among standing armies in historical and contemporary warfare in which the armies are too big to operate undetected (wars in human codified history have consisted almost exclusively of battles). Turney-High (1949) has illuminated the ‘biomechanics’ of the line which develops more or less automatically when two groups (animal or human) meet in an agonistic encounter and every individual organism strives to have its vulnerable flanks protected by its neighbors. In social carnivores and “female bonded” (or female philopatric) primate species, female participation in these – more noisy than bloody – battles commonly exceeds male participation.

Van der Dennen (1995 et seq.) has defended the position that open battles, both in prestate societies and in contemporary states, are essentially failed raids or fouled-up surprise attacks. The view of battles as failed raids has also been proposed by Lee (2007: 727) in his analysis of North American eastern woodland Indian warfare. Open battles were documented on several occasions by early European explorers, and even later witnesses in New England continued to describe Indians as occasionally lining up for battle. These open battles proceeded without much result. Very few casualties, and possibly even the first letting of
blood, sufficed to end the battle and each side would return home. “Rather than view this as
the main object of the expedition, however, it is probably more accurate to consider these
kinds of battles as moments in which the expedition has already failed, having lost the benefit
of surprise. The battle served only to uphold their collective prestige. It was, in short, a face-
saving measure, if perhaps also a kind of test of strength” (italics in original).

EXPIATORY COMBAT (TRIAL BY COMBAT) AND JUDICIAL DUELS
In some cases, conventional battles were intended in advance to put an end to a conflict and
were thus truly ‘ceremonial’. Once blood was spilt or even before, the grievances were seen
as settled, and the battle was terminated (Gat, 1999: 566).
Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915) left little misunderstanding about expiatory combat as
a conflict-limiting (and juridical) procedure. They stated: “The expiatory combats and the
regulated fights of the Australians are also all of them palpably means of ending a quarrel, or
marking a point beyond which it is not to go. They do not seek to punish a wrong but to arrest
vengeance for wrong at a point which will save the breaking-out of a devastating fight”.
The judicial “duel of champions” had a similar objective of limiting “devastating fights”
(Davie, 1929: 177). The small war, Kutana, of the BaMbala (Mbala) represented such a
The Bangala (Ngala) were reported to fight among themselves only with sticks (Weeks, 1909:
435, 1910: 412).

Among the Papuans of Torres Straits similar ceremonial fights were the usual method of
settling quarrels involving more than two people (Haddon, 1908: 344-46). In Australia, single
combats often took the place of pitched battles as a means of deciding intergroup as well as
intragroup disagreements. The fighting stopped when blood was drawn. Since the combat
decided the dispute, no blood feud was inaugurated, and thus further bloodshed was prevented
80; Parker, 1905: 92; Bonney, 1884: 136; Letourneau, 1895: 32-3). In case the friends on
either side got restive and interfered, the fight became general and plunged the two groups
into actual war (Howitt, 1904: 205-6; Parker, 1905: 78-9; Spencer & Gillen, 1899: 556-7).
Frequently intertribal disputes over hunting grounds and trespasses on them were settled by a
single combat, usually between the chiefs, and the result is accepted as final. At other times
disputes were decided by combat between equal numbers of warriors (Dawson, 1881: 77;
Single combats often occurred between chiefs of opposing forces among the Maori. “As soon
as one was wounded the duel was over, but if either of the combatants received fatal injury
one of his relatives would claim ‘satisfaction’, and a general mêlée ensued” (Tregear, 1904:
368-9, 576). The Maori duel “was a great institution”, said Best (1902-04), “Not only on the
battle fields did such encounters occur, but during quarrels concerning women, land, etc.”.
Single combat by champions has also been documented for the Eskimo (Boas, 1888: 699;
Ratzel, 1896, Vol. II: 197), the Tlingit (Bancroft, 1875, Vol. I: 105-6), the Columbian Indians
(Breysig, 1907, Vol. I: 175-6), the Indians of the northern Pacific coast (Hodge, 1907-10, Vol.
II: 145), and the Botocudo of Brazil (Keane, 1884: 207; Tylor, 1909: 223-4). Homer related a
splendid example of a single trial by combat of this type (Keller, 1906: 165; Seymour, 1907:
579). David and Goliath furnished a parallel instance among the ancient Hebrews (I Samuel
17) (Davie, 1929: 179). According to Holsti (1913: 41; see also Hodson, 1911: 113; Ratzel,
1894, Vol. I: 198; Turney-High, 1949) even a general engagement is made up, as a rule, of a
series of single combats. Turney-High (1949: 72) considered the championship duel to be a
“hangover from primitivity”.
Marian Smith (1951) described sham battles among the North American Plains Indians, in which the braves could display their strength, boldness and agility in bloodless contests. Similarly, on San Cristoval “When peace is made... there is a preliminary payment of money... after which fighting ceases. Then a day and place are fixed, and the two parties meet, fully decorated and armed for war, and engage in sham fighting. This sometimes ends in actual fighting” (Fox, 1924). Significantly, Fox adds: “It looked much more like a fighting party than a peace party; but it is the custom to make peace with the whole army, to convince the enemy that it is only for his accommodation that they are making peace, and not because they are afraid to fight him”. Thus, an important ingredient of mock fighting seems to be the face-saving it offers to the fierce warriors.

Among the Murngin of Arnhem Land in Australia, one of the types of battling was itself a peace making ceremony; the makarata, in which members of an aggrieved clan were allowed to throw spears, in a controlled and usually non-lethal way, at relatives of the individuals who had killed one of them, until their anger had subsided. The ceremony did not end, however, until the injured clansmen had drawn blood from the actual killers by jabbing spears through their thighs (Warner, 1937; Boehm, 2013; Chaseling, 1957; Fry, 2006). According to Warner’s observations over a 20-year period, no deaths resulted from makarata ceremonies. Fry (2006) appropriately commented “It is very confusing to call a nonlethal peacemaking ceremony ‘warfare’.

The alternative to killing an aggressor (and thus becoming involved in feud) among the Eskimo was to challenge him to a juridical song contest. In the manner of Provençal troubadours of the thirteenth century, the two litigants scurrilously abused each other with songs composed for the occasion. He who received the most applause won. Thus was the issue settled without reference to the right or wrong of the case. But what was more important, the dispute was laid to rest (Hoebel, 1972; Cf. also Hoebel, 1941; 1954).

CHIVALRY AND COURTESY IN BATTLE

The Samoans were capable of the most intense hatred toward their enemies. Yet they often showed them the most intense ceremonial courtesy before the action began. The combat lines would meet and address each other with formality as great chiefs and warriors, and present each other with food in an excess of courtesy. Once the fight was joined, however, the Samoans meant to kill and all chivalry was dropped, the language bandied between the lines becoming very scurrilous (G.Brown, 1910: 166; Turney-High, 1949: 225).

“Gallantry paid the Maori poorly when they tried it with modern British troops. They played the game more fairly than fair in the European concept. They were amazed when the British shot the people whom they sent from the palisades for water, for was not water necessary? When British ammunition ran low they waited for them to bring up supplies, for why fight a man on uneven terms?” (Del Mar, 1924: 153; Turney-High, 1949: 225).

The Khonds, before beginning a war, allowed the enemy time to complete a religious ceremony in appeal for the war god’s cooperation in the coming struggle. They themselves performed a similar rite (Farrer, 1880: 362-3; Davie, 1929: 181). Smyth (1878: 156-7) stated of the aborigines of Victoria: “Their mode of warfare is fair, open, and manly; for tribes on hostile terms scorn to take the least undue advantage of each other, and the instant a fight is concluded, both parties seem perfectly reconciled and jointly assist in tending the wounded men”. The desire of some Australian tribes to equalize the chances was so strong that they have been known to give arms to unarmed Europeans before proceeding to attack them (Letourneau, 1881: 189; Davie, 1929: 181). Similar cases mentioned by Davie are the Canary Islanders (Cook, 1899: 477), Peruvians (Letourneau, 1881: 198-9), Kaffirs (Farrer, 1880: 362), the Fijians (Ratzel, 1896, Vol I: 296-7), the Lushai (Risley, 1903: 226; Shakespear,
A related practice is the use of ‘chivalrous’ weapons in combat. The Tangale, for example, poisoned their arrows for elephant-hunting but not for fighting (Pope-Hennesy, 1900: 26; Davie, 1929: 182). Among the Californian tribelets some fought ‘game-like’ wars (more ‘sound’ than ‘fury’) with sublethal weapons, e.g., arrows without points or unfletched shafts, which obviously limited the ferocity and lethality of battle. A warrior might look like a porcupine when the battle was over, but he would live to fight another day (Kroeber, 1925: 727; Turney-High, 1949: 167). Turney-High (1949: 167) called such ‘recreational’ wars, not unreasonably, “more of an athletic than a military exercise”.

The use of unfletched arrows has sometimes been (mis)taken as exemplary for “good will” vis-à-vis the enemy. For example, in New Guinea, the Dani and Tsembaga Maring use unfashioned arrows in formal combat (Gardner & Heider, 1968; Rappaport, 1968; Heider, 1970; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975). This was taken as evidence that “Stone Age” cultures deliberately limit the carnage of battle (e.g., Blick, 1988; Gabriel, 1990). Gardner & Heider (1968) and Heider (1970) have speculated that the reason why they left their arrows unfletched was to reduce the chances of injuring the enemy. But, as Roscoe (2011) pointed out, no mainland New Guinea society ever fletched its war arrows because there was no need. With a light reed stem and heavy hardwood head, the center of gravity of a war arrow was forward of its center of pressure, conferring a natural aerodynamic stability over its typical range (Cotterell & Kamminga, 1990).

Q. Wright (1942) noted that beside this chivalric practice of insistence upon equal advantage in battle, the rules of ‘primitive’ war do not ordinarily manifest much fairness to the enemy.

**PEACE MAKING, PERILOUS TRUCE, ARMISTICE AND CEASE-FIRE**

European travellers were evidently less interested in the procedure by which peace was restored than in warfare, for they very seldom give details about its mechanisms and rituals.

By far the most common form of settlement concluding a tribal war involves having a leader on one side declare a desire for peace; this overture is then accepted by the opposing leader, followed by an exchange of gifts or the mutual payment of homicide compensation. This process may sound easy, but in practice the establishment of peace at any stage short of the utter defeat or alienation of one party is as difficult and delicate a task as any arranged peace between contending nation-states. Usually, peace negotiations are not even considered unless the fighting has reached an impasse and losses are approximately equal for both contenders. If the losses are not relatively even, there may be considerable resistance to a settlement on both sides: one group has suffered deaths that it must leave unavenged; the other must pay out a larger amount of ‘blood money’ than it will receive (e.g., Pospisil, 1963; Glasse, 1968; Hudson, 1976; Turton, 1979; Where paying blood money is customary, each side must pay for every death it inflicted since compensation is owed to the relatives of each victim. In other words, equal deaths on both sides do not cancel out the necessity to pay blood money). Or one group may feel strong enough to push the fighting to a more decisive conclusion. Before any peace negotiations can even begin, there must be a general consensus for peace among the warriors on both sides, which may be difficult to obtain. Any ‘hawks’ or ‘hotheads’ dissenting from the consensus for peace among the warriors can easily sabotage the negotiations simply by committing further violence. Even with such a consensus, reaching a final settlement can be a laborious and
precarious endeavor. The peace-making process among the Central Enga of New Guinea [as told in Meggitt, 1977; and summarized in Keeley, 1996] illustrates the excruciating delicacy necessary to establish peace between small-scale societies (Keeley, 1996: 147-8; see also Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1986).

This excruciatingly difficult process is even more exacerbated by the association among non-state societies of the will to peace with weakness, cowardice or defeatism: “Friedenswille ist bei den Naturvölkern beinahe ein Eingeständnis der Niederlage” (Mühlmann, 1940: 129).

When two Ona bands wished to end hostilities, each man handed one of his opponents five blunt arrows and subsequently walked toward him, exposing himself to the shots though trying to dodge them as well as he could. According to Bridges (1938), after the opponents had reciprocated, the bands fraternized for a few days.

Among the Araucanians, the party that wished to sue for peace sent a herald to the victors without a weapon and carrying a branch of canelo. The chiefs of the two parties then met at a designated place, and each sacrificed a llama. The hearts were cut into pieces, the blood was sprinkled on the canelo branch, and the bits were exchanged by the opponents. The chiefs also exchanged the blood-smeared canelo branches and often put all their commanding staves together in a bundle with them. These symbolic acts were followed by long speeches in which peace terms were discussed and assurances of good will were given. In some cases the warriors buried their toquis, arrows, and war instruments in a hole over which they planted a canelo tree (Métraux, 1949).

Among the Pilcomayo River Indians, peace was reestablished when every family that has lost a member received wergeld in the form of sheep, horses, and other gifts. Sometimes kidnapped children were exchanged (Nordenskiöld, 1912).

The Jivaro peace ceremony consisted in burying a spear. The lance was supposed “to carry with it the animosity of the feud” (Stirling, 1938).

The Guiana Carib sent an emissary to notify their enemy of their desire for peace. “The two nations then ranged themselves in order of battle, just as if they wanted to fight. They flung abuses and reproaches at each other for all the outrages committed. Finally, they threw their arms to the ground and then proceeded to the drinking hall where they feasted all together for several days” (Barrère, 1743).

War among nonstate peoples is regularly succeeded by a peace treaty, covenant or declaration. Frazer (1890) collected a number of cases of covenants by sacrifice of a slave or an animal (e.g., the African Boumali and Oronn: Talbot, 1923: 241 sq; Turney-High, 1949: 246-47).

Peace had to be formally declared among the Polynesian Manganai by announcement on the peace drums and a human sacrifice to the war god. These people recognized war and peace as separate states of affairs (or definite social statuses, or domains of reality) and observed the shift from one to the other by specific rites of passage (Buck, 1934).

According to Roberts (1979) “controls which have the effect of avoiding serious disruption of the business of making a living [in settled communities of horticulturalists] are widely reported. For example, the fighting may be called off once one or two people have been killed on either side; or periodic truces may be called (e.g., Berndt, 1962; Koch, 1974). Often such conventions are explicitly related to the exigencies of the harvest”. Koch (1974), writing about the Jalé people of Highland New Guinea, stated: “An indefinite extension of a harvesting recess then constitutes a kind of armistice. This truce is a rather perilous affair, because now small bands of men from the men’s house of a victim whose death has not been
revenged on the battlefield make occasional clandestine expeditions across the demarcation line in search of a chance to ambush an enemy”.

Among tribal pastoralists or agriculturalists who feud, resolving vendettas can range from temporary measures of payment that merely delay the retaliation (e.g., Peters, 1967), to blood-money settlements that are seen as definitive (Boehm, 1986; Hasluck, 1954) and are fairly successful in resolving the conflict (Boehm, 2013: 330-331). Perhaps the most developed instance of hunter-gatherer trucemaking in the ethnographic literature is that of the Northwest Alaskan伊努皮亚q, nomads who use large hide boats or sleds to bring substantial quantities of commodities to a large coastal market or “trade fair” every summer, with sometimes over 1000 persons attending. Because some伊努皮亚q bands have maritime adaptations and others go hunting inland, there is great economic advantage in such trade (Burch, 2005), and even with quite a large number of bands involved, remarkably a sizable foraging population that includes many friendly and many highly unfriendly bands renders itself permeable, as a whole, to safe travel. Because so many of these bands engage in genocidal intercommunity attacks, the success of a general truce may seem improbable, but in fact this takes place every summer with three weeks’ safe passage to and from the fair, and with mortal enemies mingling at the market. As the general truce finishes, lethal hostilities are resumed (Boehm, 2013: 331).

