7 The Politics of Peace in Primitive Societies:

The Adaptive Rationale behind Corroboree and Calumet

War makes rattling good history; but peace is poor reading.
Thomas Hardy

War: long periods of tedium interspersed with moments of terror.
Walter Goldschmidt

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

7.1 Introduction

Hominid/human warfare probably evolved as a facultative male-coalitional reproductive strategy, as it did in chimpanzees (See Ch. 3). The concept of an evolutionary strategy does not necessitate the ‘dogma’ of Universal Human Belligerence (van der Dennen, 1990), nor even aggression (the proximate mechanism of contest competition at the individual level) as (prime) motivation. Peaceable preindustrial peoples constitute a nuisance to most theories of warfare and they are thus either ‘explained away’, denied, or negated (contending theories, with few exceptions\(^1\), have also tended to severely underestimate the costs of war to the individuals involved as well as to the community).

Peaceability and warlikeness are, however, 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 \textit{prima facie} obvious) and an adaptive response (in the Darwinian sense) to particular sociopolitical ecologies. Most people seem to prefer peace \textit{when they can afford it}, i.e., when they can solve the internal problem of the ‘male fierce warrior syndrome’, and the external problem of being left ‘in peace’ by other peoples.

\(^1\) 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, 1990, 1994). There is no theoretical reason to deny the possibility of peaceful societies. Indeed, "there may be alternative peaceable and militaristic \textit{trajectories of evolution}" (Ferguson, 1994).
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 war: Nonviolence may be a response to overwhelming odds; it may be the taming 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. It should not be surprising that nonviolent peoples can become violent or vice versa. Nor does violence in a particular time and place necessarily indicate that peaceability in a different time or place is illusory". Thus, warlike people are quite capable of peacefulness, while peaceable peoples are perfectly capable of violence under altered circumstances.

From the point of view of evolutionary psychobiology, if war is so universal and ubiquitous as has been claimed by advocates of the Universal Human Belligerence theorem, 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).

If we were to translate Gregor’s proposition in terms of health and disease, it would read something like: Organisms are so vulnerable and diseases are so ubiquitous and contagious, that it is health which requires special explanation. In this chapter I shall argue that the claim of universal human belligerence is grossly exaggerated; and that those students who have been developing theories of war, proceeding from the premise that peace is the ‘normal’ situation, have not been erring nincompoops or starry-eyed utopians; and that peace - the continuation of potentially conflictuous interactions between discernible groups of human beings with other means (to paraphrase the famous Clausewitzian dictum) - in primitive peoples is just as much a deliberate and conscious and rational political strategy, based on cost/benefit considerations and ethical judgments, as is war.

The supposition that war evolved as a reproductive strategy does not contradict the notion of peace as the normal condition among primitive peoples. An evolved strategy specifies the (ecological) condition or range of conditions that may make the warring behavior profitable or ‘adaptive’ (involving assessment,
cognitive processing, and alternative courses of action chosen on the basis of expected fitness payoffs). Conversely, it specifies under what (range of) conditions war is not advantageous or profitable.

7.2 The Security Dilemma

For Warre, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known... As the nature of foul weather lieth not in a shower or two of rain, but in an inclination thereto of many days together; so the nature of war consisteth not in actual fighting, but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is PEACE (Hobbes, 1651).

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) that "Men like war" is as apodictic as it is general (referring to all men), and obstinately reiterated to the present day. Lately, van Creveld (1991) stated (with a similar universal pretense): "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" (Cf. William James, 1910; Freud, 1930; Dart, 1953; Freeman, 1964; Washburn & Lancaster, 1968; Hallpike, 1973; among many others). Goodall (1986) observed a great eagerness in young prime male chimpanzees for the behaviors involved in male raiding parties, but she also points out quite emphatically that there are distinct individual differences.

Fox (1991; Cf. Klineberg, 1964; Enzensberger, 1966) 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 occuring 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

2 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). Harsh ecosystems may, for example, have promoted peaceful relations among the widely dispersed groups of central Arctic Inuit (Eskimo). Furthermore, warfare is expected to be less frequent or absent when contiguous tribal units contain close relatives. And thirdly, there is the risk that an attack will destroy the possibility of mutually beneficial arrangements between groups, whether related or not.
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, from which nobody can disengage on penalty of annihilation. 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); units which have exercised comparatively strict control over the use of physical violence in the relations between their 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 confront 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. 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). Richerson (1995) advances what he calls the 'evolutionary tragedy' hypothesis: Warfare is liable to evolve even if it makes everybody worse off. It is the perversion of the situation (the logic of the war 'game') rather than that of the actors involved. The only practical way to avoid victimization by aggressors and to avoid most wars is to deter attack by being conspicuously prepared to

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3 The Kapauku Papuans do not find warfare profitable. Pospisil (1963) quotes one leader as saying: "War is bad and nobody likes it. Sweet potatoes disappear, pigs disappear, fields deteriorate and many relatives and friends get killed". Yet, willy-nilly the Kapauku too are caught in the war trap, in the web of internecine conflicts that seems to be ubiquitous, because, as one Kapauku man explained: "[N]obody can 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" (quoted in Goldschmidt, 1994).

4 "We need not postulate an instinctive predisposition to violence to explain the violence or violence-provoking behavior [among groups, bands, tribes or states]. The only necessary premises are a modicum of acquisitiveness, a scarcity of some valued amenity, and the absence of strong internal and external inhibitions against violence; given these conditions, the violence is an unsurprising resultant of rational calculations on both sides" (S.Brown, 1994).
Deterrence - the dissuasion of an action by means of the threat of imposing costs on the potential aggressor in excess of his or her anticipated gains, even though not necessarily prevailing over the aggressor - may appear to be the most efficacious means of controlling violence. In basically anarchic situations the deterrence of violent behavior often requires that the individuals or groups trying to protect themselves display a credible ability and will to inflict unacceptable damage on their would-be attackers (e.g., S. Brown, 1994).

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 fierce and fearsome opponent. A people may intentionally attempt to develop a reputation horrific enough to deter future opponents.

Deterrence rests upon participants’ fears of the other’s destructive capabilities. Too much fear, however, may be a destabilizing force. See also the analyses by Barrington Moore (1972) and de Vree (1982), who deduce violence and warfare purely from the dynamics of human interactions.

The security dilemma in which (primitive) peoples find themselves has the formal structure of a Prisoner’s Dilemma (PD) 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.).

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 PD, diplomacy and peace become viable options. In such an iterated PD situation, when both parties know each other more or less intimately, and expect future interactions, mutual suspicion and xenophobic fear can give rise to mutual caution and diplomatic maneuvering, but 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 social privileges attached to the warrior role).

As Goldschmidt (1994) points out, the problem of internal dissatisfaction with existing peace treaties among acephalous 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.

