

Handbook on Building Cultures of Peace

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Editor

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 Springer

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Preface

The discipline we now know of as “peace studies” began shortly after the Second World War. However, the idea of using education to create a culture of peace was only introduced in 1986 (by Filipe MacGregor) and not seriously considered until UNESCO’s International Congress in 1989. The congress led Elise Boulding to write *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of Human History* and to the work within UNESCO and the UN (by David Adams, Federico Mayor, Ambassador Chowdhury, and others) that resulted in the endorsement of a General Assembly resolution to create a culture of peace. Since that time hundreds of organizations and millions of people have become involved. Although UNESCO and the UN are currently only devoting minimum resources to promoting a culture of peace, the Foundation for a Culture of Peace and other organizations in civil society continue to press for its development. The concept has two particularly important merits.

First, the concept has the potential for providing a positive goal that unifies the different social movements of our times—the movements for democracy, gender equality, human rights, peace, tolerance, and sustainable development. It helps to unify these movements because it shows the interconnections between them and reveals how they can be parts of a whole.

Second, since culture involves popular attitudes and norms as well as the norms and values that affect state behavior, the concept can be used to reveal the connection between citizen action and the behavior of governments. Indeed, the UN resolution calls for both citizen and state action, and the idea of building a culture provides a roadmap for how individuals can affect their society.

Both these merits suggest that the concept of a culture of peace should be an important component, perhaps even the central component, for peace studies programs. Certainly, it is important for any program that attempts to relate the behavior of individuals to the peacefulness of the society in which they live.

The concept of a culture of peace is complex. It has many aspects and may be viewed from a number of perspectives. This handbook attempts to cover the full extent of this complexity. It aims to contribute both to the development of the concept and to the development of the cultures suggested by the concept.

This book exists because the Francis L. Hiatt Fund generously supported two conferences at Clark University. These enabled scholars from different countries to discuss the possibility of establishing cultures of peace and how the extent of such

cultures might be assessed and promoted. I want to thank my colleagues at Clark and all those scholars and practitioners who so generously contributed the chapters for this handbook. Royalties will support the University's Peace Studies Program.

I also want to acknowledge the helpful commentary of Eric Charles, Marjorie East, and Paul Kimmel, the secretarial assistance of Peggy Moskowitz, the able manuscript editing of Jodi Boduch and Lisa Mann, and the supportive encouragement of my wife Deborah.

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Introduction

Joseph de Rivera

Introduction

If we are to build a more peaceful culture, we must both use imagination and face current reality. On the one hand, building requires us to imagine what we want to construct, and we know that societies are moved by positive images of the future, images that pull behaviors that bring that future into being (Polak 1972). On the other hand, we must face both our propensity for violence and our capacity for peace. In *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History*, Boulding (2000) points out that our warlike culture is accompanied with a concurrent culture of peace. We are taught a history of power and conquest, our religions portray a holy war against evil, and our minds are so full of violent images and language that is difficult for us to imagine a peaceful culture and believe in its possibility. Yet, much actual history is of a peaceful dailiness, our religions also portray peaceful gardens that cultivate the oneness of humanity and are sanctuaries of nonviolence, and our minds know that we are interdependent and must learn to live with one another.

In a culture of peace, people behave in ways that promote mutual caring and wellbeing. These behaviors are supported by particular institutional arrangements, and they reflect particular societal norms, values, and know how. Boulding (2000) observes that such a culture attempts to offer mutual security by acknowledging the importance of diversity, an appreciation of our human identity, and our kinship with the earth. This handbook is about building such cultures. It is based on the UN initiative to build a culture of peace for the world's children.

The UN Initiative

The idea of encouraging the building a culture of peace was developed during the 1989 UNESCO International Congress. The delegates were influenced by two works that they discussed at length: the Seville Statement on Violence and a work by a Peruvian educator, Father Felipe MacGregor. The Seville Statement concludes that biology does not condemn humanity to war and that a species who invents war is also capable of inventing peace (see Adams 1991). The work by MacGregor (1986)

describes a cultural arrangement that resolves conflicts with nonviolent as opposed to violent means, a ‘culture of peace’ that could be contrasted with a culture of war and could be developed by educational initiative. The congress recommended that UNESCO ‘help construct a new vision of peace by developing a peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights, and equality between men and women’ (UNESCO 1989: 51). This concept of a culture of peace, somewhat modified by political forces within the UN, became the basis for a resolution that was adapted by the UN General Assembly (<http://www.culture-of-peace.info/history/introduction.html>).