Ceremonial peacemaking and the conclusion of treaties of peace (Holsti, 1913: 61 sq; Numelin, 1950: 197, 238) has also been observed in the case of the aborigines of Australia (Wheeler, 1910: 71, 146 sq, 155), the Maori (Best, 1902: 197 sq., cf. 201; Manning, 1863: 48 sq ), tribes of New Guinea (Krieger, 1899: 324, 418; Williamson, 1912: 183), Fiji (Williams & Calvert, 1858, Vol. I: 54; Thomson, 1908: 89), Tahiti (Ellis, 1829, Vol. I: 318), Tonga (Mariner, 1817, Vol. I: 318), Hawaii (Ellis, 1827: 131), Celebes (Sarasin & Sarasin, 1900, Vol. I: 43), Borneo (Furness, 1902: 112 sq), the Kuki (Stewart, 1855: 641; Lewin, 1869: 111), the Garo of Bengal (Dalton, 1872: 62), Assam tribes (Hodson, 1906: 99), Neillgherry Hills (Harkness, 1882: 106); the Unyamwesi (Speke, 1908: 100), tribes of Uganda (Johnston, 1902, Vol. II: 794), the Masai (Merker, 1904, 101), the Boran, Sakuju, Gubbra, Ajuran and Gurreh (Aylmer, 1911: 295), the Kavirondo and neighboring groups (Hobley, 1898: 368), the Kafirs (Lichtenstein, 1812, Vol. I: 278), the Basuto (Casalis, 1861: 224), BaMbalu and BaYaka (Torday & Joyce, 1905: 409; 1906: 49), Cross River Negroes (Partridge, 1905: 190 sq); the Ojibway (Jones, 1861: 113), the Iroquois (Morgan, 1851: 336 sq), the Kansas, Kickapoo, and Osage (Hunter, 1823: 326), the Omaha (Dorsey, 1884: 332; Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 73, 79, 87, 209, 496), the Kiowa and Comanche (Mooney, 1900: 164), the Haida, Nootka, and Nahua (Bancroft, 1875, Vol. I: 164), the Pawnee (Fletcher, 1904: 297), and the ancient Mexicans (Clavigero, 1787, Vol. I: 370, Vol. II: 412).

Elaborate and complex rituals of peacemaking have also been more recently described for a number of highly warlike New Guinea tribes, e.g., Tsembaga Maring (Rappaport, 1968), Jalé (Koch, 1974), and Mount Hagen tribes (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975, 1986; Strathern, 1971; Vicedom & Tischner, 1962).

Peace can also be ratified by means of exchange of gifts, exchange of women as marriage partners, peace festivals, and a variety of other peace ceremonies, such as burying the hatchet, breaking of spears, planting of trees, waving green branches, smoking the peace-pipe or calumet, etc. (e.g., Numelin, 1950: 211, 219, 221, 225; Holsti, 1913: 66).

The Nigerians had supernaturals who were the personification of pity and peace, and Ihi the peace spirit would take vengeance on anyone violating a formally proclaimed peace between two
towns. Furthermore, they had rules limiting cruelty in warfare which had the force of international law (Meek, 1937: 481; Turney-High, 1949: 207).

**DIPLOMACY AND WOMEN AS PACIFIERS**
Diplomacy among tribal peoples can be every bit as formalized as among the great nations today (Ekvall, 1964; Ferguson, 1998; Lizot, 1994; Numelin, 1950).

Among the Iroquois, young men were not regarded as reliable witnesses or trustworthy bearers of messages between communities. They were suspected of trying to stir up warfare in the hope of being able to acquire personal prestige by performing deeds of valor. This tendency was opposed by older men who were more interested in trade and friendly relations with other tribes, and perhaps not inclined to hurry the process by which younger men could win prestige and challenge their authority. Hence, political offices tended to be held by older men, while younger ones were excluded from decision-making to a considerable degree (Trigger, 1990).

Between Enga clans, fighting was bitter. When casualties became heavy – 10 to 15 men, for instance – older men would intervene, drawing attention to the loss of “actual or potential exchange partners” – a persuasive argument. They would take the lead, then, in peace negotiations, during which clan boundaries were reaffirmed and compensation was paid in respect of deaths (Meggitt, 1957, 1958; Berndt, 1964: 194). But not only older men had vested interests in peace, and would take the lead in peace negotiations.

Many ‘primitive’ peoples have employed women both as messengers and envoys, as well as pacifiers. Females are not uncommonly sacrosanct, i.e., they enjoy personal inviolability in war, and are consequently available for intercommunity diplomatic missions, trade, and peacemaking (Numelin, 1950: 135, 170, 212; cf. Mühlmann, 1940: 126).

Many Papuans considered peace declaration women’s work. If peace was desired, a couple of men went with their wives to the hostile village. The presence of the women indicated the end sought, so the rights of embassy were respected. The suit for peace was almost always accepted, and the men thereupon broke each other’s beheading knives and exchanged arm guards. At night the hosts had relations with their guests’ women, “and that is the real object of the visit”. In a few days the erstwhile hosts returned the visit and brought some of their wives for their former foes to enjoy (Landtman, 1927: 165; Turney-High, 1949: 247). The more chiefly Solomon Islanders were not quite so informal about peace-making as the Papuans, but the end and the means were largely the same. When one side had enough war they would inform the enemy of the fact and ask for one of their chiefly daughters as a bride for one of their own chiefs. If all went well the fighting ceased and the side which sued for peace brought a large bride price for the young woman (Ivens, 1927: 310; Turney-High, 1949: 247).

Among the Andamenese, “[a]ll peace negotiations were conducted through the women. One or two of the women of the one group would be sent to interview the women of the other group to see if they were willing to forget the past and make friends. It seems that it was largely the rancor of the women over their slain relatives that kept the feud alive, the men of the two parties being willing to make friends much more readily than the women” (Radcliffe-Brown, 1964: 86).

It is noteworthy that each individual man and woman of the forgiving party must enact a reconciliation with every man of the erstwhile enemy group so that peace is grounded in a consensus in which everyone participates. Peace requires a dissolution of rancor on the part of the women as well as the men, and this substantiates Radcliffe-Brown’s observation that the women are equally involved in the moral legitimation of war-making through which male participation in lethal violence is collectively sanctioned and rendered
laudable and prestige-enhancing (prowess in war being esteemed; see Radcliffe-Brown, 1964: 45). The peacemaking dance thus reverses the collective anger generated by the war dance and supplants it with an equally collective forgiveness and reconciliation. The Andamanese thus make war and make peace as social constructions. Neither state transpires by happenstance (Kelly, 2000: 108).

Enga women generally deplored and/or detested the frequent warfare the men engaged in, but they had little say about decisions to go to war (Meggitt, 1977; Edgerton, 1992). Before the fighting escalated some followed the line of warriors with big net bags to harvest or destroy the enemy crops. When wars became threatening they retreated with the children, household possessions, and pigs to live with relatives in other clans where they were immune to violence. If their natal clan was the enemy clan, they often served as important emissaries in the early stages of informal peace negotiations (Kyakas & Wiessner 1982; Wiessner, Tumu, Tumu & Pupu, 2007).

In many societies women detested war, but, as Keeley (1996: 145) pointed out, “Such feminine antipathy toward war was neither universal nor eternal, however.” Finally, as Rusch (2014: 10/21) observed: “In some historical cases, inferior groups actually ‘bought peace’ through ritualized danegeld payments to superior neighbours, mostly in the form of nubile women”.

**Relatives**

Relatives often had a particularly restraining influence upon hostilities (Holsti, 1913: 42). Rivers (in Haddon, 1908: 144) stated with reference to the aborigines of Torres Strait, that if two men were fighting, certain relatives of either of them had the power of stopping the fight. The relation who possessed this power in the highest degree was the wadwam (mother’s brother and sister’s child). The wadwam of a man could make him desist from fighting immediately by a mere word or by simply holding up his hand. “This power was so pronounced that even tribal fights would be stopped if a man on one side saw his wadwam on the opposite side”. Other relatives also were entitled to stop the intertribal combat. In Murray Islands a similar custom was prevalent. Among the Roro-speaking tribes and also among the Mekeo the chiefs of clans had, as Seligmann (1910: 216, 345) observed, the right of stopping a fight.

Of the natives of Micronesia we read: „Nun haben sich die Bewohner der einzelnen Inseln häufig zu selbstständigen politischen Einheiten zusammengeschlossen, die sich gelegentlich untereinander bekämpfen. In solchen Kriegen stehen demnach in den feindlichen Lagern Angehörige derselben Sippen. Allein das Gefühl der Blutbrüderschaft erweist sich stärker als die politische Feindschaft; sobald sich zwei Krieger als ‚puipui‘, d.h. als Sippenverwandte erkannt haben, dürfen sie sich nichts zu Leide thun, sondern sie müssen sich im Kampfe ausweichen“ (Kubary, 1878-9, quoted in Holsti, 1913: 43). Of the Maori, Best (1902: 220) stated that a person related to both sides in war was often spared although living with the enemy and caught in arms against the tribe that spared him. “A taharua, or person related to two tribes, would often pass to and fro between the opposing camps when those tribes were at war”. Among the Eskimo in Alaska relatives were neutral when their communities happened to be at war with each other (Nelson, 1899: 329).

Important restrictions are also incumbent on the members of different clans having the same totem (Holsti, 1913: 43). Thus in New Guinea, according to Chalmers (1903: 144, 161, 188) fighting between members of the same totem clan was strictly forbidden. In Kiwai Island it was a fixed law in battle that no man should attack or slay another who bore the same totemic
crest as himself. Strangers even from hostile tribes could safely visit villages where there were clans with the same totems as their own (Frazer, 1910, Vol. II: 37).
The Kutchin Indians were divided into three metronymic exogamous totem ‘castes’, according to Bancroft (1875, Vol. I: 132, cf. 109). “This system operates strongly against war between tribes; as in war it is caste against caste, and not tribe against tribe. As the father is never of the same caste as the son, who receives caste from his mother, there can never be intertribal war without ranging fathers and sons against each other”. Very extensive among the Haidah Indians also were the duties of members of the same totem, although otherwise these might be enemies to each other. Moreover, “in war it was not tribe against tribe, but division against division, and as the children were never of the same caste as the father, the children would be against the father and the father against the children, part of one tribe against part of another, and part against itself, so that there would have been a pretty general confusion” (Frazer, 1910, Vol. III: 356 sq; see also Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 56).

**Connubium; exogamy as a factor for peace**

“Exogamous tribes generally – though there are exceptions – live in peace with each other” Numelin (1950: 138) claimed, though this seems not to be substantiated unequivocally by the cross-cultural evidence (see Epilogue). It seems apparent, according to Service (1975), that ‘primitive’ peoples recognize the danger of warfare and take measures to reduce its likelihood. These measures are various, of course, but they all are reducible to one generic mode of alliance making, the *reciprocal exchange*. Marriage obviously is the earliest, most basic, and also the surest form of alliance-making, for it extends the domestic realm outward. Tylor (1889) made this point long ago: “Among tribes of low culture there is but one means known of keeping up permanent alliance, and that means is intermarriage... Again and again in the world’s history, savage tribes must have had plainly before their minds the simple practical alternative between marrying-out and being killed-out. Even far on in culture, the political value of intermarriage remains”. Exogamy, or marriage outside the group, is claimed to be an aid in binding groups together. Exogamy, according to Tylor, was an extraordinary factor of peace, for it developed a bond of solidarity between the groups by making them dependent on each other for wives and children. For primitive men the choice was, as Tylor emphasized, “between marrying out and being killed out” (see also Melotti, 1990).

Also LeVine (1961) pointed to the potentially pacifying ties of kin-group dispersal and exogamy (especially in uxorilocal, matrilocal and neolocal marriages), and Fox (1967) observed: “You would not try to exterminate a band whose wives were your daughters and whose daughters were your potential wives; you would become, in one sense at least, one people; you would be dependent on each other for your continuity and survival”. Thus, far from being only an economic ‘exchange of women’ in the Lévi-Straussian sense, exogamy is basically an exchange of genes (Melotti, 1990).

Also Kelly (2000) found evidence consistent with Tylor’s (1889) insight that outmarriage functions to blunt violence between local groups – an insight that represents one of the earliest formulations of anthropological theory. Extensive outmarriage may reduce rather than eliminate armed conflict, and this effect may be more pronounced among societies with little or no reliance on agriculture. “Nevertheless, it is clear from Kang’s and Otterbein’s contributions that exogamy does not ensure peaceful relations between social groups” (Kelly, 2000).

Godelier (1989), on the other hand, has shown that by marrying enemy women as a part of peacemaking procedures, the Baruya (a New Guinea society in which warfare is continuous and peace infrequent) and their foes are perpetuating conflict rather than consolidating peace. In effect, the solidarity between brothers-in-law is stronger than that between a man and his paternal kin. As a result, intermarrying with the enemy leads to betrayal and to internal
conflicts that are a burden on the unity and strength of a given group. Giving a wife to an enemy group is a *cadeau empoisoné*, or poisoned gift (Lemonnier, 1998).

Kinship and marital bonds may also lead to divided loyalties and conflicts of allegiance, which, in turn, may lead to neutrality and war mitigation; an idea already expressed by Mühlmann (1940: 65). Among the Alaskan Inuit, for example, relatives were neutral when their communities were in conflict (Nelson, 1899). But, building upon the idea of divided loyalties, conflicts may, in effect, be resolved by expanding them (Goldschmidt, 1994; cf. Oliver, 1989). Conflicting ties of loyalty or cross-cutting ties are present in many social groups. Colson (1953, 1962) argued that these incompatible loyalties put pressure on the kin and co-residents of the disputants to seek a solution to the immediate quarrel (Roberts, 1979). The Mae Enga ‘great fights’, of which the prevailing spirit was that of a sporting event (“pleasantly spiced with danger, a day of splendid fun”) were the culmination of numerous interclan grievances that might otherwise have ended in ferocious warfare. They were terminated by ceremonial peacemaking, accompanied by exchange of valuables. By deliberately widening, formalizing, and blunting conflicts, they served somewhat to contain and mitigate intergroup hostility (Meggitt, 1977).

A widespread characteristic of Highlands warfare was the existence of institutionalized means for halting escalation: by mutual exchanges of compensation, by spirit-sanctioned truces, or simply by mutually respected withdrawal from battle. Even in the event that there were no ‘doves’ in Highland societies, there were some people discerning enough to recognize the mutual destructiveness of further fighting, particularly if, as often happened, they had kinfolks in both camps, and thus cross-cutting loyalty conflicts (Oliver, 1989).

“Despite their avowed emphasis upon taking revenge for wrongs, the Choiseulese generally preferred to settle disputes peacefully when possible... It was better to settle things peacefully with fines, exchanges of ziku or kesa [valuables], ‘because then no one was killed’.” wrote Scheffler (1965) on the Choiseul Islanders. Despite these sentiments, the obligations of the blood feud led to continuous conflict. When war ensued, however, its organization entailed its resolution. “The organization of warfare involved expansion of the conflict through a multiplication of the number of parties; and as the number of parties increased, so did the likelihood of conflicts of allegiance, and in these resided the possibility of peace” (Scheffler, 1965).