Ad (a): At a peace conference attended by Salish, Spokane, and several other Plateau tribes, an old Spokane warrior said: "A state of peace has always been a time of anxiety, we were willing to trust and sure to be deceived" (Tyrrell, 1916). The alliance was rejected as a result of this distrust, and in the next
hunting season many Salish were killed.

Ad (b): The Assiniboine established amity with the Gros Ventre. The peace lasted for four years to the advantage of the Assiniboine, but though the Gros Ventre desired to maintain the peace, according to Denig (1952), "the Assiniboines were not united enough among themselves for this end". Some warriors were dissatisfied with the peace offerings and began to steal the Gros Ventre horses. Similarly, a peace mission of a Crow chief to the Blackfeet was abruptly and definitely ended when two Crow warriors used the opportunity to get revenge by killing two Blackfeet (Chittenden & Richardson, 1905).

The Cheyenne could not make peace until they had cleared the issue with the Dog Soldiers, their 'elite troops', who would make sure that the peace would not block their path to glory and wealth (Grinnell, 1915; Jablow, 1951; Llewellyn & Hoebel, 1941). In a similar vein, when the Big Men of the Mae Enga and other New Guinea tribes wish to negotiate a peace, they must persuade the warriors to agree.

The above examples are collected by Goldschmidt (1994), who adds the following conclusion: "Even when the population is war weary, 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).

Rules for war mitigation and a common law of war and peace can gradually develop (only) in a situation of hereditary enmity⁵. The resulting, so-called restrictive (rather 'restricted' or ritualized) wars, as Tefft (1988, 1990) calls them, enable political communities to pursue their economic and political interests relatively free of maladaptive consequences. These wars, Tefft says, 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).

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⁵ "Wenn wir uns fragen, wann und wo solche Regelungen möglich sind, so müssen wir uns sagen: Sie können sich nur zwischen Erbfeinden, zwischen traditionell verfeindeten nachbarlichen Stämmen allmählich einspielen und im Laufe der Zeiten zu einer Art von Gewohnheitsrecht werden" (Mühlmann, 1940).
7.3 Fierce Peoples?

Many peoples traditionally considered to be 'fierce' or 'ferocious' are, as Turney-High (1949) noticed, militarily rather inept. Even tribes such as the Apache, Seri, Karankawa, Masai, Kikuyu, Yanomamö, Carib, Plains Indians, Iroquois, Hurons, Modoc, Mohave, and Maori who traditionally have a reputation of extreme warlikeness, may actually ill deserve such a reputation. For example, the fighting of the Apaches had "more the character of assassination and murder than warfare" (Bancroft, 1875).

There is considerable evidence that the Iroquoian Confederacy (League of the Iroquois, comprising the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and, later, the Tuscarora) started as an attempt to establish peace; "one of the League's great objects was to maintain peace and to break up the spirit of warfare, and to live in harmony with the neighboring peoples" (Hale, 1886; Cf. Colden, 1747; Hartland, 1921; Holsti, 1913; Mooney, 1894; Morgan, 1851; Murdock, 1934; Numelin, 1950; Radin, 1932; Speck, 1945; Tozzer, 1925; Wissler, 1923).

"Not before the formation of the famous league in 1570 did the different tribes of the Iroquois display any particular propensity to warfare, but as soon as the league was established 'a thirst for military glory' arose among them, and this again was promoted by the facility with which firearms were procured from the Dutch and English (Morgan, 1851; Cf. Mooney, 1894)" (Holsti, 1913). The same is true of the Powhatan Confederacy comprising the majority of the tribes of Virginia and Maryland (Mooney, 1907).

"The Iroquois League was founded as an experiment in practical pacifism, an institution to put down war. The Iroquois horror of needless bloodshed was probably real, for they believed in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of the Manitou, which they sought to impress on all peoples. Those who rejected this noble principle were thought unworthy of life, and fit only for extermination" (Turney-High, 1949).

Their main adversaries were the Hurons: "This nation (Hurones) is very timid... they take no precautions against surprise, they are not careful to prepare arms or to inclose their villages with palisades; their usual recourse, especially when the enemy is powerful, is flight" (Brébeuf, in Thwaites, 1896).

Kroeber (1925) gives the following sobering account of Modoc exploits: "Their military reputation rests mainly on the famous Modoc war of 1872-73 [against the American army]. Their raiding of the Achomawi of Pit River has also been exploited. That they were the better warriors is undisputable. But if they had conducted annual raids, slaughtering the men and dragging the women and children off to sell at The Dalles [as the horror story goes], the Achomawi would long since have ceased to exist instead of being found by the Americans a fairly numerous and resistant tribe in a rather adverse habitat, and
being today one of the most populous groups in California". In fact, Kroeber states, investigation may reveal that the slave raiding consisted of only two or three incidents, and that the basis of all the clashes may have been a mere vengeance feud such as sooner or later embroiled almost all Californian groups. Thus it is known that while the Modoc fought with certain Achomawi groups or villages, they remained friendly with others.

"The Mohave Indians of the Colorado River valley are by reputation a warlike tribe, 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).

Although the Seri came to be regarded, with considerable justification, as a fierce people, there is no indication that they were initially hostile to outsiders (Bowen, 1983).

The Masai (Maasai) in East Africa were formerly described as "a relatively peaceful race" (Merker, 1904).

In response to invasion by the Masai, the Kikuyu "a once peaceful agricultural tribe had become a warring one, losing its native culture in exchange for a pastoral and foreign one" (Dyk, 1931; see also Kenyatta, 1938).

"Meinicke (1875) does not give a favourable account of the character of the Melanesians in general. They are rude, warlike, and excitable. Nevertheless, Dr. Codrington (1891) testifies that the slaughter in their wars is insignificant. With regard to a really fierce warrior race, the Maori, Mr. Taylor (1870) gives an account to the effect that 'before firearms were introduced the battle was chiefly a trial of skill and strength between the principal chiefs, and the fall of one was often the signal of flight of his people'; and even in the case of a general fight the slaughter was inconsiderable (Gudgeon, 1902)" (Holsti, 1913).

Many subdivisions of the Yanomamö were, and are, according to Ferguson (1992), not nearly as violent and belligerent as those described and made (in)famous by Chagnon (1968 et seq.). Smole (1976), Ramos (e.g., 1987), Lizot (1985, 1989), Albert (1989, 1990), and Good (1991), who have conducted field research among the Yanomamö, have found Chagnon's reports of violence inapplicable to the people they studied. Lizot (1985), who spent many years among them, criticized the Hobbesian view of the Yanomamö: "I would like my book to help revise the exaggerated representation that has been given of Yanomami violence. The Yanomami are warriors: they can be brutal and cruel, but they can also be delicate, sensitive, and loving. Violence is sporadic; it never dominates social life for any length of time, and long peaceful moments can separate two explosions".