UN resolution (A/RES/52/13) defines a culture of peace as involving values, attitudes, and behaviors that (1) reject violence, (2) endeavor to prevent conflicts by addressing root causes, and (3) aim at solving problems through dialogue and negotiation. It proposed that both states and civil society could work together to promote such a culture by acting to promote eight bases for such a culture. These are: (1) education (and especially, education for the peaceful resolution of conflict); (2) sustainable development (viewed as involving the eradication of poverty, reduction of inequalities, and environmental sustainability); (3) human rights; (4) gender equality; (5) democratic participation; (6) understanding, tolerance, and solidarity (among peoples, vulnerable groups, and migrants within the nation, and among nations); (7) participatory communication and the free flow of information; (8) international peace and security (including disarmament and various positive initiatives).

Each of these bases is related to others and the overall goal of building a peaceful culture. And each is much more complex than first apparent and must confront serious problems and challenges that will be examined in subsequent chapters.

Challenges and Contradictions

The UN resolution is a social and political proclamation rather than a scientific document, and consensus requires enough ambiguity to encompass multiple perspectives. Yet when we empirically examine peaceful societies, we find that they often do reflect many of the above bases. For example, they are often egalitarian and democratic. However, they also have certain characteristics that are not mentioned in the UN documents. In particular we discover that they value and nurture children, exhibit a harmony with nature, and *define* themselves as peaceful. Rather than assuming that we know how to create cultures of peace, we take the building of such cultures as an empirical challenge, ask how we can go about its development, and feel free to suggest some friendly amendments to the bases proposed by the UN.

One might imagine that the UNESCO proposal might be resisted as a Western cultural imposition. Certainly there is a sort of taboo against advocating cultural changes that has been noted by theorists who have recognized the importance of culture for development and written about how political leadership may influence culture (Harrison and Huntington 2000; Harrison 2006). However, such theorists have tended to only focus on economic development and to view contemporary

Western culture as a model that others should emulate. In focusing on economic progress, they overlook certain problems in liberal culture and the extent to which the prosperity of some nations may rest on military dominance. The advantage of using a culture of peace as a standard is that it reflects a range of values that is much broader than economic progress and that holds economically developed nations to agreed-upon standards. Western cultural imposition will only occur if we insist there is only one culture of peace by not qualifying the different ways in which each of the bases may be achieved.

In fact, the most controversial aspect of the proposal proved to be its contrasting a culture of peace with a culture of war. The implication—that we are currently living in a culture of war—was resisted by the most powerful nations in the UN who insisted that all references to a culture of war be removed (Adams 2001). In so doing, the powerful appear to be asserting that their military power is preserving the peace rather than reflecting the dominance involved in a culture of war. This confounds legitimate and illegitimate uses of power. Probably most of us believe that legitimate, consensual authority can empower development and facilitate the maintenance of order. A majority believe that laws must be enforced and that sometimes force is necessary. However, power may be used to dominate as well as to enforce, and when powerful nations insist on the priority of their own interests and resist the development of international law and UN reform in order to cling to their power, they are clearly reflecting a culture of war and hindering the development of a culture of peace.

It seems likely that a global culture of peace will require some sort of supranational system of lawful authority to insure global justice, and this will require loyalty and some common values. We now have a genuine global transnational community, but Howard (2000) argues that, historically, peace has relied on highly qualified elites who could exercise moral authority. If he is correct, the world will need a transcultural elite with shared cultural norms who can make these norms acceptable within their own societies. The values reflected in the concept of culture of peace may offer such norms. However, there are two obvious problems. First, Howard points out that many of the current elites in underdeveloped countries are small minorities with out-of-proportion wealth, minorities who are perceived as culturally subversive and beholden to alien powers. Such a situation will produce authoritarian regimes, warlords, or populist theocracies. Second, although Howard observes that modernization requires a framework of social and political order, he fails to note how the most powerful nations are blocking needed reforms.