The same effect can be obtained not only by bonds of marriage but also by bonds of friendship (Numelin, 1950: 243). If a man, in one tribe in the New Hebrides, had a friend in one of the groups to be attacked, “it was his prerogative to refuse to fight along side with his own tribe... if a man chose not to join in the expedition, he had a perfect right to do so, and no question as to his bravery was involved” (Humphreys, 1926).

Because Kapauku men often married women of confederacies that traditionallly were regarded as enemies, ‘in-law’ relatives, blood relatives, and friends met on the battlefield as enemies. To avoid hurting or killing one’s relative or friend, one fought on the other end of the battlefield (Pospisil, 1994).

Persons, especially women, related by kinship or marriage to both belligerent parties were sometimes allowed to pass with impunity from one village or camp to another. Such persons were, especially in Oceania, employed to carry proposals of peace (Holsti, 1913; Rowe, 1930: Numelin, 1950). Best (1902 et seq.) observed that a person related to both hostile parties was often spared among the Maori, though living with the enemy and probably caught in arms against the tribe that spared him (cf. Stewart, 1832; Vincendom-Dumoulin & Desgraz, 1843).

Service (1975) considered reciprocal exchange to be the generic mode of alliance making in the ‘primitive’ world, be it goods, favors, or marriage partners. Not only more or less
permanent exchange of women in exogamy, also short-term exchange of women is sometimes part of the peacemaking ritual. Among the Kiwai Papuans, the peacemaking feast that each enemy tribe gives its opponent includes giving their hosts access to their women “to put out the fire” (Landtman, 1927). Among the Maring, women are exchanged between enemies as part of the peace negotiations, ideally one woman from one tribe for each man slain in the other (Rappaport, 1967; Goldschmidt, 1994).

Among the Australians the exchange of women is part of the peacemaking ceremony, as well as direct dispute settlement: “When an attacking party is about to attack the home party, the latter if it does not want to fight, sends a number of its women over to the former. If these are willing to settle the matter in dispute without fighting, they have sexual intercourse with the women; if not, they send them back untouched... the Aborigines have no desire to exterminate each other’s groups, for, if they did, how could wives be found?” (Elkin, 1938; cf. Spencer & Gillen, 1929). Among the Andamanese, “[a]ll peace negotiations were conducted through the women. One or two of the women of the one group would be sent to interview the women of the other group to see if they were willing to forget the past and make friends. It seems that it was largely the rancor of the women over their slain relatives that kept the feud alive, the men of the two parties being willing to make friends much more readily than the women” (Radcliffe-Brown, 1964).

A related phenomenon is common worship or religion, which may sometimes mitigate war (Numelin, 1950: 100). Among the North Australians it was believed that while a totemic emblem is in camp all fighting should cease, and any infraction of the tribal law was considered a direct insult to the clan (Warner, 1930). In Nukuhiiva (Marquesas) priests were always immune from violence (Krusenstern, 1810; Langsdorff, 1812). The Tahitians would not molest an enemy who came to offer sacrifice to the national god (Ellis, 1830). Common worship has also led to the custom of forbidding war during religious festivals, a custom analogous to the Western treuga Dei (peace of God).

Conflicting loyalties and cross-cutting ties do not seem to affect the policy of entire groups and will not prevent war between them, but only affect individuals, who may not participate in a war in order to avoid clashing with relatives on the opposite side. So we may conclude that kinship relations between local groups will only help to settle conflicts peacefully between allied groups interested in cooperation against common enemies, as Greuel (1971) and Evens (1985) demonstrated for the Nuer. Kinship and marriage, though, are not irrelevant. They are relevant as resources of mobilization, of which, however, advantage is taken only if Realpolitik so requires (Helbling, 2006b: 126). Conflicting loyalties may even spread violence by dragging neutral groups into the armed conflict if they offer refuge to a member of one of the main opponents (Helbling, 2006b: 126).

**COMMERCIIUM; TRADE AS PROMOTER OF INTERTRIBAL RELATIONS**

Barter exists virtually all over the ‘primitive’ world. Silent trade probably originated from distrust, fear or enmity, prohibiting any direct contact with strangers. Territorial boundaries gradually came to be recognized as neutral areas where one might occasionally meet for mutual benefit, if not on friendly terms, at least without hostility. “As distrust declines, the former silent trade becomes less silent and the tribal representatives (mostly women) begin, though at first shy, to meet at regular intervals: The primitive market. The market day necessarily has the character of a restday, holiday, affording opportunities for social intercourse, sport and amusement, during which hostilities are suspended. The market place can also become a kind of asylum, violation of which is sacrilege” (Numelin, 1950: 228).

Closely related to treaties of ‘connubium’ are those of ‘commercium’ or trade, which tend to bring about friendly intercourse but first modifying and later supplanting the hostile
intergroup relations. In ‘primitive’ cases, trade is often an alternative to war, and the manner in which it is conducted shows how it is a modification of the latter. For the development of trade, peace is necessary. Hence less war means more trade, and vice versa.

One common assumption made by many people concerning the contexts for war and peace is that if societies are exchanging goods and marriage partners with one another, relations between them are likely to remain peaceful (Keeley, 1996: 121). Following the lead of Lévi-Strauss, anthropologists have characterized trading and raiding as structurally opposed forms of social relations: “war is exchange gone bad, and exchange is a war averted” (Ferguson, 1984). In a brief time frame, this statement is generally true: the exchange of goods or voluntary intermarriage cannot very well take place while active hostilities are in progress. But in the longer term, assuming that intertribal exchanges of goods or intermarriage preclude warfare is a mistake.

In the modern civilized world, exchange partners commonly become periodic enemies. Historical research has found that “disputes between trading partners escalate to war more frequently than disputes between nations that do not trade much with each other” (Ember & Ember, 1990). Ethnographers have frequently encountered tribes that intermarried and traded with one another but were also periodically at war: Hidatsa (Matthews, 1877: 27); Mae Enga and Walbiri (Meggitt, 1962: 42, 1977: 42, 80-81); Kikuyu and Masai (Spears, 1981: 100); Tupi (Balee, 1984: 257-59); Mountain Ok (Morren, 1984: 171, 184); Tsimshian (MacDonald & Cove, 1987: xx); Kotzebue Sound Eskimo (Burch, 1984: 306); Alaska Eskimo (Hall, 1984: 341); Mackenzie Delta Eskimo (D. Smith, 1984: 348); Inland Tlingit and Tutchone (McClellan, 1981: 469, 494); Koyukon and Inglik (Clark, 1981: 582; Zagoskin, 1967: 137, 178, 190-91); Hupa, Chilula and Whilkut (Wallace, 1978: 168-69); Chimariko and Shasta (Silver, 1978: 205, 213); Atsugewi (Garth, 1978: 238); Cahto (Myers, 1978: 245); Wintu (LaPena, 1978: 329-31); Nomlaki (Goldschmidt, 1978: 344-45); Patwin (P. Johnson, 1978: 352-53); Yana (J. Johnson, 1978: 363); Maidu (Riddell, 1978: 379-80); Yavapai (Khera & Mariella, 1983: 40); southwestern U.S. tribes (Ford, 1983: 719-22); Nambicuara (Lévi-Strauss, 1948: 367); tribes of the Guianas (Gillin, 1948: 850) (Keeley, 1996: 122). The Mae Enga of New Guinea asserted, “We marry the people we fight” (Berndt, 1962: 234; Meggitt, 1977: 42; Keeley, 1996: 122; cf. Hayano, 1973; Black-Michaud, 1975; Rodseth et al., 1991). The African Tallensi had a similar saying (Fortes, 1969).

The major reason why exchange partners and enemies have often been the same people is simple propinquity. We interact most intensely with our nearest neighbors, whether those interactions are commercial, nuptial, or hostile. More intense contact also increases the chance of disputes, some of which can turn violent. However, mere proximity cannot explain why some interactions are benign, why some are violent, or why they are so often both (Keeley, 1996: 122-3).

As previously mentioned, economic exchanges and intermarriages have been especially rich sources of violent conflict. “Interrmarriage is thus no guarantee of peace; like trade, it can be an inducement to war” (Keeley, 1996).

**INTERCOMMUNITY RITUALS, FEASTS, AND FESTIVALS**

Mühlmann (1940: 34, 54-7) regarded the male initiation ceremonies as the evolutionary matrix of the amphictyony because several sovereign clans unite for the occasion. In Australia hostile tribes met in peace during the performance of certain initiation rites; all hostilities were suspended for the time being. The intertribal character and significance of these ceremonies appears from the fact that persons travelling to or from such feasts could pass unmolested through the territory of hostile tribes.
There are instances of peaceful relations being maintained between primitive tribes by means of festivals specially arranged for the invocation of peace. All fighting is placed under a ban or taboo for the time of the festival, and this ban may sometimes have great and lasting consequences (e.g., corroborees, fairs, messenger feasts.) (Numelin, 1950: 91, 140-41, 232; Holsti, 1913: 68-70). According to Kelly (2000), festive joint gatherings intended to promote peace and goodwill are commonplace among hunter-gatherers. The Dieri tribe in Australia arranged special festivals to invoke peace, the so-called mindarie (Gason, 1879: 271; Wheeler, 1910: 98 et seq.; Holsti, 1913: 69). The same is true of the Mafulu of New Guinea (Williamson, 1912: 84, 132 et seq., 250, 255 et seq.), and the Barea and Kunama in East Africa (Munzinger, 1864: 473). Among the Jalua tribes in Uganda, if a big chief died all the surrounding peoples joined in the funeral rites even if he happened to be at war with some of them; and on the same occasion hostilities between different clans were suspended (Johnston, 1902, Vol. II: 794). McClintock (1910: 206) described a great festival in which two thousand representatives of fourteen different groups of North American Indians took part, apparently without any fighting or even “angry words”. The Omaha and Ponka had a special ceremony to bring about friendly relations between themselves and the neighboring tribes, with all its peaceful obligations (Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 376 et seq., 495 et seq.) (Holsti, 1913: 69).

In close relation to these customs are visits paid by whole parties. Similarly we find meetings taking place between different social units in order to consult about policy and to conclude alliances, or to perform religious or other ceremonies (Holsti, 1913: 67-8; Numelin, 1950: 118): Australians (Spencer & Gillen, 1899: 32, 50 et seq.; 1904: 31, 1912, Vol. I: 200 et seq., 232 et seq.; Frazer, 1910, Vol. I: 63; Schürmann, 1879: 241 et seq.); Tasmanians (Wheeler, 1910: 79); Cross River tribes (Partridge, 1905: 190 et seq.), BaMbala and BaYaka (Torday & Joyce, 1905: 409; 1906: 49; Torday, 1913: 136); and ancient Mexicans (Clavigero, 1787, Vol. I: 370). Yet, the peace-creating effect of the common cult was never very strong (Mühlmann, 1977: 846).


**POST-BATTLE INDEMNIFICATION AND COMPENSATION**

Another equally powerful factor in mitigating and preventing blood feuds arose when a property compensation came to be substituted for actual vengeance. The offender could stay the hand of the relatives of a murdered man by paying him ‘bloodmoney’. This practice has received the name ‘weregeld’ or ‘wergeld’ from the Anglo-Saxon for ‘manmoney’.

In her study of Melanesian warfare, Camilla Wedgwood (1930) found that peacemaking procedures usually “fall into two distinct parts; the making of compensation for injuries
inflicted during the fighting; and the performance of some ceremonial, such as the exchange of gifts or food, which symbolically unites the erstwhile opponents”.

McCorkle (1978) stated on the effects of compensation and indemnity payments (bloodmoney) in the tribelets of the Californian region: “It also appears that regional, intertribal adherence to the unwritten law that each injury must be exactly recompensed limited armed aggression, since restraint served to save wealth goods that would have to be expended at the settlement marking the end of hostilities”.

Also Q. Wright (1942) and Numelin (1950: 230) noted that the common requirement for pecuniary compensation for casualties and wounds, often paid by the victor to the loser, is a means of securing the peace and of ending feuds. Sometimes the usual rule of a life for a life is carried out by a process of intergroup arbitration by which the tribe whose member is responsible for the original murder turns over to the tribe of the victims one of its less desirable members on which the injured group may wreak revenge.

Spencer & Gillen (1927) described the ‘atinga’, or avenging party of the Arunta (Aranda), a band of hunter-gatherers in the harsh desert of Central Australia. The particular ‘atinga’ they described was organized by the old men of a band who had determined through mystical procedures that the several recent and unaccountable deaths which had occurred in their group were caused by malevolent magic of a neighboring band. After going through a number of purification rituals, the men painted their bodies, and taking their fighting boomerangs and spears, set out to stealthily approach the enemy group. The other band discovered them, and seeing they were outnumbered, immediately sent out some of their women as evidence of a desire for peace. If the attacking group copulated with the women, it would signify that they would not attack. In this particular case, the offering was rejected, so two men were sent out to confer with the attackers, and two whole days of palavering and negotiations took place. Finally an agreement was reached between the old men of both parties that the battle would be carried out. However, a secret agreement had been made that no one was to be killed by the avengers except three of the young men. It seems that these three men had been causing trouble by not obeying their elders, violating rules for the sharing of meat, taking sexual privileges which did not belong to them, and in general being arrogant. Near dawn the next day a special fire was lit by the old men of the victim group. It was answered by the attackers, who then moved in quickly, speared two of the marked men and retreated, taking their wives as booty. The third victim had smelled trouble and pulled stakes during the night. The elders of the attacked group put up a faked resistance but the only casualties were the two marked men.

By day volleys of arrows are exchanged by warring Enga clans (New Guinea Highlands) in an atmosphere that may initially resemble a sports match with intoxicating team spirit. However, once a man has been killed, ‘sports’ turns to rage (Wiessner, 2006). Prior to approximately 1885, Enga groups dispersed after warfare. Compensation was paid to allies but not to the enemy; if the losing party remained in the area, ties were renewed gradually. Perhaps this is why there is no word for peace in Enga, only terms to describe the cessation of hostilities exist: yanda konjingi, “to cut off the fight” or yandate lakenge, “to break the spear” (Wiessner, Tumu, Tumu & Pupu, 2007).

In all phases of compensation, families in one clan gave to families who were friends and relatives in the other, thus achieving peace and restoring a multitude of individual ties. Forgiveness was not an element of compensation, and desire for revenge could be evoked years later. With the completion of akali buingi, the bed and possessions of the deceased were removed so that fellow clansmen would not be overcome by emotion and feel like taking vengeance. If certain members of the victim’s clan were not satisfied with what they received
personally in the compensation, the leader of their own clan might give them a pig to quell desires for revenge.

The fact that compensation must be paid for the deaths of both enemies and allies made clansmen hesitant to accept many allies and eager to terminate hostilities before the burden of compensation payments became too heavy.