Another people made infamous in early reports were the Carib, notorious for cannibalism and slave raiding. "Although both practices do appear in the earliest contact reports, as my colleague Neil Whitehead has shown, the Carib
reputation for cannibalism was deliberately inflated. The more careful and less self-serving accounts show that cannibalism was a limited ritual practice in which warriors ate small portions of individuals they captured. Because Spanish law made cannibal tribes fair game for immediate enslavement, Europeans employed stories of huge cannibal buffets as a pretext" (Ferguson, 1992).

Similarly, the allegedly warlike and ferocious cannibals, the Karankawa, may well have been a "rather inoffensive, poorly known, much put upon, extinct, coastal people" (Newcomb, 1983), much maligned by early Spanish sources. Their 'ferocious cannibalism' being nothing more than the customary ritual/religious type, which was prevalent in the region.

"The military ambition of the Blackfeet was satisfied when the war party had succeeded in killing one adversary, and great festivities were arranged on account of a single scalp" (Holsti, 1913; referring to McClintock, 1910).

"Among the Oakinacken Indians, 'the moment a chief... falls, fighting gives place to mourning; they get discouraged and instantly fly without disgrace, and the battle is ended (Ross, 1849)"' (Holsti, 1913).

Finally, and paradoxically, the Plains Indians' warrior complex with its emphasis on solism and individual feats of bravery and bravado (as exemplified by counting coup; touching the enemy, whether alive or dead, was the ultimate act of bravery) actually limited violence, so that warfare, though incessant, boiled down to a series of small-scale raids of a few 'braves' striking coup and stealing horses, which were far more important objectives than killing the enemy.

7.4 The Inventory of Allegedly Peaceful Societies

'Simple' human societies, according to Knauf (1991, 1994; see Ch. 5) place great emphasis on generalized reciprocity and far less on balanced competition or negative reciprocity. Concomitantly, ethnocentrism and collective military action or warfare tend to be rudimentary of absent in simple human societies. This contrasts in aggregate terms with more complex, sedentary, food-producing 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; Carneiro, 1970, 1981; Price & Brown, 1985; Johnson & Earle, 1987; Ingold, Riches & Woodburn, 1988-89; Upham, 1990; Maryanski & Turner, 1992).

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). Van der Bij (1929) and Bonta (1993) both present inventories of a great number of
peaceful peoples.

In the Appendices, I present my own inventory, investigation and evaluation of the primitive (preindustrial, acephalous, band-level, tribal) societies which have been claimed to be highly unwarlike (i.e., war reported to be absent or mainly defensive), and peoples (ethnies) with allegedly mild, low-level and/or ritualized warfare, together with the main sources. This inventory is part of my ongoing Ethnological Inventory Project (see e.g., van der Dennen, 1988, 1990), which purports to catalogue all primitive societies mentioned in the ethnographical literature, and describe and categorize the characteristics of their warring and/or feuding behavior (or the absence thereof).

The criteria I used for inclusion in this list of allegedly peaceful peoples are the following: It is stipulated by the observer that

- fighting does not exceed the level of petty feuding (mostly for purposes of revenge); or
- warfare is explicitly and only for defense; or
- fighting results in none to few casualties; or
- an ethic of nonviolence is present; or
- the particular ethny is 'peaceful', 'peaceable', 'not hostile' or similar terms, or
- the particular ethny is 'inept at warfare' or 'unfamiliar with warfare' or similar terms.

My inventory deviates 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.). Furthermore, my inventory excludes cenobites (i.e., non-ethnic, religion-based, and contemporary peace groups, such as Hutterites, Mennonites, Quakers, etc.), as well as contemporary nation-states (such as Koreans, Thai, etc. included in Textor, 1967; and Bonta, 1993).

The evidence of a substantial number of peoples without warfare, or with mainly defensive and/or low-level warfare (i.e., seldom exceeding the level of petty feuding) 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) and Dentan's (1992) 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 Darwinian sense) to particular political ecologies" (Dentan, 1992).
Knauft (1991) concluded, on the basis of his theoretical considerations, 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". Results of my Ethnological Inventory Project also suggest that the HRAF cross-cultural standard samples may be skewed in the direction of overrepresentation of complex (in the sense of Knauft) societies, in which economic and/or political war motives are more conspicuous than in 'simple' societies.

Van der Bij (1929) concluded that primitive peoples were peaceful because they were primitive. Steinmetz (1929), on the other hand, concluded that primitive peoples were primitive because they were peaceful. Steinmetz thereby reiterated the statement by Gumplowicz (1892) that peaceful peoples "bleiben auf der Stufe der Affen" [remain on the level of monkeys]. (Gumplowicz, by the way, admits that ethnology offers numerous examples of such peaceful peoples, without giving any explanation of why and how these monkey-like peaceful peoples have been able to survive in so warlike a world as he envisaged).

One might have expected such argumentation to have disappeared with the demise of Social Darwinism, but it did not. A similar kind of argument was revived by Morris (1967), who considered primitive peoples "remote cultural backwaters so atypical and unsuccessful that they are nearly extinct"; they are to be considered stultified non-mainstream humans. Needless to say, I do not endorse such a caricature.

### 7.5 Peace as the Normal Condition

"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" (Q. Wright, 1942).

"[S]ome 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).

"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) conclude in their extensive survey of some 650 primitive peoples (see Ch. 2).

"On the face of it, a disproportionate interest in warfare by anthropologists is strange. For human society to persist, even the most violent of them, there must be order, sociability, reciprocity, cooperation and empathy - perhaps, even
compassion and love. In even the most warlike societies, the vast preponderance of time is spent in the pursuit of ordinary, peaceful activities that embody these qualities" (Gregor & Sponsel, 1994).

The unsentimental military analyst Turney-High (1949) 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. Perhaps this is because it so rarely was thoroughly economic. One might even be justified in observing that feelings were more often hurt than bodies, that primitive war was more psychological than lethal. 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 (Turney-High, 1949; italics added).

In discussing the Inevitability Belief (i.e., the belief that war is 'natural' and, therefore, inevitable, Ferguson (1989a) notes:

Another version [of the Inevitability Belief] is that war is a natural form of expression for politically autonomous groups. This Hobbesian view is discussed and criticized elsewhere (Bennett Ross, 1980; Ferguson, 1984, 1986). Supporting the Hobbesian view is the corollary belief that war is universal, found in all societies. But there are societies without war (Fabbro, 1980). In fact, the claim for universality 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 (Ferguson, 1989a; italics added).
7.6 Prudent Feuders

Many instances exist in which tribal communities will not support members in their personal vendettas against outsiders in 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 turn a murderer over to the victim’s kin (A.Moore, 1978). 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, 1986b).

"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 (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, 1986b).