Assumptions and Propositions

Culture, as we use the term, is not a static concept, but a process, and we may use the term either to refer to a global culture of peace or to the different cultures of peace developed by different nations or communities. Hence, it might be more accurate to speak of building cultures of peacemaking. Further, we are referring not

only to things such as language, or a set of beliefs and common practices, but also to complex wholes that include governmental policies, economic and justice systems, relations with the environment, social inequalities, etc. In this sense, culture is a system with interacting parts; we cannot change one element without affecting others. Thus, we might speak of building a peace *system* (Irwin 1988) as an alternative to the domination systems described by Wink (1992) and Zimbardo (2007).

We tackle the problem of creating peaceful societies by embracing two fundamental propositions. First, we propose that human nature is essentially relational and far more complex than what is often assumed. Whatever our biological character, cultures have evolved and differentiated themselves to produce a wide range of behavioral patterns—from extremely violent to very peaceful and much between the two. Second, although we accept the UN’s concept of a culture of peace, we do not assume that we know exactly how to build such cultures. We view building peaceful cultural alternatives to war as our primary hope if the future of the world is to escape from the war machines of the major industrial countries, but we take an empirical approach as to how this may be accomplished. Since these propositions are fundamental, let us we consider what we know about human nature, and the history and empirics of peace building efforts.

Our Human Nature

In our contemporary Western society we are apt to think of persons as primarily individuals who exist independently of one another and who relate to each other by contracts (of marriage, work, property ownership, etc.). The selfishness of these individuals is mitigated by feelings of attachment to, or love for, a few other individuals or a social group with which we identify, but this fundamental self centeredness places severe limitations on how peace may be obtained and leaves little room to imagine how we might construct a peaceful world. Hence, it is important to realize that this view of human nature simply reflects the organization of our current society and the stress that it places on individual autonomy and market structures. Fiske (1991) suggests that this “market pricing” view is only one of four primary forms of human relations. He articulates three other forms of fundamental social relationships: communal sharing (the we-ness involved in love and identification), authority ranking (relatively minimized in our own culture but reflected wherever differences in status and power exist), and the “equality matching” that is reflected in demands for fairness and justice. Fiske contrasts all four of these forms of social relations with the asocial relationships that occur in violence and coercion. In imagining the building of cultures of peace, it may be useful to remember that we can draw upon all four of the structures of social living.

Many believe that peace is desirable in theory, but impossible to attain. For them, a peaceful world is not a realistic goal to have and work for. They are thinking of their personal experiences with violence, the violence they hear about, and the apparent necessity to use violence to control the behavior of those bent on violence.

They forget that war, like slavery, is a societal institution, that behaving violently is an aspect of culture, and that institutions and cultures can dramatically change. Yet much of human behavior is governed by culture, the meaning we make of situations largely depends on cultural norms, and the very way in which we understand human nature is shaped by culture. The dominant contemporary Western view—that we are basically individuals who look out for ourselves—may be contrasted with the views of cultures who believe that humans are essentially group members or with cultures that believe that humans are essentially peaceful. In point of fact, human beings are not either essentially violent or peaceful. The most essential aspect of human nature is that we are dependent on others. These interdependencies occur in all cultures and are shaped by the culture in which we find ourselves and that we help create.

In fact, we may view persons (as contrasted with other biological organisms) as only *existing* in their relationships with other persons (Macmurray 1961). From this perspective, contemporary psychology's emphasis on the contrast between love and hate misses our fundamental dependence. Since we are always in relationships, the more essential contrast is between our love for others and our fear for ourselves. This fear for self begins to dominate whenever we are hurt and leads to splits between mind and body, reason and emotion, ideal and real. Persons and whole cultures become overly individualistic or conformist, liberal or conservative, idealist or realist. Yet, we can only become whole when people care for one another. Hate occurs when our dependency on the other is frustrated by the other's failure to care for us. War cultures involve domination and the fear of being dominated or destroyed. Their mythology places evil destructiveness outside of the self and believes that order can only be restored with the use of violence. By contrast, peace cultures involve mutual nurturance so that caring for what is other prevails over fear for self. Their mythology sees fear and selfishness as ubiquitous and redemption as requiring acknowledgment of our human frailty (see Wink 1992). To imagine cultures of peace, we need only to shift our mythology. To create what we imagine, it helps to review what we know about the history of peacebuilding.