Essential features in peace-making among the Enga clans and groups were: (1) diplomatic oration, (2) the return of families to their land shortly after hostilities had ceased so that daily communication could resume, (3) the promise of future economic gain through exchange, and (4) the payment of compensation over a protracted period of two to three years to permit the healing hands of time to take effect. Once peace was established, marriages were arranged between enemy clans to further strengthen ties. In short, prior to first contact with Europeans, Enga were masters of what is today called 'restorative justice' (Wiessner, Tumu, Tumu & Pupu, 2007). Furthermore, rules and restrictions were laid down to govern warfare, and clan meetings were held before going to war. Each adult man in the clan offered his opinion and then leaders orchestrated the many views into consensus. Trouble-makers could still initiate violence but they were discouraged and warned that they would have to bear the greater share of funerary gifts to the maternal kin of those killed in warfare.

In practice, Enga clans usually try to evade paying the outstanding blood-money by resorting to delays, procrastinations, or token payments, so most of their ‘peaces’ seldom endure for long (Keeley, 1996: 148).

As the Enga example shows, the custom of paying blood money or other forms of war reparations are almost as much a cause of subsequent warfare as of immediate peace. New disputes can arise or fighting can resume when compensation is not paid promptly or to the satisfaction of the recipients (Keeley, 1996). Indeed, among the Huli of New Guinea, unpaid homicide indemnities have been identified as a very common cause of wars (Glasse, 1968). In general, reparations are a very weak mechanism for maintaining peace, and they often prove to be an impediment to reconciliation or an inducement to further violence (e.g., Pospisil, 1963; Meggitt, 1977; Paula Brown, 1978; Herdt, 1987). Just as with the Treaty of Versailles, the settlement of one tribal conflict could produce grievances leading to the start of another (Keeley, 1996: 149).

Another kind of compensation (non-monetary) is related by Whitehead (1990). He stated that according to Gumilla (1745), among the South American Otomaco and Saliva, ceremonies of peace were concluded by individuals interchanging as many blows with a club (though not the war club) as amounted to complete satisfaction for both parties.

As the power of the chief increases, the right of private vengeance or of composition is taken out of the hands of the individual and lodged in those of the chief. With political development, offenses come to be regarded as public rather than private wrongs and are dealt with more and more by the government. The individual thus gradually loses all right of private justice: the state replaces him as avenger.

**THIRD PARTY MEDIATION**

Whitehead (1990) presented the following example of third party mediation and peacemaking: On March 22nd, 1624, a large Aricoure war party, from the Cassipour River in Brazil, stopped at a Yao village on the Oyapock, en route to attack Carib settlements at Cayenne. The Yao intervened, as they were ‘common friends of the two’. They secured a peace between the Caribs and the Aricoures. “On the occasion of this peace the Yaos entertained them together for eight days, peace having never been known between them before” (Sloane, 1707).
Among the North American Plateau tribes, hostilities were limited to petty feuds and occasional small-scale raids by self-interested volunteers. Headmen and chiefs of villages and bands, however, disapproved of such entrepreneurial raids and went to great length to maintain peace, sometimes risking their lives in negotiations with hostile outsiders. Feuds between kin groups were known but not common, and chiefs served as arbiters of such disputes, which were often settled by bloodmoney. The rudiments of a legal mechanism were, therefore, present (Driver, 1961). On mediation and negotiation in ‘primitive’ societies see also Gulliver (1979) and Greenhouse (1985).

When no third party exists to adjudicate disputes over marriage arrangements, personal injuries, trade, territory, and other economic concerns, or when the mediators that do exist cannot enforce their decisions on the recalcitrant, disputants regularly resort to violent self-help (Keeley, 1996).

**FORMAL DECLARATIONS OF WAR**

A further step toward the mitigation of war is the formal declaration of war (*indictio belli*) and the ultimatum (Davie, 1929: 176-77; Mühlmann, 1940: 115-16; Numelin, 1950: 98). Because most tribes relied for success on a surprise attack, they seldom declared war formally. There are, however, some exceptions. Before setting out on a campaign, civilized and more ‘primitive’ tribes alike consulted omens and performed some kind of magico-religious ceremony to ensure the success of the expedition and to safeguard the lives of the warriors. The Chibcha spent a whole week making ceremonial preparations. During this time they implored their gods to protect them, sang songs in which they enumerated the reasons for the campaign, and sacrificed children to the deities. The Chibcha sent heralds to the enemy to announce the beginning of hostilities, and these emissaries remained with the enemy during the war (Métraux, 1949: 388-89; Kingsborough in Spencer, 1873: II, 17). When the Jivaro decided to attack a group with which they had been at war previously, the shaman dug up a spear which had been buried during the peace ceremony. An emissary was sent to notify the enemy, and war etiquette required that the enemy also send a messenger to announce their readiness to fight (Stirling, 1938: 52).

Before attacking, the Amahuaca sent messengers to scatter grain on the enemy’s paths. The Surinam Carib dispatched a few macaw feathers ahead of the war party. The Caribs (such as the Huri of the Yaoura River) declared war by hurling arrows or javelins into the enemy country, or sticking them into the ground at the territorial boundary (von Martius, 1867: 97). A Cashinawa chief who was about to storm a village told the enemy to flee at the very moment when his warriors rushed in to cut off their retreat. As a threat and a symbol of hostility, the Sherente impaled an arrow in a piece of buriti rachis, which they laid in the path of the enemy. If the foe declined the challenge and sought a peaceable settlement, they shot an arrow with a broken head over toward the attackers (Nimuendajú, 1942: 76).

The populations which the Inca intended to subjugate were first invited to submit peacefully; ambassadors sent by the Emperor took great pains to point out the advantages of becoming incorporated into the Tahuantinsuyu. Supposedly, it was only after such offers had been spurned that the Inca attacked (Métraux, 1949: 389).

Notification of hostilities to opponents is also described for the Australian aborigines (Curr, 1886: I, 256, 1887: II, 38; Dawson, 1881: 74; Howitt, 1889: 323, 1904: 333; Howitt & Fison, 1889; Macgillivray, 1852; Smyth, 1878: I, 165; Spencer & Gillen, 1904: 571-76; Wheeler, 1910); a number of New Guinea tribes (Guise, 1899: 213; Krieger, 1899: 200, 416; von Hagen, 1899: 251); Torres Straits (Haddon, 1890: 433); Rotuma (Gardiner, 1898: 471); Samoans and Tongans (Turner, 1884: 253-54); Maori (Tregear, 1904: 343-44); the Fiji Islands (Thomson, 1908: 89-90; Williams & Calvert, 1858, Vol. I: 44); tribes of former
Formosa (Hulsius, 1649: 36); headhunters of Borneo (Ratzel, 1894, Vol. I: 411); Tenae in Bengal (Dalton, 1872: 35); the Naga tribes (Butler, 1875 in Davie, 1929: 293; Godden, 1897: 163, 1898: 12-13, 40; Hodson, 1911: 113 sq; Woodthorpe, 1882: 71); the Malays (Frobenius, 1914: 127-36); the Ilongot (Ratzel, 1896: I: 447); the Battak (Frobenius, 1914: 128-29; Ratzel, 1896: I, 447); the Lisu (de Lacouperie in Davie, 1929: 293); the Masai (Hinde, 1901: 65); Galla (Paulitschke, 1893: 256-57); Gannawarri and other Nigerian headhunters (Tremearne, 1912: 183-84); Kaffir (Farrer, 1880: 362), Eastern Equatorial African tribes (Jacques & Storms in Davie, 1929: 292); South African tribes (Macdonald, 1890-1: 266); Bangala (Weeks, 1909-10: 413); Ba-Mbala (Hilton-Simpson, 1911: 255-56; Spencer, 1874: IV: 13; Torday, 1913: 101; Torday & Joyce, 1905: 415-16); North America tribes generally (Dellenbaugh, 1901: 366; Farrand, 1904: 245; Jähns, 1880: 40; Tylor, 1909: 224; Waitz, 1863: III, 338); the Huron and Iroquois (Morgan, 1851: 339), Natchez and Mississippi Valley tribes (Mallery in Davie, 1929: 295); the Florida Indians (Swanton, 1911: 127, 132-33); the Central Californians (Bancroft, 1875: I, 379); the Columbian Indians (Franchère, 1854: 251); the Chinook (Cox, 1831, Vol. I: 322); Honduras tribes (Bancroft, 1875, Vol. I: 723; Herrera, 1725: IV, 135); Peruvians (Letourneau, 1881: 198), and Aztec and other Mexicans (Bancroft, 1875: I, 581, II, 420, 423; Biart, 1900: 248; Clavigero, 1787: 370). Holsti (1913: 41), who presented some of these cases, commented: “Not merely is the enemy thus in many cases duly warned beforehand, but also during the fighting itself certain rules are observed which tend to mitigate the destructive harshness of war”.

The effect of these war declarations is, as Numelin (1950; also Davie, 1929: 176) stated, obviously to give the enemy a fair chance and can thus be considered to be some kind of chivalrous action. Turney-High (1949: 244-45) offered the following interpretation:

The importance of closely integrated and efficiently functioning socio-political institutions has been strikingly demonstrated in the power or lack of power to declare states of war or peace. To be sure, many people think that the universal state of all persons below literate levels has been one of war. This hardly squares with the facts. Many tribes in varying states of culture considered war the unusual, so unusual that it required some formal act of declaration. It is impossible to say that this idea correlates with either the very simple or the complicated cultures. It has been evident in all degrees of cultural development. Perhaps no simpler or more wretched people existed in either of the Americas than the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego. They were also accustomed to bitter and long standing feuds. Nevertheless, one Captain Low, quoted by Cooper (1917), said that the West Patagonians made a rude image of a man with long red teeth and with a neck halter of hide. Around this they stuck spears, arrows and clubs. This they set up as a declaration of war. A similar method was used by the Araucanians... When the somewhat better organized but yet simple Canadian Algonkians went to war, they sent as a messenger to the people they intended to attack a slave formerly captured from that people, bearing an axe with a handle painted red and black (Lahontan in Mallery, 1888). The Huron sent a black wampum belt to the enemy-to-be. The royal Natchez lagged little behind the level which civil and civilized states had achieved a few years ago. They declared war by leaving a ‘hieroglyph’ picture in enemy territory to announce their intention of attacking at a certain phase of the moon (Mallery, 1888). The anything-but-royal Pomo behaved similarly. This, to be sure, destroyed the surprise element, which may be why modern nations have lost their manners.
Keitsch (1967: 95) described what happened among the Melanesians when the war-magic failed, when the spells cast upon the enemy did not seem to work, when the sorcery of the enemy proved to be stronger than one’s own: “Zeigte der Gegner irgendwelchen Gegenstand, so war jeglicher weiterer kampf mehr oder weniger sinnlos, denn der Zauber hatte versagt. Der Zauber der Feinde hatte sich als stärker erwiesen. Das Bewußtsein, den Sieg nicht mit absoluter Gewißheit in einem Schlag erringen zu können, nahm trots bisweilen hoher eigener Überlegenheit der angreifender Partei jeglichen Mut. So blieb oft als einziger Ausweg nur der sofortige Rückzug und das Vertrauen auf eine günstigere Gelegenheit”. In other words, a devastating blow to their combativeness.

**FIXING TIME AND PLACE OF BATTLE IN ADVANCE**

The effect of a declaration of war as it occurred among the BaMbala was to render the encounter less severe, so much so that a special name, ‘Kutana’ or small war, was given to this kind of warfare. A day and place were appointed for the battle, the bush was cleared to give a fair and open field, and the kind of weapons and mode of fighting so regulated that rarely were any of the combatants killed. Should one or more by any chance be killed, ‘Gembii’ or real war ensued, in which no declaration was made, no quarter was given to the wounded, and every form of treachery was employed (Hilton-Simpson, 1911; Spencer, 1873-81; Torday, 1913; Torday & Joyce, 1905).

A still further step toward the mitigation and ritualization of war is, in addition to the formal declaration of war, the agreement on the war theater or battle field, and by implication the neutrality of other localities (Mühlmann, 1940: 116-17). The most important development of the “law of war” (*ius belli*), as well as the rules and regulations of warfare (*ius in bello*), is the transition from the treacherous attack to the pitched battle on an agreed-upon battlefield (Mühlmann, 1940: 119). All other developments can be more or less logically derived from this primordial achievement: Neutrality of certain places; non-belligerence and truces at certain times; neutrality and inviolability of certain persons, especially non-combatants (women and children); asylums and safe havens; use of sublethal weapons, etc.

It is frequently understood that blood relatives, certain diplomatic and religious personalities, certain places, as the sea or the trees, and certain times, as night, are exempt from destructive activities; that poisoned weapons should not be used, and that fighting should cease after a certain number of casualties; that peace, once made, should not be broken without cause (even though ‘primitive’ international law is at best rudimentary and lacking in universality) (Q. Wright, 1942). Taken as a whole, however, illustration can be found in the war practices of ‘primitive’ peoples of the various types of international rules of war known at the present time: rules distinguishing types of enemies; rules defining the circumstances, formalities, and authority for beginning and ending war; rules describing limitations of persons, time, place, and methods of its conduct; and even rules outlawing war altogether. Wars to end war, which sometimes occurred in Australia after minor wars had become abnormally frequent and destructive, usually were so destructive and exhausting, sometimes resulting in losses to each of the federated groups of belligerents of as many as a dozen or two men, that the peace outlawing war which follows was observed for a considerable period (Q. Wright, 1942).

Many preindustrial societies had special theaters of war; arenas often located at the boundary between the inhabited areas of the disputants. Sometimes neutral zones were arranged while the rest of the country was looked upon as dangerous (Mühlmann, 1940: 117; Numelin, 1950: 94). The tendency of sparing enemies is extended especially to those who have taken refuge in such places as are recognized as asylums (Mühlmann, 1940: 117; Holsti, 1913: 45). This custom was generally prevalent among the Australian aborigines (Wheeler, 1910: 106 sq). In
Nissan Island, the hut of the chief served as an asylum (Steinmetz, 1892: 420). The idea of neutral zones and the right of asylum probably arose originally from magical and religious conceptions of spirits dwelling in certain places which are sacred and must be kept free from disturbances, as Westermarck (1907) suggested. The graves of chiefs and ancestors are often sacred and taboo, as are the sanctuaries and temples beside them. The tombs of dead chiefs gave shelter to refugees in Tonga (Meinicke, 1876, Vol. II: 81). Hence, “if the most inveterate enemies meet upon this ground they must look upon each other as friends under penalty of the displeasure of the gods” (Mariner, 1817, Vol. I: 95). In Hawaii, as observed by Ellis (1827: 137, 155 sq), two cities were recognized as asylums, both of which afforded complete safety during war to all fugitives, including the vanquished. Turner (1861: 285, 334) stated that among the Samoans a different district or the houses of the chiefs served as places of refuge. Among the Kuki (Lewin, 1869: 100), and the Lushai in general (Shakepear, 1909: 374) fugitives found shelter in the huts of the chiefs. This was the case also with the Kafirs (Kidd, 1904: 352), the Masai (Merker, 1904: 206), and other native peoples in Africa (Post, 1887, Vol. II: 37). In the Canary Islands, in time of war, places of worship were not molested (Cook, 1899).