7.7 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 writes:

Other researchers, who have combed the literature more systematically than myself, have reached the same conclusion. Thus Richard Sipes notes in his study of war and combative sports: 'Relatively peaceful societies are not easy to find. I had to investigate 130 societies to find eleven, of which five were rejected because of insufficient information’ (1973: 68).
Similarly, Otterbein (1970) found only four peaceful cultures among the fifty in his study of the evolution of war. Turning to advanced, state-level societies the searcher for peace becomes even more disheartened...
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. Otterbein (1970), for example, finds that societies lacking in military organizations, such as the Copper Eskimo, the Dorobo and the Tikopians, live on islands, mountain tops, arctic wastelands and plateaus surrounded by malaria infested jungles. In some cases this isolation is a strategic adaptation to dealing with more aggressive societies that surround them. In most instances, however, peaceful societies appear to achieve their status by evading rather than solving the problems of intertribal relations (Gregor, 1990).

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).

Why could Gregor find so few peaceful peoples? One of the reasons might be simply because his criteria were wrong.
We do not demand absolute extramarital chastity in order to classify a people as monogamous. Yet, in order to classify a people as 'peaceable', we demand not only absolute proof of the absence of warring and feuding, but also the absence of every trace of intragroup violence, aggression, and even assertiveness. We quite unrealistically require them to be 'gentle' and pusillanimous in all walks of life.
As Turney-High (1949) 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. The lack of organized war may demonstrate certain points, but it should not be overstressed, as it sometimes is. 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" (Turney-High, 1949).
7.8 Bellicosity Does Not Equal Aggression

The conspicuous absence of intergroup violence in mammals generally (only a few species apparently have mastered the art; see Ch. 3) is the major argument against a simple and naive aggression-warfare linkage. All these mammalian species do have aggression in their behavioral repertoire, but very few have war or its nonhuman equivalent (the chimpanzees of Gombe as described by Jane Goodall and others, and dolphins, in which separate groups may sometimes cooperate in attacks on rival communities, are the most convincing examples). 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 coalitional psychology supposed to be operative in 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.

The profound misunderstanding about aggression and warlikeness, and the fundamental confusion concerning ‘nonaggressive’ and ‘peaceful’ is perhaps best exemplified by Heelas (1989; Cf. also Dentan, 1992), who devotes his whole contribution discussing definitions of aggression in his Search for Peaceful Peoples.

It may be important to note that ‘peace’ as used by Heelas and Dentan, and by many other Anglo-American authors, refers to the absence of physical violence generally (including intra- and intergroup violence), while in most other languages ‘peace’ (except in such metaphors as ‘peace of mind’, etc.) refers preferentially or exclusively to the absence of ‘war’ (as collective, organized, armed and violent intergroup or interstate conflict).

Montagu (1978) makes the same distinction between intragroup or intergroup ‘aggression’ and implies that they 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 Yanomamó. 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; see Appendices).

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. 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'. In a previous publication (van der Dennen, 1986) I have tried to outline the fallacies involved in this kind of reasoning, especially the fallacy of subreption (the 'moves unaccounted for' in equating aggression and war) and the cumulative fallacy (the confounding of levels-of-analysis).

It was also pointed out in that study that even in an extremely warlike society such as the Yanomamö, 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 (Chagnon, 1968 et seq.; Goldschmidt, 1988, 1989; Ferguson, 1992, 1994).

In former times, anthropologists and ethnologists were very eager to classify tribes or peoples as 'warlike' or 'peaceful', without giving much consideration to the nature of this supposed 'warlikeness' or 'peacefulness'. Even the frequency of wars cannot be taken as a valid measure of 'warlikeness', if we do not consider whether the warfare is defensive or offensive, and what the motives and the issues at stake are. For example, the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico were frequently engaged in defensive warfare against marauding neighboring tribes. Yet, it makes little sense to call them 'warlike' (van der Dennen, 1986).

In virtually all discussions on the warlikeness or peacefulness of primitive peoples the distinction between offensive and defensive warfare is conspicuously absent. Yet, such a distinction is crucial, if only because a defensive stance does not and can not, in itself, initiate war ("It takes two to tango"; see van der Dennen, 1986). Most students of the field seem to endorse the view that war is war, period and full stop, regardless of motives, goals and circumstances. Or as a French rhyme goes: "Cet animal est très méchant / Quand on l'attaque, il se défend".

According to Kennedy (1971) and numerous other authors (see van der Dennen, 1986), aggression is obviously correlated with, and an integral aspect of war, but the relationships between war and aggression are reciprocal, complex, and mediated by intervening variables. 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 primitive peoples socialization for aggression is more likely to be a consequence than a cause of war. Grudges of 'unemployed' warriors after coercive pacification have sometimes been (mis)construed as evidence of some kind of innate bellicosity.
Actually, it may make little sense to apply the distinction belligerent/peaceful, warlike/unwarlike too rigidly. It is not a neat, static (binary, either/or) and historically fixed dichotomy. Furthermore, to speak of *societies* as 'peaceful' or 'warlike' may analytically not be very helpful, since, as highly abstract categories, societies (groups in general) do not act purposively, as Riches (1987) has pointed out.

Peace and war represent the two extremes of a whole array of collective survival strategies, ranging from collective retreat and cultural insulation to 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. To say that man is belligerent *by nature* is a phrase devoid of any meaning (the savage, one might paraphrase Rousseau, is neither noble nor ignoble; he is just utterly human).

Robarchek & Robarchek (1992), discussing the Waorani in Amazonia (who are probably unique in deliberately and consciously abandoning feuding and warfare; see Appendices), draw 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".

The result is a more or less stable balance of terror with constant raiding among the various social groups (Robarchek & Robarchek, 1992). In such a situation, fear, as Whiffen (1915) long ago, and Mühlmann (1940) and Meyer (1977) more recently, pointed out, seems to be the predominant war motive.

There is, furthermore, a strong sexist - 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; for 'aggressive' read 'bellicose').
These authors also draw attention to the fact that aggression/violence/warlike-
ness, 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 'unmasculine/feminine' equals 'impotent' equals
'emasculated/castrated'.

7.9 Primitive War as a Post-Contact Phenomenon

The conspicuous and inconspicuous effects of contact with 'civilized' states and
colonialism in the warfare patterns of primitive peoples have, 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 sense (Service, 1968; Morey & Marwitt, 1975; Blick,

"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, recor-
ded wars involving tribal peoples can be directly attributed to the circumstan-
ces of Western contact" (Ferguson, 1992b; italics added). A consequence of
this is, as he explains elsewhere (Ferguson, 1990a), a systematic exaggeration
of images of warlike behavior in supposedly 'first contact' accounts.

Three types of war are stimulated by state expansion into the tribal zone:
(1) war by indigenous people directed against the state presence, that is, wars
of resistance and rebellion;
(2) war by indigenous people carried out under the control or influence of state
agents; that is, ethnic soldiering; and
(3) war between indigenous peoples responding to their own perceived inter-
ests in the changing circumstances of the tribal zone; or internecine warfare
(Ferguson & Whitehead, 1992; Sponsel, 1994).