The Empirics of Peace

People differ in their assessment of the degree to which peacefulness must be secured by force, and Howard (2000) points out that people are divided between those who feel that we have relative peace and this must be *maintained* by strength, and those who are aware of the absence of real peace and believe that such peace must be *attained*. The perspective of this handbook is that a peace that includes justice must be *attained*. However, it does not automatically reject the idea that peace may also need to be maintained. Pinker (2002) points out that the capacity for violence is part of our biological makeup, and if we are not inherently warlike, neither are we inherently peaceful. We humans have created cultures of war as well as cultures of peace, and the morality that works within groups often fails between

groups. As Howard notes, states make war possible, but in our contemporary situation, they also make peace possible and, thus far, are the only effective way that masses of people can govern themselves. Yet the chapter by Fry, Bonta, and Baszarkiewicz not only shows that peaceful cultures exist, but that whole cultural systems may be relatively peaceful. The position taken in this handbook is that the problems involved in building contemporary peaceful cultures must be solved empirically. We cannot yet be sure about the best way for states to be constructed so that power can be shared among different ethnic groups or the best way to balance the different types of human relationships.

Yet, we do know a good deal. The power of violence and the strength of those who perpetuate it can be demoralizing, and it is heartening to remember the many successful challenges to that power and the numbers, strength, and persistence of those working for peace and the power of nonviolent action. Those building a global culture of peace may draw strength from the mobilization of students, peasants, and workers in Latin America that led to land reclamation and the Treaty of Tlatelolco that established a nuclear free zone in all of Latin America and the many accounts of people working together to successfully resolve conflict (Mathews 2001).

The movement to build cultures of peace rests on the efforts of many previous movements that have sought to replace violence with non-violent justice-seeking behavior (see Boulding 2000). These include early Christian monastic settlements, the lay religious orders that operated at the same time as the crusades, and the Anabaptist communities that developed during the reformation and led to the initial success in Pennsylvania. These religiously based movements were supplemented when, during the Napoleonic wars, people developed the idea of the state as a moral community and peace as a citizen's issue. Their advocacy led states to accept the basic idea of arbitration, and the practice was so successful that there were 63 successful international arbitrations between 1890 and 1900, and the peaceful separation of Norway from Sweden in 1905. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, the Hague Peace Conference envisioned nation states as instruments of diplomacy that could not only abolish war, but also poverty and disease. Although the conference did not adequately deal with the issue of disarmament and neglected to face the problems of ethnic diversity, colonialism, and the power struggles that contributed to the two world wars that followed, it did lay the basis for the current United Nations. Meanwhile, the concept and practice of using nonviolent action to achieve justice for those without political power was developed by Gandhi and used in dozens of nonviolent campaigns for justice so that we now have a wide spectrum of new tools for negotiation and nonviolent action that may enable us to build cultures of peace.

Gradually, we are developing new norms and institutions that build cultures of peace. The social movements for women's rights, human rights, democracy, economic justice, and peace have led to the formation of dozens of peace research institutes and journals, and hundreds of peace education programs in universities throughout the world. We now have dozens of occupationally based groups, many national peace groups, unarmed peace teams working amidst civil strife, a number of regional organizations, and many nongovernmental organizations working for

world law and nuclear disarmament. Finally, we have thousands of people constantly struggling to create peace in the midst of civil strife and an increasing number of business executives who are gradually making changes in corporate practices that will promote more peaceful systems.

On the state and international levels, there is the quiet development of a new sort of transnational infrastructure for peace. There is an international community of diplomats working for UN reform in the face of resistance by the major powers. As Boulding (2000, p. 239) observes, “This incipient peace culture in the diplomatic corps of each state is there to be worked with in the demilitarization efforts of the peace-building sectors of the civil society.” Although the major powers are resistant, the middle powers are working for nuclear arm abolition and the control of small arms. And although it is hampered by major power vetoes, the United Nations is an autonomous force with departments for disarmament and arms regulation, peacekeeping and humanitarian affairs, complete documentation of international negotiations on arms control, a center in every member state, and international civil servants carrying UN passports—a glimpse of what an interstate culture of peace could be.