Such ‘holy’ places can become asylums where fighting is prohibited. Among many ‘primitive’ peoples there are taboo or fetish houses where protection and peace is secured for all who enter. Sometimes related tribes could take refuge in one another’s territory. The Indians of the Southeastern United States had peacetowns (or “white towns”) wherein no human life could be taken, not even an enemy’s (Bourke, 1892: 453; Holsti, 1913: 46; Mooney, 1900: 207; Turney-High, 1949). “Now it is obvious that this widespread institution also greatly contributed to mitigate the warlike character of primitive conditions” (Holsti, 1913: 46).

Like ‘holy’ places there are also ‘holy’ or tabooed days when peace and rest must be observed (Holsti, 1913; Mühlmann, 1940; Numelin, 1950: 232).


This custom, however, was not limited merely to negotiators of peace; it also applied to messengers of every kind (Holsti, 1913: 66-7; Numelin, 1950: 170): Australia (Wheeler, 1910: 109 et seq.), Sue Islanders (Macgillivray, 1852. Vol. II: 41), New Guinea (Krieger, 1899: 324, 416; Rawling, 1913: 174), Masai (Thomson, 1885: 260; Baumann, 1894: 165), Wambugwe (Baumann, 1894: 188).
Among the North American Indians the calumet was sacred; hence it was of old “a Pass and Safe Conduct amongst all the Allies of the Nation who has given it” (Hennepin, 1698, Vol. I: 75; Holsti, 1913: 66; Numelin, 1950: 221). Even more, whoever was carrying it was welcomed and even respected by the enemy (Carver, 1779: 358 et seq.; Hunter, 1823: 326 et seq.; Dorsey, 1884: 368; Fletcher, 1904: 279; Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 381).

Moreover, this restriction of killing is in many cases extended also so as to include all the adversaries who are not carrying arms, or at any rate have ceased to offer further resistance (Holsti, 1913: 44). Among the aborigines of Torres Strait, *Padaugarka* was the name given to a peaceful man who would not fight even when the rest of the men were engaged in fighting. The enemy noticed the fact, and when they returned home they mentioned it, and in future they would not attack him nor his family (Haddon, 1908, Vol. V: 302).

The savagery of ‘primitive’ warfare is also mitigated by the recognition of neutrals or non-combatants (Davie, 1929: 185); e.g., Bering Strait Eskimo (Nelson, 1899, Pt. 1: 329); BaKongo (Weeks, 1914: 191). Among ‘primitive’ peoples the smith very often enjoys this immunity (Lippert, 1887; Sumner & Keller, 1927). Some tribal societies also recognize neutral territory or “no man’s land” e.g., the Luhupa Naga of India (Godden, 1897: 12); New Hebrides (Somerville, 1894: 385-6); the Australians (Curr, 1886, Vol. II: 293-4); the BaMbala (Torday & Joyce, 1905: 408); the tribes of the Loango Coast (Bastian, 1874, Vol. I: 243); the Fuegians (Darwin, 1873: 236); and the ancient Mexicans (Bancroft, 1875, Vol. II: 425; Biart, 1900: 249). All these cases represent efforts to limit the inconveniences of war (Davie, 1929: 186).

The Abipon as a rule spared the unwarlike (Dobrizhoffer, 1822, Vol. II: 144). The Tenae in India “make war only on men, inflicting no injury whatever on non-combatants” (Dalton, 1872: 35). According to the old Chinese custom of warfare, it was not considered right “to rush on those who were willing to surrender” (Medhurst, 1846: 192).

Another mitigation of war appeared when women and children were spared. Many nonstate societies make no distinction of age or sex during the heat of a fray. Among the more ‘advanced’ peoples, women and children or even men captured from the enemy are spared, usually, to be made slaves (Q. Wright, 1942).

Davie (1929: 191) considered the sparing of women and children in war to be the beginning of a common law of war and peace. Efforts to confine armed conflict to the fighting male population has also been observed by Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1986) to be part of the institutionalization of rules of warfare that help to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. Cultural evolution, he submitted, here phenocopies ritualizations that in the animal kingdom repeatedly led from damaging fights to tournament-like contests.

Many ‘primitive’ peoples spared and/or protected women and children of both sides: e.g., Australians (Wheeler, 1910: 154); the Tasmanians (de Quatrefages, 1884: 343-44); the Torres Straits Papuans (Haddon, 1890: 346, 415); the Fijians (Seemann, 1862: 180; Stewart, 1832; Vol. I: 289, 317); the Samoans (Ellis, 1830, Vol. I: 318 [“only cowards would kill women”]; Turner, 1861, Vol. I: 318, 1884: 195-96); the Andaman Islanders (Man, 1878: 108 sq); the Tenae of Bengal (Dalton, 1872: 35); the Kuki (Roth, 1887: 126); the Angami and other Naga tribes (Godden, 1897-8: 12-13); the Kabyles (Hanoteau & Letourneux, 1893, Vol. III: 79); the Bedouins (Burckhardt, 1830: 81, 173); the Masai (Hinde, 1901: 6, 64; Johnston, 1902: 822; Thomson, 1885: 90, 177); the BaHuana (Torday & Joyce, 1906: 289); the Kaffirs (Farrer, 1880: 362); the Oromo (Paulitschke, 1893-6: I, 256); the Bageshu (Roscoe, 1909: 182); the Guanches of the Canary Islands (Farrer, 1880: 362; Cook, 1899: 477); the Iroquois (Morgan, 1851: 344); the Winnebago, Sioux, and Abipon (Farrer, 1880: 362-63); the Omaha and Ponka (Dorsey, 1884: 332); the Wyandot, (Powell, 1880: 68); the Californian tribes in general (Bancroft, 1875, Vol. I: 381); and the Abipon (Dobrizhoffer, 1822, Vol. II: 141).
Among the New Guinea Kapauku, the women, being tabooed from injury by the enemy, moved around the battle lines collecting arrows for their husbands (Pospisil, 1994). This has also been commonly reported of Californian societies (e.g., Kroeber, 1925).

Another grand case of the mitigation of war is seen in the treatment of prisoners. Among some ‘savage’ tribes no prisoners of war are taken, and women and children are slain (Fijians: Thomson, 1908: 305; Africa: Ratzel, 1896, Vol. II: 345; Omaha: Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 603).

Many other tribes take no prisoners or take them only to eat or sacrifice them. The first mitigation of this savagery came, as we have seen, when women and children were spared. Hence women and children were the first prisoners of war. Indeed, primitive warfare seems to be characterized in general by the fact that the men are slain and the women and children carried off into captivity. The cases where this occurs range in civilization from the naked savage to peoples of considerable culture (Davie, 1929: 194).

Davie here refers to the BaHuana (Torday, 1918: 174; Torday & Joyce, 1906: 289); the Bangala (Weeks, 1909: 413); Ugandan tribes (Johnston, 1902, Vol. II: 822); Torres Straits (Haddon, 1890: 433); Kamilaroi and Kurnai (Fison & Howitt, 1880: 214); Bering Strait Eskimo (Nelson, 1896: 328); Pacific States Indians (Bancroft, 1875, Vol. I: 407; the Ainu of Japan (Batchelor, 1892: 288-9); Berbers of Morocco (Harris, 1898: 71); Homeric society (Seymour, 1907: 270-71; Keller, 1906: 293-4); early Arabs (Smith, 1885: 283-5) and early laws and customs generally (Maine, 1883: 213-4; Sumner, 1906: 468).

Tribes not sufficiently advanced to hold slaves commonly practice adoption. In this way they were able to some extent to compensate for their own losses in war: e.g., the Kuki (Roth, 1887: 126); the Mekeo tribes (Seligmann, 1910: 319); the Dyaks (Roth, 1892: 60; Gomes, 1911: 94-95); the Kurnai (Fison & Howitt, 1880: 214); the Andamanese (Man, 1878: 355-56); the Abipon (Farrer, 1880: 363); the Charrua (Christison, 1882: 36); the Minuane and Puelche (Nieboer, 1910: 192); and many other South American Indian tribes (Steward, 1946-8); tribes of Mexico (Bancroft, 1875: I, 628); and North American Indians (Bancroft, 1875: I, 500; Davie, 1929: 191-92; Dellenbaugh, 1901: 366; Farrand, 1904: 243; Hodge, 1911: II, 914; Nieboer, 1910: 246; Lippert, 1887: II, 82-83).

The usual fate of captured men is death, yet occasionally they, too, were spared. The first move in the direction of making male enemies prisoners instead of slaughtering them was scarcely a mitigation of the cruelties of war, for the captives were tortured and mutilated, sometimes with incredible and sickening cruelty.

Among the North American Indians prisoners of war were not always tortured, but were sometimes well treated and adopted or interchanged (Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911). This is the case at least with the Iroquois (Morgan, 1851); the Omaha and Ponka (Dorsey, 1884); the Wyandot (Powell, 1880), and the Californian tribes (Bancroft, 1875).

The Mafiumi carried on their wars rather humanely. “Even in the case of victory they do not penetrate into the interior of the enemy’s country. Male prisoners of war are not killed, but kept for ransom” (Baumann, 1894). With reference to the Kabyles, Hanoteau & Letourneux (1893) observed that when in war an enemy has been made prisoner and, accordingly, ought to be tortured, «un des combattants peut le sauver en le couvrant de son burnous ou en échangeant son fusil avec lui». Moreover, «les femmes, qui dans la vie civile tiennent si peu de place,... par leur présence seule, éloignent la mort et donnent l’anaia’».

With the development of agriculture organized slavery appeared and prisoners of war were normally spared for this purpose. Slavery placed an economic value on human life. It became
more profitable to enslave prisoners than to eat, torture, or adopt them. “Slavery, then, in its time and setting, marked a decided improvement in human manners. It was, in truth, a great humanitarian advance” (Davie, 1929:195).

**Dual Chieftainship**

The partition of ‘primitive’ communities into peaceable and belligerent groups had the same end in view, namely, the prevention of too destructive warfare (Holsti, 1913: 46). Of the warlike Galla, we are informed that they were divided into three different classes. The Moran contained the unmarried warriors, the Morua were married and never took part in war, and finally the Levelé were married but at the same time might fight occasionally (Ratzel, 1895, Vol. II: 166). This division was most systematically carried out among the Indians. Many Indian tribes, said Gatschet (1898: 350; cf. Dorsey, 1884: 113 sq. 1897: 233 sq; Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911: 542 sq), to the east as well as to the west of the Mississippi, had an old division of the male population into fighting and peaceful groups. It sometimes happened that the peaceful groups separated themselves from the warlike ones and consequently came to carry on their own wars, though much more humanely than the warlike groups (Ratzel, 1895, Vol. I: 564; Holsti, 1913: 47).

Dual chieftainship (separate peace and war chiefs) may have served the same function (i.e., to demarcate the separate states of war and peace) among many North American Indians (Numelin, 1950: 184).

**Blood-Brotherhood and Friendship**

The exchange of blood between persons who are establishing friendship is a relatively common ceremony. Drinking or mixing blood establishes peace relations. Blood-brotherhood is, in the ‘primitive’ world, regarded as one of the chief factors in preventing feuds (Numelin, 1950: 206).

Friendship ties between Kapauku headmen of confederacies pacified formerly vicious enemies for the time of their lives (Pospisil, 1994). Irwin (1990) described pseudokinship (ritual cousinship) among the Netsilingmiut Inuit he studied. He summarized the cultural proximate mechanisms for limiting Inuit conflict as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limiting Conflict</th>
<th>Cultural Adaptation</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>No cognates available to conceptualize and discuss war</td>
<td>Planning war is difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Organization</td>
<td>No institutions for social organization above the extended family</td>
<td>Organizing war is difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization of nonaggression</td>
<td>Child rearing practices manipulate infants rewards, affection, and punishment, aggression</td>
<td>Develops self control of aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic</td>
<td>Murder by magical means is ineffective</td>
<td>Murder rate reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat of Retribution</td>
<td>Execution of murderer is socially encouraged</td>
<td>Costs of murder increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mythology teaches the high costs of murder</td>
<td>Apparent costs of murder increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Conflict</td>
<td>Ritualization of conflict limits combatants</td>
<td>Death rate reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship</td>
<td>Intermarriage increased ties between tribal subpopulations</td>
<td>Coefficient of relationship increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudokinship</td>
<td>Itlureet (ritual cousins) increased ties between potentially antagonistic tribes</td>
<td>Apparent coefficient of relationship increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badging</td>
<td>Increased cultural similarity reduced innate capacity for intertribal hostility</td>
<td>Apparent coefficient of relationship increased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between some Australian tribes close bonds of friendship were maintained, sometimes for several generations. Contiguous hordes of the Tanganekald and Jarildekald, for example, were friendly and frequently intermarried so that access rights through marriage tended to develop between some families. As in most fraternizations of this kind, jealousies, thefts of women, and deaths ascribed to sorcery tended to limit the growth and continuation of such bonds (Elkin, 1938).

Also adoption may have worked as an avenue for preserving peace. The Inca emperor adopted sons of conquered chiefs and thus cemented his empire into a formidable monolith. Similarly among the Kapauku adoption of young people of influential families was used to bring lasting friendly relations (Pospisil, 1994).

The custom of guest-friendship may have served a similar purpose. By this expedient friendship, hospitality, and safeconduct supersede the old practice of robbery and slaying aliens, rights enjoyed by members of the ingroup are extended to outsiders, and the bounds of the peacegroup are thus widened (Davie, 1929: 214-15).

**War Substitutes and Institutions of Peace**

Goldschmidt (1994) examined in some detail three instances of what he called the ‘institutions of peace’; the White Deerskin Dance (as practised by the Hupa, Karok and Yurok of California); the potlatch (as practised by the Northwest Coast Kwakiutl and Tlingit); and the kula (as practised by the Melanesians). These institutions of peace (or war substitutes in the case of the potlatch) are, Goldschmidt said, socially constructed patterns of behavior in which antagonism and competitiveness are expressed in ways that are neither lethal nor violent. They do not eliminate war; they do, however, tend to reduce the level of military conflict.
An institution with an even greater effect in preventing warfare and enforcing peace was the ‘primitive’ secret society. The secret orders, especially those of West Africa, were concerned with every matter of public interest, civil as well as religious. “They punish crimes and act as public executioners, serve as night police, collect debts, protect private property, and, where they extend over a wide area, help to maintain intertribal amity” (Webster, 1908).

Numelin (1950: 233-37) ascribed a prominent part in the development of peaceful relations to these secret societies. “The secret societies seem to be so eminently peaceful in character that it is a question whether one of their chief purposes is not to prevent hostilities between local groups and tribes”. For example, one of the most potent secret societies, the Duk-Duk in the Bismarck Archipelago has been described by Von Pfeil (1898: 181) as “a power with sufficient influence to enjoin peace on contending parties”.

In general, Numelin’s claim seems grossly exaggerated, however. It is more likely that these secret societies performed internal militia and policing tasks, thus being able to control feuding to a certain extent.

Social signaling and the Yangoru Boiken’s pig-exchange system as symbolic war

It has been widely reported that small-scale societies in places such as New Guinea, Africa, and South America devote an enormous amount of ceremonial labor to competitive feasting, distributions of material valuables, performances of singing and dancing, and other conspicuous, cooperative activities. These ceremonial displays, Roscoe (2009a,b, 2013) argued, are a means of reliably signaling the military strength of the individuals, subgroups, and/or communities that sponsor them. Through these displays, the individuals and subgroups within a political community and the political communities that make up an alliance of communities are able to establish in a nonlethal way who would win a fight to the death over some conflict of interest without any individual or group having to risk an actual fight to the death.