The Miskito-Sumo case is instructive: Once there were numerous villages of
horticultural-fishing chiefdoms located in favorable areas along the Gulf Coast
of Nicaragua. Shortly after the arrival of the Spaniards the native chiefdoms
simply disintegrated and the surviving inhabitants fled to the interior forests. In
the late 1600s those now called Miskito (or Mosquito) received guns in trade
with the buccaneers and began raiding for slaves. The defeated Indians
retreated in small groups into the interior. By 1700 the Miskito had formed
their famous kingdom while the scattered victims became the 'Sumo' which is simply a collective name for such refugees (Service, 1968).

### 7.10 The Characteristics of Peaceful Peoples

Fabbro (1978) analyzed five peaceful primitive societies, including the Semai of Malaya (Dentan, 1968), the Siriono of Eastern Bolivia (Holmberg, 1966), the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri Forest (Turnbull, 1961; 1965; Moore, 1972), the !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert (Schapera, 1930; Fourie, 1960; Marshall, 1960 et seq.), and the Copper Eskimo of Northern Canada (Jenness, 1922; 1946; Rasmussen, 1932; Palmer, 1965). To these 'traditional' groups, Fabbro added two literate peaceful communities for reasons of comparison, the Hutterites of North America (Hostetler, 1974; Hostetler & Huntington, 1967), and the Islanders of Tristan da Cunha (Munch, 1964 et seq.). 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 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.

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 peaceful communities mentioned above were also present in the analyses of Gregor (1990) and Dentan (1992, 1994). 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 open and egalitarian decision-making, although some of them exist within a larger cultural milieu (there are, for example, some 40,000 Mbuti).
- The 'traditional' groups all experience a changing composition in their membership in the short term. This 'flux' derives in part from seasonal-ecological variables. They 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. But conflicts within these groups are also partly responsible for personnel changes, fission being used as a dissociative conflict resolution form. The changing composition of these traditional societies is partly responsible for the lack of lineal leadership. It may be

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7 Peaceability should not be confused with pacifism, which is only one genre of peaceability (Dentan, 1992).
important to notice that the scarcity of resources, with which most of these societies are faced, is not a factor that contributes to violence; quite the contrary, it is a factor that encourages close cooperation (Fabbro, 1978; Cashman, 1993).

- The traditional groups produce little or no economic surplus. Material inequality between individuals on a long-term basis is, therefore, impossible. As a corollary, leadership remains on the level of personal authority rather than coercive power because there is no surplus to appropriate and utilize. If there is no surplus, the political authorities can not confiscate it and use the wealth derived from it as a basis for carrying on coercive activities, including the creation of a military organization (Cashman, 1993). Fabbro (1978) concludes that peaceful societies are peaceful essentially because they lack some of the most important structural prerequisites for engaging in war: A coercive hierarchy and leadership and an economic surplus to support a nonproductive military organization.

- The differences in child-rearing practices between the traditional and the cenobite societies are open to a number of possible - and contradictory - explanations. Cenobites generally are more authoritarian with children than are peaceable 'refugees' like Semai, and they approve the spanking and whipping of children as corporal punishment of last resort (Dentan, 1992, 1994).8

- Many of the peaceful societies develop what Gregor (1990) calls 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).

- Peaceability and nonviolence among the primitive peoples and contemporary peace groups 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

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8 "[A] focus on general emotional training may be expected to promise rather little as regards subsequent social interactions in adult life; per se, the training in appropriate emotional controls appears not to incorporate in any prominent fashion the fact that in adult life, different behavior, with different emotional loads, is appropriate to different people — varying according to the category of social relation in which these people are incumbent" (Riches, 1987). Enculturating nonaggression may be a relatively minor factor in the creation of peaceability (e.g., Dentan, 1992; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1993), and vice versa, though some cross-cultural studies find a positive correlation between child abuse and neglect or harsh socialization practices and bellicosity (e.g., Levinson & Malone, 1980; Ross, 1992).
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.

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, a contrast that forms an important part of the everyday maintenance of the system. 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).

The cenobites control in-group conflicts about sex in various ways. Like the Semai, all of them stress self-control over sexual urges. Following common Western praxis, Amish and Hutterites equate the suppression of women with the control of sexuality. Thus, the gender-equality characteristic of many band societies, like Semai, is not a necessary correlate of peacefulness among enclaved peoples, although the two phenomena can co-occur.

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 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

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9 "At any time during the Pleistocene there must have been many scattered groups of people who, like the Paiute, the Bushmen, the Congo Pygmies, and today's Australian aborigines, were hovering on the brink of extinction in unwanted deserts, jungles, and cold northern forests. As the centuries succeeded one another, such peripheral peoples must often have passed into extinction, to be replaced by other fugitives from 'hot centers'... In most cases... the people banished to the deserts would have been too 'retarded' to learn social cooperation adequate for the defense or conquest of a more desirable area. All these peoples were surrounded by warlike agricultural peoples, and their 'peacefulness' was imposed on them by force" (Bigelow, 1969; italics added). Similarly, Alexander (1979) states on the still extant hunter-gatherer societies: "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; moreover, 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. In other words, they are restricted by aggression, or its threat, to the localities where they exist now". War may have an impact on demographics as a 'pump' driving population movements toward demographic 'sinks', i.e., marginal and suboptimal areas (Ferguson, 1990a, 1994).
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).

- A commitment to peaceability always runs the unacceptable risk of inviting attack by peoples not so committed (Dentan, 1994).

The tribes of the Upper Xingu are of special interest because they do not conform to the profile of the typical peaceful society. Unlike most peaceful peoples they are sedentary with fairly advanced economies based on slash and burn horticulture (a system that is often associated with warfare [Vayda, 1961]). The isolation characteristic of many peaceful societies is also not typical of the Xinguanos. Indeed, the unique feature of the area is the intensity and richness of intertribal relations (Gregor, 1990). The irony of the uneasy Xingu peace is that the institutions which curb conflict are also those which painfully express fear and anger: Belief in witchcraft, ethnocentrism and hostile stereotypes.

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.
- On the whole, political factors seem to play a more important part than economic or social factors in the creation, maintenance and termination of peace periods.
- If alleged pugnacious and hostile attitudes are deeply embedded in man, they are often neutralized within peace periods.
- 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 by war.