The notion that competitive exchange is a kind of “fighting with food” or “fighting with property” is widespread in small-scale societies both within and beyond New Guinea (e.g., Codere, 1950: 118-129; Kaberry, 1941/42: 344; Tuzin, 1972; Young, 1971: 223). Even to a naive observer, it is obvious that Yangoru’s pig-exchange ceremonies had similarly aggressive connotations, and local exegesis reveals that the entire complex was, in fact, an elaborate symbolic war (Roscoe, 2009b). The symbolism begins with the pig, which, depending on the context, stands as both a spear and a human being. As a gift — a commodity in the process of transaction — it is said to be a symbolic spear… At the same time as they are “spears”, pigs are also symbolic humans… Both explicitly and implicitly, pig-exchange was a symbolic form of war, and just as individuals and subgroups had to defend their land with the spear against enemy encroachment so, in the symbolic “war” of pig-exchange, they had to “defend” their land with gifts of pigs against encroachments by those against whom they could not use the spear — other members of their political community and their allies… (Roscoe, 2013: 485, 483).

Structural restraints in North American eastern woodlands Indian warfare

Lee (2007: 716-37) outlined a number of structural restraints in eastern woodlands Indian warfare, which was a nearly endemic, though not continuous, state of war, consisting of raids caused mainly by revenge. There were, however, certain restraints within the need for revenge. The scale of the avenging party, and thus its destructive potential, was limited by the mobilization process. Decisions for war were reached by consensus, and Native American
leaders lacked the capacity to coerce participation (Ferguson [1997] argued that this lack of coercive structures was the most fundamental limitation on prestate warfare). While a lack of coercive political structure limited the scale of war, another fundamental limitation was the Native ideology of revenge. The revenge motive did not carry with it the motivation to pursue the wholesale destruction of the enemy people – a few scalps and prisoners would suffice. This “tit-for-tat” understanding of war was unfocused in its targeting since any victim would do, but it was limited in its scale (Lee, 2007: 716).

Furthermore, these Indians appear to have distinguished between ‘grand’ and ‘little’ war, and what Lee (2007: 719) called “not quite war” (the “not quite war” was politically motivated as an effort to effect relations between groups, but employed only the small-scale methods of ‘little’ war). Once “at war”, whether at the ‘grand’, ‘little’ or even the “not quite war” level, a number of factors built into Native American society tended to limit the extent of the conflict’s lethality and overall destructiveness – for both the attacker and the defender. These structures were not absolute, and they may or may not have originated as deliberate efforts to restrain war, but there is little doubt that they served that function in practice.

To begin with, Native American war demanded a certain level of ritual preparedness and sacred purity. Common to many of these prewar rituals was the expectation that proper access to spiritual power would provide protection in war. Such a powerful belief in the importance of ritual to the successful outcome of war meant that an offensive could easily be derailed by bad omens, whether natural or deliberately manufactured. Sacred restrictions included a prohibition on sexual intercourse, which extended to prohibit the rape of enemy women. Finally, acknowledging the fundamental spiritual harm caused by the taking of life, some societies expected returning warriors to undergo a period of purification prior to their full reentry into society. This need for purification after a raid created a basic limitation on the frequency of war, since it at least nominally prevented those warriors from simply resupplying and returning to the attack (Lee, 2007: 721-22).

The coercive power of Native American leaders was extremely limited, and it was thus difficult to raise large armies or to maintain one’s leadership position after a defeat. Authority within a people usually derived from the consensus of the elders channelled through a peace and a war chief. In military terms this divided structure of leadership dependent on the consensus of the group imposed two significant limitations. The first was the inability to coerce warriors to go to war – the mobilization problems. The second was the limited size of war parties on most occasions. In turn, a smaller war party could inflict only limited damage. Furthermore, the fragile authority of the war chief tended to limited the risks he could take while on campaign, thus limiting the likely destructive potential of any given raid (Lee: 2007: 723-24).

Finally, the desire for prisoners, the role of women and peace chiefs (who did not derive their social status or authority from success in war), and resident aliens or long-term visitors from other nations, limited the total level of destructiveness of Indian war (Lee, 2007: 730-37). Significantly, Lee concludes that “Peace was more a temporary lack of hostile feelings than a permanent, preferred state of being” (p. 735).

**Purification Rituals: Ambivalence Toward the Enemy**

We have been led to think that disregard for enemy life and his feelings are characteristic of warfare, Turney-High (1949: 222) stated, but this is not necessarily so, as evidenced by ambivalent feelings toward the enemy and guilt-expiating ritual, both of which seem to be universal and betraying “bad conscience”: “Cold-blooded slaughter has really never been approved by the bulk of mankind. All have understood the amenities of peace to a greater or less degree. Civilized and savage men understand that war requires regulation and that human
death is full of ‘mana’, which is a fearsome thing” (Turney-High, 1949: 207) “Peace, then, seems to be the normal situation in the minds of even warlike peoples” (Turney-High, 1949: 241; cf. Keeley, 1996; Maret, 1920; Numelin, 1963: 43; Q. Wright, 1942).

“War and killing push men into some kind of marginality which is at least uncomfortable, for there seems to be a basic fear of blood contamination, an essential dread of human murder. If man did not consider human killing something out of the ordinary, why has there been such common fear of the enemy dead, the idea of contamination of even a prestigious warrior of the we-group? We have seen that the channeling of frustration into hatred toward the enemy is good for the internal harmony of the we-group, but the enemy is human, too. Humanity is capable of ambivalent attitudes toward its enemies” (Turney-High, 1949: 241).


Ritual seems to have a primarily apotropaic function; it reduces fear and anxiety. It has the effect of coordinating preparations for action among several organisms. It also functions as a means of organizing the perception of reality, i.e., chaos is replaced by (binary) order (Kennedy, 1971; P. Smith, 1991; Meyer, 1993). Ritual (especially pre-battle or preparatory ritual) reduces fear. It reinforces the solidarity of the group by dramatizing its status structure. It strengthens group boundaries, justifies its hostile or defensive activities, and expiates its guilt. It supports the warrior values and the warfare process by ceremonially transforming the guilt of killing into self-righteous virtue and strength. The great ritual efforts to induce commitment may be seen, according to Kennedy (1971), as culturally developed means for overcoming the subconscious repugnance to killing as well as for reduction of fear. The warrior value system apparently needs a great deal of social buttressing, from early training in fierceness through indoctrination, divine validation and many shaming devices to fear-reducing rituals (Kennedy, 1971; see also Turney-High, 1949; Andreski, 1964; Potegal, 1979; Goldschmidt, 1988, 1989).

In a chapter of his The Golden Bough, aptly entitled “Taboo and the Perils of the Soul”, Frazer (1890) was the first to acknowledge the existence, and summarize the available evidence of disculpation ritual, taboos and purification ceremonies (or lustration), indicative of some sense of guilt, in the post-war behavior of ‘primitive’ peoples. The purpose of the seclusion and the expiatory rites which the warriors who have taken the life of a foe have to perform is, he points out, “no other than to shake off, frighten, or appease the angry spirit of the slain man”.

In his Totem und Tabu, Freud (1913) was so impressed by these examples of disculpation ritual that he discussed the subject at length, connecting the expiatory ceremonies following the killing of an enemy with the general ambivalence of taboo: “We conclude from all these regulations that other than purely hostile sentiments are expressed in the behavior toward the enemy. We see in them manifestations of repentance, or regard of the enemy, and of bad conscience for having slain him. It seems that the commandment, Thou shalt not kill, which could not be violated without punishment, existed also among these savages long before any legislation was received from the hands of a God”.

Or, in the words of Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1975): “Der Mensch vermag unter bestimmten Umständen grausam zu handeln, aber das Gewissen verfolgt ihn”.

Much of the post-war ritual activity in nonstate societies seems clearly to indicate the expiation of guilt. Various kinds of ritual penance after killing were widespread in ‘primitive’ (and ancient) societies. Fasting, vomiting, sexual abstinence, and seclusion (separation) were common, as were ritual responsibilities such as sacrifices for vows given. Often the returning
warrior was considered sacredly polluted and had to undergo additional purification rituals. The Pima, for example, regarded the killing of an enemy to be such a dangerous act that a Pima warrior withdrew from battle the moment he killed his opponent to begin his rites of purification, or lustration (Kroeber & Fontana, 1987). Similarly, a Papago warrior who had killed an enemy was contaminated, unclean and dangerous, and the ordeal of purification (lasting sixteen days) necessary to readmit him to society was even more severe than the hardships of the warpath (Densmore, 1929).

The Jivaro killer also had to go through a lengthy and troublesome purification rite, but presumably from different motives than those of the Papago; fear of the enemy spirit thirsting for revenge (Karsten, 1923).

Similarly, among the military Zulu the victorious slayer had to receive magical medication to purge him of ‘nuru’, his victim’s vengeful spirit (Junod, 1927; Krige, 1936). An Ibo warrior, after decapitating an enemy, licked some of the blood from the knife in order to become identified with the slain, thereby becoming immune from attack by his ghost (Meek, 1937).

Among the Maori, returning warriors could not participate in the victory celebration until they had gone through a *whake-hoa* ritual, designed to make them ‘common’ again: The hearts of slain enemies were roasted, after which offerings were made to the war god Tu, and rest was eaten by priests, who shouted spells to remove “the blood curse” and enable warriors to reenter their ordinary lives (Sagan, 1974).

The almost masochistic character of these transformative rituals may appear from the following example. Among the Taulipang Indians of South America, victorious warriors “sat on ants, flogged one another with whips, and passed a cord covered with poisonous ants, through their mouth and nose” (Métraux, 1963). Such painful and shocking postwar rites impress on the warrior that war is much more than a “continuation of policy... by other means”. In war men enter an alternative realm of human experience, as far removed from daily life as those things which we call ‘sacred’” (Ehrenreich, 1997).

Similar expiation and purification practices have been recorded for a great number of other band-level and tribal societies, e.g., Carib (Whitehead, 1990), Chilcotin (Lane, 1981), Huli (Gasse, 1968), Marquesan (Handy, 1923), and Meru (Fadiman, 1982), among many others.

“There has existed” Turney-High (1949: 225) concluded his perceptive review, “a dread of taking enemy life, a feeling that if the life of a member of the we-group was precious, so was that of a member of the other-group. Fear of death-contamination has demanded expiation or purification among many folk”. Also Keeley (1996) concluded that “These and similar rituals emphasize the extent to which homicide was deemed abnormal, even when committed against enemies”.

The existence or non-existence of ‘natural’ inhibitions against killing conspecifics in human beings has been fiercely debated among scholars. Many authoritative ethologists, primatologists, anthropologists and psychologists have denied the existence of these ‘natural’ killing inhibitions, while others have affirmed them (see Van der Dennen [2011], for a review of this fascinating literature).

**EPILOGUE**

Although all theories of negative and positive peace are intuitively reasonable, few if any of them survive the test of the cross-cultural data. Exogamy and trade may actually be positively correlated with war frequency (Tefft, 1975; cf. Berndt, 1962; Gregor, 1990; Keeley, 1996; Kelly, 2000). Just as interpersonal violence often occurs in close relationships, the most intense conflicts seem to occur between polities that are similar in structure and intensely engaged with one another (as Waltz [1979] also observed for the contemporary international
system). “[N]either trade nor intermarriage encourages peace, but often helps to rupture it” (Keeley, 1996).

Tefft (1975) noted: “Interchange of membership through intermarriage does not seem to reduce substantially the frequency of war or to further peaceful relations between political communities... Economic ties create more mutuality of interest and less division than kinship ties at the tribal level. However, neither kinship nor economic ties create strong enough bonds of mutual interest to prevent external war”.

This conclusion is, however, contestable. Tefft does not sufficiently distinguish types of warfare (e.g., social, economic, political), nor does he take into account the various cultural, political, or socioeconomic levels among the societies studied, lumping them all together. It may well be that the mechanisms and processes in question are conducive to peace at some level of socioeconomic development, but not at others. Or only when a particular type of warfare prevails, and not when other types prevail. It is a not uncommon pattern to find that tribes trade, raid, and intermarry. The Mae Enga say that “we marry the people we fight” (Meggitt, 1977: 42). Tindale (1974), the authoritative source on the Australian peoples, stated: “Where intertribal marriages were common, the cross-tribal kinship links established thereby often prevented large-scale quarrels”.

On the other hand, Berndt (1962) noted on the Grand Valley Dani: “Marriage and close relationship in this region are intimately correlated with warfare. The more closely districts are bound by kinship ties, the greater the likelihood of dissension and open hostility”. The conclusion formulated by Kelly (2000) seems to me to be *grosso modo* correct: “Extensive outmarriage may reduce rather than eliminate armed conflict, and this effect may be more pronounced among societies with little or no reliance on agriculture. Nevertheless, it is clear from Kang’s and Otterbein’s contributions that exogamy does not ensure peaceful relations between social groups”.

Dentan (1992) sketched a political-ecological model for the origin, persistence and demise of peaceable societies. The model fleshes out the familiar suggestion that nonviolence is a way in which less powerful societies respond to violence by stronger ones (e.g., Bigelow, 1969; Sipes, 1973; Dentan, 1978, 1979; Alexander, 1979; but cf. Knauf, 1987). Dentan argued especially (1) that ideology by itself does not determine peacefulness; (2) that nonviolence is not due to a psychic or cultural inability to be violent; and (3) that static interpretations of dynamic adaptations and situations are unlikely to be helpful.

Some of the important observations and conclusions of the studies briefly discussed above are the following:

- Peaceability is not disability, not a cultural essence unrelated to a people’s actual circumstances. Warlike peoples are capable of peacefulness, while peaceable peoples are capable of waging war under appropriate circumstances. Furthermore, the hated enemy of yesterday can be the respected ally of today. Such reversals sometimes happen, as Keeley (1996: 147) observed, with “bewildering rapidity” (“With bewildering rapidity, hated enemies can become respected allies, devout pacifists can become tigers on the battlefield, peaceable societies can become belligerent, and vice versa. The roots of war and peace clearly lie in certain social and economic circumstances that mold or override values and attitudes”).

- The rise and survival of peaceful societies suggests that human peaceability is not an impossible, anti-Darwinian fantasy but instead, as Dentan (1992, 1994) emphasized, an adaptive response to particular political ecologies.

- If no social institutions necessitate warfare, old animosities and needs for revenge are ignored (LeBlanc & Register, 2003).
Many peoples who value peace positively still have relatively high rates of intragroup violence, e.g., Gebusi of New Guinea (Knauft, 1987) and San (‘Bushmen’) of Africa (e.g., Thomas, 1994). “In simple societies, the reality of long-term harmony and cooperation in the face of spasmodic violence is not a paradox” (Knauft, 1994). Thus a cultural emphasis on (inter)dependence and nurturance does not by itself account for nonviolence. Social support networks themselves involve costs and conflicts. In other words, people are not nonviolent unless they feel nonviolence is good or at least that violence is bad; but peace-loving people on occasion may commit acts of violence, and those occasions may come often.

Keeley (1996: 150-7) suggested a few factors that seem to help peace endure: (a) geographic isolation; (b) a catastrophic defeat can foster an aversion to war for many generations; (c) the existence of a powerful third party able to punish violence; (d) mutual tolerance of customs and beliefs; (e) allowing allies to specialize in the production of items that a society could produce itself also seems to help maintain peace. Keeley also points out, however, that interethnic harmony and intercultural appreciation are not preconditions for peace (p. 156).