Vasquez (1993) has analyzed peace in the contemporary world. His findings
are also summarized for reasons of comparison.
The ability of the contemporary global system to avoid war seems to be a function of the extent to which it has an ordered structure. A system can be considered ordered to the extent to which actors are constrained from unilaterally imposing their issue preference on others. In an ordered political system, actors officially recognize and feel it necessary to follow certain rules of the game, and institutions exist for the resolution of issues.
On the basis of Wallensteen’s (1984), Kegley & Raymonds’ (1981 et seq.), and Väyrynen’s (e.g., 1987) findings, Vasquez (1993) reached the following conclusions about the characteristics associated with contemporary peace. In peaceful periods, rules of the game have been created and norms are not unilaterally abrogated. The system as a whole restrains the contention of actors by offering them practices other than power politics for the resolution of issues. In particular, practices - such as buffer states, compensation, and concerts of power - that permit states to deal with territorial issues have been implemented. Issues involving severe threats to territory, especially to the core territory of major states, and certain life and death issues are kept off the agenda through the creation of a tolerable status quo and the avoidance of messianism.
The most important conclusion is that peace is not simply a negative phenomenon (the absence of war), but the active creation of relationships that permit actors to contend over issues whose resolution will enhance or harm their value satisfaction. Nations not only learn how to go to war; nations also learn how to construct a peace.

In the next section, I shall more fully discuss some of the strategies and mechanisms of peace-making in primitive societies.

### 7.11 A Typology of Peace

**Dissociative (Separative) 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) 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, envoys, couriers
(6) Intercommunity rites and feasts; corroboree, etc.
(7) Hospitality
(8) War substitutes (e.g., potlatch)
(9) Personal union (blood-brotherhood 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
7.11.1 Strategies of Negative Peace

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. Another classic form of negative peace is peace by deterrence, a conscious political policy that goes back at least as far as ancient Greece and remains an active part of military doctrine (Gregor, 1990). The efficacy of deterrence in primitive societies is attested to by a substantial number of anthropological studies, such as Evans-Pritchard's (1940) examination of the 'ordered anarchy' of stateless societies.

In Oceanian societies, as discussed by Oliver (1989), four kinds of peace prevailed between otherwise warring peoples. The first ensued when one of the sides had been exterminated, or decimated and widely scattered, a common and widespread occurrence. This state of affairs one might call the peace by annihilation or 'peace of the graveyard'.

The second resulted when defeated survivors were assimilated or became a subdivision of the victors' political unit - a less common occurrence, but not unusual in parts of Polynesia. This may be called peace by incorporation or subjugation.

The third kind of peace occurred when one side was beaten but retained enough numerical strength to remain autonomous. This is peace by defeat or stalemate-peace. In some places this kind of peace was put into effect simply by disengagement of forces, in others it was ratified by ceremony - specifically by payments of indemnities and rites signifying 'submission' on the part of the defeated side.

The fourth kind eventuated when two evenly matched opponents mutually agreed to call off active battling and resume 'normal' relations, i.e., mutual weariness punctuated by restricted episodes of combat. This may be called peace by war-weariness or exhaustion (Oliver, 1989).
7.11.2 Strategies of Positive Peace

Positive 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 (Colson, 1953; Gluckman, 1955; Murphy, 1957). Moreover, exchange leads to the creation of a common culture. Parallel institutions in different societies can generate a consensus of values and stimulate the kind of diffuse emotionally meaningful relationships that would inhibit violence (interdependency model) (Galtung, 1968; Gregor, 1990).

Most of the strategies, institutions, customs and conventions of positive peace mentioned in the typology are more or less self-evident and well-known in our contemporary repertoire of peacekeeping efforts. I shall review here a number of strategies and conventions of positive peace and mitigation of war among primitive peoples which may be less self-evident (not necessarily in the same sequence as mentioned in the typology).

Diplomacy: The most 'primitive' form of diplomatic communication was probably the custom of sending occasional messengers to transmit important messages from one tribe or local group to another. Special envoys are sent from one chief to another for the purpose of discussing questions of intertribal interest, such as war and peace, hunting and fishing, commerce, intertribal marriages, feasts and rituals, etc. Material evidence consists of messenger sticks. It may be assumed that messengers and envoys were initially sent only to friendly neighbors, and that gradually this intercourse was extended also to less amicable tribes and remoter peoples. Many primitive peoples have employed women both as messengers and envoys. Females not uncommonly are sacrosanct, i.e., enjoy personal inviolability in war, and are consequently available for missions, trade, and peacemaking (Holsti, 1913; Numelin, 1950). Among the Iroquois, young men were not regarded as reliable 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 (Trigger, 1990).

Connubium: "Exogamous tribes generally - though there are exceptions - live in peace with each other" Numelin (1950) claims, though this seems not to be substantiated by the evidence (see § 7.13). Exogamy, or marriage outside the group, is claimed to be an aid in binding groups together. Exogamy, according to Tylor (1889), 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" (Tylor, 1889; see also Melotti, 1990). Also Fox (1967) noted this pacifying effect: "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).

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). Among the Alaskan Inuit (Eskimo), 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.

"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'." writes 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 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 (Goldschmidt, 1994).

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 (Oliver, 1989).

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10 "Im Verwandtschaftssystem liegt nun aber zugleich auch ein den Streit begrenzendes Moment. Da nämlich alle Klans untereinander zusammenhängen, wird es unvermeidlich, daß zahlreiche Leute mit beiden Parteien verwandt sind. Diese Leute zeigen eine 'geteilte Loyalität', neigen zur Neutralität" (Mühlmann, 1940).
The same effect can be obtained not only by bonds of marriage but also by bonds of friendship. Sometimes a man in one tribe in the New Hebrides, about to go to the assistance of its ally, had a friend in the tribe about to be attacked and, through him, a warning was sent so that the latter was prepared and fully armed when the attack began. "Again, if a man 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 traditionally 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 related by kinship or marriage to both belligerents could sometimes pass with impunity from the territory of the one to that of the other and be regarded as a friend of both. Such persons were, especially in Oceania, employed to carry proposals of peace (Holsti, 1913; Numelin, 1950). In the retaliatory violence of blood feuds and wars, persons and families allied by marriage might be spared (Stewart, 1832; Vincendom-Dumoulin & Desgraz, 1843).

Women related to both belligerent parties in Samoa were allowed to pass in time of war from one camp to another without hindrance, and "as is proverbially the case with the sex all the world over, they divulge the secrets of both parties" (Rowe, 1930).

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.

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?"
Closely connected with consanguinity is common worship or religion, which may sometimes mitigate war (Holsti, 1913; Numelin, 1950). 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 Nukuhiva (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).

**Commercium; 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. In Queensland, tribes are free to travel unmolested on certain trade routes, laid down from time immemorial.

"The boundary stone was perhaps the predecessor of the market-cross. 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).

**Intercommunity rituals, feasts, and festivals:** Mühlmann (1940) regards the male initiation ceremonies as the evolutionary matrix of the amphictyony because several sovereign clans unite for the occasion (e.g., corroboree of the Australians, the 'Balum' festival of the Huon Gulf Papuans, 'Mambela' festival of the Babali, etc.). In Australia hostile tribes met in peace during the performance of certain initiation rites; all hostilities are 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, Minda-rie feast of the Dieri, etc.) (Numelin, 1950).