A comparison of active peace systems suggests, according to Fry (2012), that common features that can be hypothesized to be important include (i) an overarching social identity, (ii) interconnections among subgroups, (iii) interdependence (ecological, economic, and/or defensive, (iv) nonwarring values, (v) symbolism and ceremonies that reinforce peace, and (vi) superordinate institutions and conflict management. The promotion of an “us-versus-them” mentality can facilitate intergroup hostility; however, at least some successful peace systems (such as the Xingu) form a common identity that helps to promote peace. Intergroup bonds of friendship and kinship discourage violence. Communalities, interconnections and linkages (shared values, norms, religion, cosmology, marriage alliances, etc.) greatly facilitate the resolution of disputes. The general principle is that the existence of cross-cutting ties such as ceremonial unions, fictive and consanguine kinship, economic partnerships, and friendships decreases the chances that conflicts will result in war.

Any peace arrangement lacking powerful institutions and other means to maintain it amounts to little more than a temporary cease-fire or a prolonged truce. “Vrede in die zin, dat volken elkaar zo welgezind zijn, dat er geen sprake is van enige oorlogsdreiging, treft men in de etnologische literatuur niet of nauwelijks aan. Gewoonlijk betekent vrede een min of meer langdurige wapenstilstand. Georganiseerde vrede vindt men nergens” (Fahrenfort, 1963: 157; Keeley, 1996: 161). “[P]eace is as demanding a state as war, requiring for its maintenance effort, economic sacrifice, and even occasional violence. Peace is not an effortless inertial or ‘natural’ state to which people and societies revert in the absence of perturbation” (Keeley, 1996: 157). As Diamond (2012: 148) observed: “Tribal peaces are fragile and quickly deteriorate to yet another cycle of war”. The main reason of this sorry state of affairs is, as we have seen, the security dilemma, which Otterbein (1988: 184) aptly characterized as “ironically, the basic need for self-preservation is both the reason for building a strong military organization and the cause of war which it was intended to prevent”.

Fry (2006) and Sponsel (2010) can claim that the majority of primitive societies is peaceful only by substantially diluting the concept of war and substantially inflating the concept of peace. Furthermore, the majority of peaceful peoples that Fry claimed to have found is mainly based on semantic legerdemain (from “social war” to “no war” to “peaceful”). For example, Wrangham & Glowacki (2012) reported that out of 21 nomadic hunter-gatherer societies listed by Fry (2007) as being peaceful, at least 13 (62%) interacted with pastoralists, farming or state societies in ways suggesting that they
were militarily or politically subordinate. Of the remaining eight, one was so isolated from other groups that it had no opportunity for war (Copper Inuit). Only two appear to be strong candidates for being warless (Columbians and possibly Sanpoil). And I (van der Dennen, f.c.) show that the Fry & Söderberg (2013) study is deliberately selective, if not manipulative, concerning its sources, extremely biased in its interpretation of these sources, and plainly wrong in its conclusion that their supposedly peaceful mobile forager band societies resemble ancestral populations.

- The seeming peacefulness of small hunter-gatherer groups may be more a consequence of the tiny size of their social units and the large scale implied by our normal definition of warfare than of any real pacifism on their part, as Keeley (1996: 29) observed.

- In all known cases in which ecological balance was rapidly attained, this balance came about from external factors, not from the society’s developing mechanisms to adjust the balance. Changes in social behaviors worked out by the societies themselves never seem to be the reasons for the transition to peacefulness (LeBlanc & Register, 2003).

- “Out of the warlike peoples arose civilization, while the peaceful collectors and hunters were driven to the ends of the earth, where they are gradually being exterminated or absorbed, with only the dubious satisfaction of observing the nations which had wielded war so effectively to destroy them and to become great, now victimized by their own instrument” (Q. Wright, 1942).

- “Friedfertigheid wäre evolutionsbiologisch völlig widersinnig“ (Hölldobler, in an interview in Der Spiegel, 5, 2010). The accumulating bioarchaeological evidence (e.g., Allen & Jones, 2014; Arkush, 2011; Arkush & Allen, 2006; Chacon & Dye, 2007; Chacon & Mendoza, 2007a,b; Dye, 2009; Lambert, 2002; LeBlanc, 1999; LeBlanc & Register, 2003; Martin & Frayer, 1992; Martin, Harrod & Pérez, 2012; Maschner & Reedy-Maschner, 1998; Milner, 1995; Rice & LeBlanc, 2001; Snead & Allen, 2010; Walker, 2001; and especially Mirazón Lahr et al., 2016) makes the “short chronology” of war increasingly untenable.

The tragedy of the human condition may well be that everybody wants peace, but everybody wants peace on his/her own conditions, and “savage wars of peace” (as Kipling called them in his famous poem The White Man’s Burden, 1899) were and are waged for this purpose. As St. Augustine (354-430 AD) already wrote in his City of God (Ch. 12): “Wars themselves then are conducted with the intention of peace… [E]ven those who wish to disrupt an existing state of peace do so not because they hate peace, but because they desire the present peace to be exchanged for one of their own choosing. Their desire, therefore, is not that there should be no peace, but that it should be the kind of peace they wish for”.

In conclusion, I can fully agree with Max Weber’s (as cited in Coser, 1968: 232) conception of peace as “nothing more than a change in the form of the conflict or in the antagonists or in the objects of the conflict…”.

Notes
I use the names of the societies, ethnies, peoples, tribes, etc. as the original authors referred to them.

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1 It is quite possible that the notion of the ubiquity of primitive war is even older than Social Darwinism. In his “Essay on the History of Civil Society”, Adam Ferguson (1767) had already concluded: “We had occasion to observe that in every rude state the great business is war; and that in barbarous times, mankind, being generally divided into small parties, are engaged in almost perpetual hostilities”.
But I am unable to ascertain whether Ferguson’s essay had any impact on later theorists. His work seems largely unknown to 19th-century writers. Ferguson’s work may, however, be placed in a still broader historical context: the so-called Hobbes-Rousseau controversy.

The condition of “almost perpetual hostilities”, or relative peacelessness among primitive peoples and early hominids was confirmed, after Ferguson, by Waitz (1859-62), Lyell (1863), Lubbock (1870), Tylor (1874), Jaehns (1880; 1893), Gumpelwicz (1883 et seq.), Hellwald (1883), Bagehot (1884), Spencer (1885 et seq.), Vaccaro (1886), Maine (1888), James (1890, 1910), Ratzen (1894), Novicov (1896), Vierkandt (1896), de Molinari (1898), Schultze (1900), Schaeffle (1900), Topinard (1900), Frobenius (1903), Lagorgette (1906), Steinmetz (1907; 1929), Sumner (1911), Boas (1912), McDougall (1914), Hartmann (1915), Jerusalem (1915), Weule (1916), Knabenhs (1917), Keller (1918), Mueller-Lyer (1921), Hobhouse (1924), Sumner & Keller (1927), van Bemmelen (1928), Davie (1929), Andreski (1954), and most contemporary evolutionary anthropologists and sociobiologists.

Relative peace as the primeval condition of mankind was advocated by Montesquieu (1748), Rousseau (1755; 1762), Letourneau (1895; although Letourneau is ambiguous on this point), Westermarck (1889; 1907), Kropotkin (1902), Holsti (1912; 1913), Anthony (1917), Perry (1917; 1923), de Lavessan (1918), Dickinson (1920), Dewey (1922), Rivers (1922), Smith (1924), Wheeler (1928), Cleland (1928), van der Bij (1929), Schnittemner (1930), MacLeod (1931), Benedict (1934), Malinowski (1936; 1941); Mead (1940 et seq.); and most contemporary cultural anthropologists.

These visions are not, however, as diametrically opposed as might prima facie appear. They are differences of emphasis rather than essential distinctions. Although “belligerence is a concomitant of increasing civilization” (Broch & Galtung, 1966), that does not mean that most primitive cultures lived in a paradigmatic condition of perpetual peace and blissful harmony. On the contrary, the terms “pseudo-peace” (Garlan, 1975) or “Friedlosigkeit” (Hartmann, 1915) are more appropriate. “It is interesting”, Service (1975) notes, “that the actual nature of primitive prestate society as we now know it ethnologically can support both Hobbes and Rousseau, each in part. War, as Hobbes meant it - as threat or imminence as much as action - certainly is an omnipresent feature of primitive life, as is, in part, an appearance of the Rousseauian peace and generosity. As we shall see, these two aspects of social life coexist; the threats of violence caused by the ego-demands of individuals are countered by social demands of generosity, kindness, and courtesy”. Long ago, Sumner (1911) answered the question whether man began in a state of peace or a state of war as follows: “They began with both together. Which preponderated is a question of the intensity of the competition of life at the time. When that competition was intense, war was frequent and fierce, the weaker were exterminated or absorbed by the stronger, the internal discipline of the conquerors became stronger, chiefs got more absolute power, laws became more stringent, religious observances won greater authority, and so the whole societal system was more firmly integrated. On the other hand, when there were no close or powerful neighbors, there was little or no war, the internal organization remained lax and feeble, chiefs had little power, and a societal system scarcely existed”.

A further impetus to the notion of the universality of primitive war probably came from Quincy Wright’s (1942) opus magnum A Study of War (actually a collective enterprise, and numbering some 1600 pages), in which a small section is devoted to primitive war: “Appendix IX. Relation between warlikeness and other characteristics of primitive peoples”, comprising a cross-cultural sample of some 650 distinctive primitive peoples, arranged alphabetically by continent and categorized with respect to warlikeness and other characteristics, and based on the list of peoples used by Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915). This is followed by statistical tabulations indicating the relationship between warlikeness and a series of other variables such as habitat, political and social organization, etc. Furthermore, Wright introduced the important distinction between four types of primitive war: defensive, social, economic, and political. Defensive war was coded if war is never embarked upon except for immediate defense of the group against attack, with the inclusion of a few tribes who do not even defend themselves from attack. This category comprised 5% of the total sample.

If war is embarked upon for purposes of revenge, religious expiation, sport, or personal prestige, this was coded social war. This category comprised 59% of the total sample.

If war, in addition to utilization for defensive and social purposes, is an important method for acquiring slaves, women, cattle, pastures, agricultural lands, or other economic assets (including the provision of victims for human sacrifice), this was coded economic war. This category comprised 29% of the total sample.

Finally, if war is fought not only for defensive, social, and economic purposes but also to maintain a ruling class in power and to expand the area of empire or political control, this was coded political war. This category comprised 7% of the total sample.

In toto this means 95% warlike peoples versus 5% unwarlike, a result which seemed to substantiate the notion of universal belligerence.

2 Fairly typical of ameliorative statements in this respect are, for example, “Even in regions where war is endemic, it is not waged all of the time, nor with all the surrounding groups” (Numelin, 1963: 42), and that
warfare among ‘savages’ was “by no means very bloody”, as Holsti (1913) was fond of writing – as if such statements prove their point (the peacefulness of ‘simple’ societies), and if this downplaying makes ‘primitive’ war more palatable. Not only Keeley, but already Mühlmann pointed out that this is mistaken: “Fest steht, daß manche Ethnographen uns irreführen, wenn sie formulieren, daß die kämpfenden Parteien sich mit wenigen Toten ‘begnügen’, oder daß sie den Kampf abbrechen, nachdem ‘nur’ wenige Leute gefallen sind. Die Zahl der Opfer muß auf die Volkszahl bezogen werden; dann aber ergibt sich, daß ein Verlust von ein bis zwei Mann auf zehn bis zwanzig Kämpfer (wie in Melanesien) ganz erheblich ist “ (Mühlmann, 1940: 179).

3 It is important to realize that these high casualty figures may be biased toward the extremes of the total number of ‘primitive’ societies and possibly ignore the bulk of the evidence (e.g., the data on hunter-gatherers presented by Quincy Wright (1942), and my own Ethnological Inventory Project). In hundreds of hunter-gatherer and simple horticulturalist these figures are much lower. As far as I can ascertain, the figure of 25 % lethality from all sources of violence was first presented by Livingstone (1968: 8-11) in his investigation of the effects of warfare on the biology of the human species. It was subsequently favorably quoted by Symons (1979: 145) and uncritically parroted ever since. The figure was already extreme to begin with, based as it was on reports from war-infested areas such as Amazonia and Highland New Guinea. A more realistic estimate is, I believe, that ethnographic and archeological data account for around 15 % of the male deaths due to warfare in general (see also Johnson & Thayer, 2016; and Appendix).

4 The definition of warfare as “socially sanctioned lethal conflict between independent polities” (e.g., LeBlanc, 2014: 27; Jones & Allen, 2014: 354) is not particularly helpful because “socially sanctioned” is often very difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain (van der Dennen, 1995), and because it excludes entrepreneurial raiding (not “socially sanctioned”), such as practiced by many North American Indian societies, and feuding (sensu stricto), as well as many forms of violence that are either not socially sanctioned, or non-lethal, or internal. The definition also precludes comparison with other primate species (as LeBlanc admits).

5 The near-genocidal character of raiding in a horticulturalist society may be glimpsed from the following example provided by Ghiglieri: “In 1966…, an aspiring Dani big man of the Getulu clan named Mabel (New Guinea social dynamics are not ruled by hereditary chiefs but by ‘big men’ who lead via charisma and persuasion) led a dawn raid by hundreds of Getulu men against the dozen nearest compounds that were firmly tied to some insulting big men of the Dani Wilihiman-Walalua alliance. The Getulu torched the enemy’s homes, and as the unsuspecting men, women, and children fled the fires, the Getulu massacred 125 of them. The Getulu regained face against the insulting Wilihiman-Walalua alliance – and also looted hundreds of pigs (a Dani’s most valuable commodity). The Wilihiman-Walalua alliance swiftly counterattacked but failed. The gardens between the new enemies became a blackened no-man’s-land” (Ghiglieri, 1999: 194-6).

6 This is only one example of many in my data that do not fit easily and do not unequivocally support the so-called “male warrior” hypothesis advocated by Van Vugt (2009, 2011; Van Vugt, de Cremer & Janssen, 2007; Van Vugt et al., 2008; McDonald, Navarrete & van Vugt, 2012). The male warrior hypothesis implies that men may be more motivated to protect and defend the ingroup, particularly when faced with threats from another group, given that failure to protect one’s groups could have serious consequences for men’s reproductive fitness (Van Vugt, de Cremer & Janssen, 2007). The male warrior hypothesis errs on the side that self-sacrificial altruistic ingroup defense is the main motivation of the warriors rather than egotistical material greed, self-aggrandizement, and individual privileges, especially sexual and reputational. Also “healthy cowardice” and the self-serving “show of ferocity”, discussed above, do not square with much “parochial altruism”. Also Wrangham & Glowacki (2012) could not find any mention of overt self-sacrificial behavior for others in their data on warrior motivation. The male warrior hypothesis minus the self-sacrificial altruism part however is, I think, a useful hypothesis to explain a great deal of social-psychological data on differential male and female intergroup behavior (e.g., Klavina, 2012). This is not to deny the evolutionary logic of self-sacrifice which is expressed by Teehan (2010: 30) thus: “Sacrificing my life in the fight to save my group may be a necessary part of enhancing my inclusive fitness. Even if I die, and even if society does not compensate my family for my sacrifice, fighting and dying may be the only way my kin have a chance to survive and pass on some copies of my genes”. On the other hand, Rusch (2014: 7/21) admits: “If we assume that among the spoils of war there potentially are also private goods and/or that the distribution of at least some loot might not be independent of individual effort, this could substantially change the incentives for participation in intergroup conflict, at least for some individuals. Their participation would then be better described as mutually beneficial or even selfish behaviour rather than as altruism”.

Im Prozeß der kulturellen Pseudospeziation schlossen sich Menschengruppen voneinander ab, als wären sie Vertreter verschiedener Arten. Die dem Menschen angeborenen Aggressionskontrollen, die innerartliche Aggression wie beim Tier entschärfen, wirken damit nur mehr im Innergruppenkonflikt. Der Zwischengruppenkonflikt nahm Züge an, die an den zwischenartlichen Konflikt bei Tieren erinnern, er wurde destruktiv... (Der Krieg) hat sicher selektiv in Richtung auf Aggressivität hin gezüchtet... Der Krieg hat damit die Auslese von Kampflust und Aggression zumindest für eine lange Zeit der menschlichen Geschichte begünstigt. Der Mensch wurde aber in diesem Zusammenhang nicht nur auf Kampftüchtigkeit, sondern auch - wie Bigelow (1970; 1971) betont - auf Kooperationsfähigkeit und Intelligenz hin selektiert, und zwar in der Konkurrenz der Gruppen” (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1975: 201, 217).

These authors also draw attention to the fact that violence/warlikeness, though considered ‘natural’ (particularly or exclusively in males) is also condemned as ‘bad’, while its perceived opposite, peacefulness, carries with it the negatively valued connotations of being passive and inert, qualities which are associated with females. One might go so far as to state that for many males in ‘primitive’ communities, as well as in our Western culture, ‘peaceful’ equals ‘weak’ equals ‘un-masculine/feminine’ equals ‘impotent’ equals ‘emasculated/castrated’. It could be argued that even in the 21st century human beings are deeply ambivalent about peace, that many are suspicious about the possibility of peace, or that, on some deep unconscious level, are afraid of peace. According to Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1979: 227), at the root of men’s desire for peace is the pressure to bring the cultural norm filter (which commands to kill ‘the enemy’) into harmony with the biological filter (our innate inhibitions against killing). However, the universality of this desire is disputed by many, including Wintsch, who maintains the opposite: “peace, interpreted in the traditional sense as a legally ordered and peaceful form of human coexistence, does not seem to be a general need. There is hardly such a thing as a ‘peace drive’ that can be isolated from among the many determinants of human behavior in the way in which the feeding drive or the sex drive van be isolated... I actually believe... we are entitled to say that what man wants is not peace, but appeasement of his needs” [Der Mensch will nicht Frieden, sondern Befriedigung seiner Bedürfnisse] (Wintsch, 1972: 288). Eibl-Eibesfeldt then cites Mitscherlich, who believes that basically we are afraid of peace, “certainly in the deeper, hidden layers of our mental organization, which of course also contains within itself the great experiences of the history of the development of the species. The feeling of being robbed of the possibility of expressing collective aggression is unconsciously regarded as a highly dangerous, defenseless condition; this is reflected in the vague displeasure connected with associating oneself with peace in a more than rhetorical fashion, and may be one of the reasons why the term world peace sounds so hollow and dishonest in many mouths” (Mitscherlich, 1969: 108).

To the Eurasian peaceful peoples might be added the ethnies/ethnolinguistic minorities in mainland China (People’s Republic), many of whom have been pacified by force: The Achang, Bai, Bonan (Bao’an), Bouyei, Bulang (Blang), Chaoxian, Chuang, Dai, Daur, De’ang, Dong, Dongxiang, Dulong (Derung), Even, Ewenki, Gelao, Hani, Hezhe (Hezhen), Hui, Jing (Gin), Jingpo, Jino (Jino), Kung, Kyrgyz, Lahu, Li, Man (Manchu), Maonan, Mongol, Mulao (Mula), Nai, Naxi (Mosuo), Nu, Oroqen, Pumi, Qiang, Salar, She, Sui (Shui), Tajik, Tatar, Tibetan (Zang), Tu, Tuja, Uyghur, Uzbek, Wa (Va), Yao, Yi, Yugur (Yellow Uyghur), Xibo (Xibe), Zhuang, and the Gaoshan (some 13 minorities) in Taiwan.

APPENDIX

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SOCIETY</th>
<th>RATES AND SH ORES</th>
<th>SOURCES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abelam (NG)</td>
<td>Share 30%</td>
<td>Forge, 1990; 168; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines (N. Territory 1958-60)</td>
<td>Share 10%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aché (S. Amer.)</td>
<td>Share 30%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Pinker, 2011; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agta (Casiguran Agta) Philippines</td>
<td>Share 10-12%</td>
<td>Headland, 1989; Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Bowles, 2009; Pinker, 2011; Fry, 2013; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aka (Africa)</td>
<td>Share 36%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anbara (N. Austral.)</td>
<td>Share 2-4%</td>
<td>Hogg, 1965; Bowles, 2009; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andamanese 30 years</td>
<td>Rate 20; Share 25%</td>
<td>Q. Wright, 1942; Keeley, 1996; Kelly, 2000; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Share</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anggor (NG)</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>Huber, 1972, 1974, 1975; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arawete (S. Amer.)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Viveiros de Castro, 1992; Walker &amp; Bailey, 2013; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asmat (NG)</td>
<td>1-2%</td>
<td>Eyde, 1967 : 160 ; Hanser, 1985 ;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auyana (NG)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Robbins, 1982: 211, 193-213; Feil, 1987; Keeley, 1996; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellona Islanders</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>Figure from Kuschel (1989), reprinted in Scott (1992); Van der Dennen, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackfoot (N. Plains) 1805/1858</td>
<td>33-50%</td>
<td>Livingstone, 1967, 1971: 11; Gat, 2006; Helbling, 20016a; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackfoot (Piegan Blackfoot)</td>
<td>1000; 25 per generation</td>
<td>Ewers, 1955; Livingstone, 1968; Van der Dennen, 1995; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buin (Solomon Isl.)</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>Thurnwald, 1936; Q. Wright, 1942; Van der Dennen, 1995; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burrum (NG)</td>
<td>almost 20%</td>
<td>Detzner, 1921: 133; Hanser, 1985;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chimbu (NG)</td>
<td>200 (est.)</td>
<td>P. Brown, 1982; Van der Dennen, 1995;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copper Inuit (N. America)</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>Rasmussen, 1932: 17; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cree (Alberta 1974-78)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Millar, 1982; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dani (NG)</td>
<td>290; Share ♂ 28.5%; ♂ 2.4%</td>
<td>Bromley, 1960: 243; Matthiesen, 1962; Heider, 1970: 118f, 128, 230f, 1972; Hanser, 1985; Van der Dennen, 1995; Gat, 2006; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dani (Bokondini Dani) 1937-62</td>
<td>140; Share 20%</td>
<td>Ploeg, 1983: 164; Keeley, 1996; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dani (Dugum Dani) 1961</td>
<td>480; Share 15.5% (♂28.5%, ♀2.4%)</td>
<td>Heider, 1970: 118f, 128, 1991: 46f; Keeley, 1996; Wrangham &amp; Peterson, 1996; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dani (Grand Valley Dani)</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Heider, 1970; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dani (Wanggulam Dani)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>Ploeg, 1969: 1, 159, 1979: 164; Hanser, 1985;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eipo (NG) 3 years</td>
<td>240; Share 22%</td>
<td>Schiefsenhövel, 1980: 2, p.c.; Hanser, 1985; Van der Dennen, 1995; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Etoro (NG)</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Kelly, 1977; Schiefsenhövel, p.c ; Van der Dennen, 1995;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faiwolmin or Baktaman (NG)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Barth, 1971: 175, 1975: 16ff; Hanser, 1985; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji (Melanesia, 1860s)</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>Carneiro, 1990; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fore (NG)</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>Bennett et al., 1959; Van der Dennen, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gebusi (NG) 1940-82</td>
<td>350; 200-419; Share ♂ 35.2%; ♀ 29.3%</td>
<td>Knauff, 1985: 376f, 1987, 2011; first figure from Kuschel (1989), reprinted in Scott (1992); Knauff et al., 1987; Van der Dennen, 1995; Keeley, 1996; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goilala (NG)</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>Hallpike, 1977; Gat, 2006; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadza (Africa)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hagenberg tribes (NG)</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>Vicedom, 1938: 43; Hanser, 1985;</td>
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<tr>
<th>Group (Region)</th>
<th>Rate/Share</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hiwi (S. Amer.)</strong></td>
<td>Share 3.8-20%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Hill, Hurtado &amp; Walker, 2007; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Huli (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 130-166; Share 13.2% (♂19.6%; ♀6.1%)</td>
<td>Glasse, 1968: 98; Feil, 1987: 44; Van der Dennen, 1995; Keeley, 1996; Wrangham &amp; Peterson, 1996; Lehmann, 2002; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inuit (Central Arctic Eskimo)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 100</td>
<td>Symons, 1979; Knauft, 1987; Briggs, 1994; Gat, 2006; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jivaro (Achuarä/Shuar Jivaro) S. Amer.</strong></td>
<td>Share 32.7-42% (♂59-69%; ♀27%)</td>
<td>Bennett Ross, 1984: 96, 1988; Descola, 1986: 47ff; Keeley, 1996; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kalinga (Philippines)</strong></td>
<td>Share 19.6%; Rate 600</td>
<td>Dozier, 1967: 207; Keeley, 1996; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kamano (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Share 50%</td>
<td>McLean, 1992: 54; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kapauku (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 200 (est.)</td>
<td>Pospisil, 1958; Van der Dennen, 1995;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kato (Cahto) (Calif. 1840s)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 1450</td>
<td>Krooer, 1965; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kayapo (S. Amer.)</strong></td>
<td>Share 35% (♂75%)</td>
<td>Werner, 1980; Walker &amp; Bailey, 2013; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kmb (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Share almost 20%</td>
<td>Detzner, 1921: 133; Henser, 1985;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kung (Africa)</strong></td>
<td>Share 40%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kunimaipa (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 500-620; Share 71%; ♀29%</td>
<td>McArthur, 1961: 321, 1971; Hallpike, 1977: 120; Schiefenhövel, p.c.; Van der Dennen, 1995; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Machiguenga (S. Amer. 1988-89)</strong></td>
<td>Share 4%</td>
<td>Gurven &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mae Enga (NG) 1900-1950</strong></td>
<td>Rate 250-320; Share 18.6-34.8% (♂34.8%; ♀2.3%)</td>
<td>Meggit, 1958: 270, 1977: 110ff; Hanser, 1985; Van der Dennen, 1995; Gat, 2006; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manga (NG) 1949-56</strong></td>
<td>Rate 460</td>
<td>Pflanz-Cook &amp; Cook, 1983; Vayda, 1976; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maori (2000-2005)</strong></td>
<td>Share 22%</td>
<td>Robson &amp; Harris, 2007; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marind Anim (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 200 (est.)</td>
<td>Van Baal, 1966; Van der Dennen, 1995;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maring (Tsembaga Maring) (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 200 (est.); Share 1.8-7.6%</td>
<td>Rappaport, 1968; Vayda, 1971: 13; Hanser, 1985; Van der Dennen, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mbuti (Afr.)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 40</td>
<td>Turnbull, 1965: 186, 190, 236; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mekranoti (S. Amer.) before contact</strong></td>
<td>Share 32.5% (♂42%; ♀23%)</td>
<td>Werner, 1983a: 241, 1983b: 225f; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mekranoti (S. Amer.) 1955-1964</strong></td>
<td>Share 8.5% (♂14%; ♀3%)</td>
<td>Werner, 1983: 241; Helbling, 2006a;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Métis (N. Amer. 1991-2001)</strong></td>
<td>Share 4%</td>
<td>Tjepkema et al., 2009; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mimika (NG)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 260</td>
<td>Pouver, 1955: 220; Hanser, 1985;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modoc (Calif.)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 450; Share 13%</td>
<td>Ray, 1963; Keeley, 1996; Bowles, 2009; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mohave (Calif.-Ariz.) 1840s</strong></td>
<td>Rate 230</td>
<td>Stewart, 1965; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Montenegro and Albania (tribal)</strong></td>
<td>Share 25%</td>
<td>Boehm, 1984: 177; Gat, 2006; Helbling, 2006a; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mtewa Zulu (S. Africa, 1806-14)</strong></td>
<td>Rate 590</td>
<td>Otterbein, 1967; Keeley, 1996; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Murngin (Australia) 1910-1930</strong></td>
<td>Rate 280-330; Share 12.21% (♂28.6%)</td>
<td>Warner, 1930, 1931: 481f; 1969; Q. Wright, 1942; Harris, 1975; Knauf et al., 1987; Van der Dennen, 1995; Keeley, 1996; Gat, 2006; Helbling, 2006a; Bowles, 2009; Pinker, 2011; Roser, 2014; Gomez et al., 2016;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>Share</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nalumin (NG)</td>
<td>Rate 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Guinea general</td>
<td>Rate 250 (est.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>San (Kung San, Bushmen) (Kalahari)</td>
<td>Rate 29-42</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Semai (S.E. Asia)</td>
<td>Rate 0-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siriono (S. Amer.)</td>
<td>Rate 53</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tauade (NG) 1900-46</td>
<td>Rate 320-533; Share ♂ 60%, ♀ 40%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tauna-Awa (NG) 1900-1950</td>
<td>Rate 257; Share ♂ 30%, ♀ 16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telefolmin (NG, 1939-50)</td>
<td>Rate 740; Share 1.25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiwi (Australia) 1893-1903</td>
<td>Rate 160; Share 5.75%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tsimane (S. Amer.)</td>
<td>Share 6-52%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkana (Africa)</td>
<td>Share ♂ 50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waorani (S. Amer.) internal war</td>
<td>Share 56-60% (♂ 53.6%, ♀ 38.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waorani (S. Amer.) external war</td>
<td>Share 18.2% (♂ 16.1%, ♀ 20.4%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wari (S. Amer.)</td>
<td>Share 28%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wola (NG)</td>
<td>Share 2.18%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yahgah (S. America)</td>
<td>Rate 178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanomamö (S. America) 1938-58; 1970-74</td>
<td>Rate 330; 165.8-290; Share 15% (♂ 24%, ♀ 7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yanomamö (Namowe)</td>
<td>Share 15.3% (♂ 23.7%, ♀ 6.9%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yanomamö (Shamaturi)</td>
<td>Share 29.9% (♂ 37.4%, ♀ 4.4%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yanomamö (Xilixana)</td>
<td>Share 16% (♂ 80%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yurok (Calif.)</td>
<td>Rate 240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There are two ways to state the frequency of homicides in populations: Rates and Shares. For modern societies homicide rates are usually given as homicides per 100,000 people per year; for more violent societies described by archeologists and ethnologists homicide rates are sometimes presented in homicides per 1000 people per year. Homicide shares are simply given as the percentage of a sample of deaths which were due to homicide (Roser, 2014).