(On the other hand, instances are not lacking in which the former enemy was invited to a feast in the other’s camp only to be treacherously attacked there (e.g., Easter Islanders: Knoche, 1936; Nagas: Mills, 1937; Yanomamö: Chagnon, 1968 et seq.).

Elaborate and complex rituals of peacemaking have also been described for a number of highly warlike Papuans, e.g., Tsembaga Maring (Rappaport, 1968), Jalé (Koch, 1974), and Mount Hagen tribes (Strathern, 1971; Vicedom & Tischner, 1962).

Post-battle indemnification and compensation: 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) states on the effects of compensation and indemnity payments (bloodmoney) in 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".

Another kind of compensation (non-monetary) is related by Whitehead (1990). He states 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. This practice and its context, is, Whitehead observes, very reminiscent of the chest-pounding and club duels of the Yanomamö, as reported by Chagnon (1968 et seq.).

Third party mediation: Whitehead (1990) presents 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, but only on condition that the Aricoures should ask for it:

Their ceremony was as follows; the Caribs obliged them to wait on the seashore with their arms and as the Caribs fitted the arrow to the bow, ready to let fly, the Aricoures took water and poured it on their heads. This done, the Caribs, throwing down their arms, rushed into the canoes of the others and embraced them. On the occasion of this peace the Yaos entertained them together for eight days, peace having never been known between them before (Sloane, 1707).

Barrère (1743) reported a similar procedure whereby one of the opposing war-chiefs would approach the enemy with a small band of warriors declaring that they wished friendship. If this proposition was well received then both parties would array their forces in battle-order and start singing, recounting the past capture of women and the death or cannibalism of relatives. Following these declarations both sides would throw down their arms, rush to embrace each other and then retire to one or another village for a feast. Among the North American Plateau tribes, hostilities were limited to raids and occasional small-scale feuds 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 see also Gulliver (1979) and Greenhouse (1985).

**Formal declarations of war:** A further step toward the mitigation of war is the formal declaration of war (*indictio belli*) and the ultimatum (Mühlmann, 1940). A declaration of war seems to have been the custom among many peoples (e.g., Kabyles: Letourneau, 1895; Ovambo (Ambo): Hahn, 1928; Warega (Rega): Delhaise & Overbergh, 1909; Lango: Driberg, 1923; Masai (Maasai): Hinde, 1901; Toala: Sarasin & Sarasin, 1905; Solomon Islanders: Thurnwald, 1912; Yap Islanders: Müller-Wismar, 1917; Melanesians: Malinowski, 1920; Tonga Islanders: Mariner, 1817; Polynesians: Williamson & Piddington, 1939; Tasmanians: Roth, 1890; and Columbians: Spier & Sapir, 1930). The Caribs declared war by hurling arrows or javelins into the enemy country, or sticking them into the ground at the boundary (von Martius, 1867). The effect of these war declarations is, as Numelin (1950) states, obviously to give the enemy a fair chance and can thus be considered to be some kind of chivalrous action. Turney-High (1949) 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), says 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 (Turney-High, 1949).

**Fixing time and place of battle in advance:** A still further step toward the mitigation 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): "Die Festsetzung besonderer Kampfplätze bringt beinahe automatisch die Neutralisierung der anderen Ortlichkeiten mit sich" (Mühlmann, 1940).

The most important development of the 'law of war' is the transition from the treacherous attack to the pitched battle on an agreed-upon battlefield. 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.

Davie (1929) considers 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 submits, here phenocopies
ritualizations that in the animal kingdom repeatedly led from damaging fights to tournament-like contests\textsuperscript{12}.

Many primitive peoples spared and/or protected women and children of both sides (e.g., Australians: Wheeler, 1910; Fijians: Seemann, 1862, Stewart, 1832; Samoans: Ellis, 1830 ["only cowards would kill women"]; Andaman Islanders: Man, 1878; Masai: Hinde, 1901; Iroquois: Morgan, 1851; Omaha and Ponka: Dorsey, 1884; and Huron: Powell, 1880).

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).

Many primitive peoples 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 (Holsti, 1913; Mühlmann, 1940; Numelin, 1950).

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. 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. Like 'holy' places there are also 'holy' days when peace and rest must be observed (Holsti, 1913; Mühlmann, 1940; Numelin, 1950).

**Expiatory combat and judicial duels:** Hobhouse, Wheeler & Ginsberg (1915) leave little misunderstanding about expiatory combat as a conflict-limiting procedure. They state: "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' has a similar objective of limiting 'devastating fights'. Instances of duels and single combats to settle intra- and intertribal disputes have been documented for the Inuit (Eskimo) (Boas, 1888; Ratzel, 1896; Hoebel, 1940; 1967; 1972), Malays (Brinton, 1886), Australians (Dawson, 1881; Smyth, 1878), and ancient Greeks, Hebrews, and Romans (Keller, 1906; Seymour, 1907; Numelin, 1950).

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, he 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 Australians of Arnhem Land, one of the types of battling was itself a peacemaking 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).

**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; Turney-High, 1949).

"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; Turney-High, 1949). Chivalry in combat can probably develop only in 'agonal' types of warfare.
Peace treaties, covenants and ceremonies: Fighting among primitive peoples is not only often preceded by ceremonial consultations but also regularly succeeded by a peace treaty, covenant or ceremony. Frazer (1890) has collected and expounded a number of cases of covenants by sacrifice of a slave or an animal, and the taking of an oath by the peacemaking parties between the divided halves of the victim. In its crudest form the sacrifice is seen for instance among the African Boumali, where a slave is sacrificed; but an animal, which is cut in two, can substitute for the human sacrifice (e.g., Oronn: Talbot, 1923; Turney-High, 1949).

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). The more chiefly Solomon Islanders were not quite so informal about peacemaking 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).

Melanesian peace declarations had little idea of honor (Powdermaker, 1933). The signal for peace in the New Hebrides seems to have been fronds of palm carried between the combatants (Humphreys, 1926). Peace had to be formally declared among the Polynesian Mangaian 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).

Dual chieftainship (separate peace and war chiefs) may have served the same function (i.e., to demarcate the separate states of affairs) among many North American Indians (Numelin, 1944, 1950).

Peace can also be ratified by means of exchange of gifts, and a variety of other peace ceremonies, such as burying the hatchet, breaking of spears, planting of trees, smoking the peace-pipe or calumet, etc.

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. It is not improbable that the pledging of friendship or the drinking of health in wine is a
survival of the ancient ceremonial of pledging in blood. Friendship ties between Kapauku headmen of confederacies pacified formerly vicious enemies for the time of their lives (Pospisil, 1994). Between some Australian tribes close bonds of friendship were maintained, sometimes for several generations. Among South Australian tribes for example, contiguous hordes of the Tanganekald and Jarildekald 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 work 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).

**War substitutes and institutions of peace**: Goldschmidt (1994) examines in some detail three instances of what he calls 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 says, 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.

Numelin (1950) ascribes a prominent part in the development of peaceful relations to the secret societies flourishing in the primitive world. "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) 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.
7.12 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) states, 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'. "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 prestigeful 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).

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 order (Kennedy, 1971). Rituals seem to play an important and even indispensable role in social intercourse. According to Durkheim, societies must periodically "recharge their social and moral sentiments of solidarity". Furthermore, rituals "receive their special character from underlying and overarching semiotic structures that arrange concepts in patterns of binary oppositions" (P. Smith, 1991). The ritualistic confirmation of an ethnocentric cosmos apparently played a major role throughout the history of war (Meyer, 1993).

Ritual (especially pre-battle or preparatory ritual) reduces anxiety and fear and institutes confidence. 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 divine validation and many shaming devices to fear-reducing rituals (Kennedy, 1971; see also Turney-High, 1949; Andreski, 1964; Potegal, 1979; van der Dennen, 1979, 1980; 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, 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 among primitive peoples 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".13

Much of the post-war ritual activity in primitive societies seems clearly to indicate the expiation of guilt, even more than it indicates a *rite de passage*, marking the return to the normality of daily life, or the release of tension and the victory gloating of triumph ("Victory has ever been strong medicine" as Turney-High (1949) puts it).

Various kinds of ritual penance after killing were widespread in primitive (and ancient) societies. Fasting, sexual abstinence, and 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, according to some observers, a Pima warrior withdrew from battle the moment he killed his opponent to begin his rites of purification, or lustration (Kroeber & Fontana, 1987).

The Papago considered an enemy life precious and its destruction a murder, even though committed by a Papago warrior in legitimate war. A Papago man who had killed an enemy was 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. The Papago wounded were also thought to have received contamination from the enemy, and were forced to

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13 "Wir schließen aus all diesen Vorschriften, daß im Benehmen gegen die Feinde noch andere als bloß feindselige Regungen zum Ausdruck kommen. Wir erblicken in ihnen Äusserungen der Reue, der Wertschätzung des Feindes, des bösen Gewissens, ihn ums Leben gebracht zu haben. Es will uns scheinen, als wäre auch in diesen Wilden das Gebot lebendig: Du sollst nicht töten, welches nicht ungestraft verletzt werden darf, lange vor jeder Gesetzgebung, die aus den Händen eines Gottes empfangen wird" (Freud, 1913).
purify themselves for four days (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). "There has existed" Turney-High (1949) concludes 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".

### 7.13 Epilogue

Although all of the theories of negative and positive peace are intuitively reasonable, none of them survives the test of the cross-cultural data, says Gregor (1990). Deterrence does not work (Ch. 2). Exogamy and trade are actually positively correlated with war frequency (Tefft, 1975). 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 another¹⁴. Tefft (1975) notes:

> Interchange of membership through intermarriage does not seem to reduce substantially the frequency of war or to further peaceful relations between political communities. In so far as internal war is concerned, political communities with numerous kinship ties war more frequently than those with fewer ties. This is not entirely surprising since internal wars are often fought over issues growing out of intermarriage (i.e., default of bridewealth, adultery, etc.). More significant is the fact that political communities which have important economic ties with one another fight internal wars less frequently than those whose ties are primarily one of kinship. 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 (Tefft, 1975).

¹⁴ As Waltz (1979) observed for the contemporary international system: "[T]he fiercest civil wars and the bloodiest international ones are fought within arenas populated by highly similar people whose affairs are closely knit."
This conclusion is, however, contestable. Tefft does not sufficiently distinguish types of warfare, 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 on others. Or only when a particular type of warfare prevails, and not when other types prevail.

Divale, Chamberis & Gangloff (1976) have proposed an alternative explanation of the Tefft (1975) and Tefft & Reinhardt (1974) findings that internal war was correlated with the presence of peacemaking mechanisms, and external war with their absence. The alternative explanation runs as follows:

Cultural homogeneity between combatants may facilitate peace negotiations, and, once established, peace may be more stable. But cultural homogeneity cannot be used to explain the occurrence of internal war, nor can its absence explain external war. We suggest that with respect to pre-state level society, there is a fundamental difference between internal and external war, which involves more than the fact that internal war is between members of the same society while external war is between different societies. We suggest that internal war is of a regulatory nature - connected to a system of population control (Divale & Harris, 1976; Divale, 1972). On the other hand, we suggest that external war is a struggle for survival between two or more societies fighting for space in the same ecosystem - it is on the order of the competitive exclusion principle in biology, that two species or populations cannot occupy the same ecological niche (Gause, 1932). External war is part of a process that leads to the development of matrilocality, which is a structural adaptation made by a pre-state level society struggling to maintain its niche (Divale, 1974). 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 (i.e. peacemaking mechanisms or stable peace) (Divale, Chamberis & Gangloff, 1976).

Dentan (1992) sketches a political ecological model for the origin, persistence and demise of peaceful societies. The model fleshes out the familiar suggestion that nonviolence is a way less powerful societies respond to violence by stronger ones (e.g., Gardner, 1966; Sipes, 1973; Dentan, 1978, 1979; Endicott, 1983; Donald, 1987; but Cf. Fabbro, 1980; Knauf, 1987). Dentan argues 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

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that static interpretations of dynamic adaptations and situations are unlikely to be helpful.

Some of the important observations and conclusions of the studies discussed 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. Violence in a particular time and place does not necessarily indicate that peaceability in a different time or place is illusory.
- Many peoples who value peace positively still have relatively high rates of violence, e.g., Gebusi of New Guinea (Knaufft, 1985a,b, 1987), the Pacaa Nova peoples (von Graeve, 1989) and San foragers (‘Bushmen’) of southern and eastern Africa (e.g., Thomas, 1994). Thus a cultural emphasis on dependence and nurturance does not by itself account for nonviolence. Social support networks themselves involve costs and conflicts. Besides, the social cohesion which stems from external stress can be pathogenic (Schaffer, 1964). 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.
- The discussion of human violence and nonviolence, war and peace, has suffered from ahistorical essentialism, treating particular historical moments as if they represented universal evolutionary trends or deep-rooted manifestations of quasi-national characters (Sponsel, 1989). A Darwinian approach, which takes peace and nonviolence as an adaptation to particular political ecological circumstances, seems more viable. Under some circumstances, opting for warfare is fatal. Death obviously decreases one’s fitness to zero. The choice of flight, on the other hand, has also complex social and psychological consequences. The rise and survival of peaceful societies suggests that human peaceability is not an impossible, anti-Darwinian fantasy but instead an adaptive response (in the Darwinian sense) to particular political ecologies.