Coalitions of hundreds of NGOs have successfully pushed for the banning of landmines and the establishment of an international criminal court and are constantly working for the abolishment of nuclear weapons. They influence an emotional climate of hope that we can create the norms and institutions of a culture of peace. The question, of course, is whether the gradual increase in this culture can overcome the pressures towards maintaining a culture of war.

Organization of the Handbook

This handbook is divided into three sections. The first addresses the challenge of building peaceful cultures from the perspective of the different social sciences. From anthropology, we learn about the characteristics of the peaceful cultures that currently exist. A cultural psychologist uses semiotics to discuss the mechanisms that may be necessary to intervene in the constant dynamical interplay between war and peace. An economist discusses our main economic perspectives and the political economy that may be required if we are to have peace in our global society. Two students of cultural change consider how we may be able to transform norms. A political scientist presents different theories of power and how we may have to regard power to attain a peaceful culture. A social psychologist discusses our current global situation, the constraints posed by our current conditions of violence, and how we can assess the extent to which our current nation-states are peaceful.

The second section contains chapters that examine the conceptual issues and empirical challenges involved in each of the eight bases for a culture of peace proposed by the UN General assembly (education, gender equality, tolerance, democracy, open communication, human rights, international security, and sustainable development). They ask what is really involved in peace education, how we can best measure gender

equality, and how we might promote tolerance. They inquire into how democracy is best conceived and assessed, the benefits and challenges of open communication, and what methods may help develop human rights when ethnic groups are in conflict. They examine the best ways for us to promote international security and what we must do if we are to have both development and sustainability.

The third section is practically oriented and deals with the methods we may use to build the bases. Some of these are general methods that may be applied in many different contexts. They include methods for nonviolent struggle and peace building, negotiation, dialogic techniques, and nonviolent ways for dealing with deviance, such as programs for restorative justice and prison reform, and achieving police oversight. Others are aimed at the specific levels with which we must work: personal transformation, developing more peaceful families, community development, community reconciliation, and societal reconciliation. A short final chapter relates these tools back to building the UN bases. We realize that the ideas presented here are mere beginnings, but we hope readers will find them thought provoking and useful in the task that lies ahead.

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Section I
Views from the Social Sciences

Chapter 1

Learning from Extant Cultures of Peace

Douglas P. Fry, Bruce D. Bonta, and Karolina Baszarkiewicz

Introduction

Boulding (1978, p. 93) once quipped, “Anything that exists is possible.” The anthropological literature documents the existence of peaceful societies from around the globe. This chapter focuses on what extant peaceful societies can teach us about creating and maintaining “cultures of peace.” First, we will consider “peace systems.” Peace systems are comprised of neighboring societies that do not wage war on each other. A comparison of peace systems from Brazil’s Upper Xingu River basin, India’s Nilgiri and Wynaad Plateaus, and the European Union (EU) suggests certain psychosocial features that help to prevent warfare and to promote cultures of peace within these peace systems. The cultures of peace elements with the most obvious relevance to peace systems include, for instance, social norms for peace education and socialization (including the promotion of values that explicitly shun intergroup violence), social cohesion and tolerance, inclusion of all groups in the system (human rights and equality values), a de-emphasis on security sought via military means, and in some cases, democratic participation, such as in the EU.

Second, we will consider some lessons for creating cultures of peace as derived from a study of internally peaceful societies. Several elements of the cultures of peace concept are germane to internally peaceful societies: societal norms favoring education and socialization for peace and the use of nonviolent dialogue and conflict resolution practices, valuing of women and nurturance, and the attainment of social cohesion via tolerance and understanding.

Peace Systems

It is often assumed that all societies engage in warfare (Fry 2004, 2006). However, this is simply not the case. Numerous non-warring societies exist (Fry 2006, 2007). Some neighboring societies have formed peace systems, meaning that they do not make war on each other (and sometimes not with outsiders either). For example, in addition to the examples to be presented in this chapter, the aboriginal inhabitants of the central Malaysia Peninsula, the Inuit of Greenland, and the

Montagnais, Naskapi, and East Main Cree bands of the Labrador Peninsula maintain peace systems.

Brazil's Upper Xingu River Basin Tribes

In the 1880s, the first European to visit Brazil's Upper Xingu River basin, the German explorer von den Steiner, found a cluster of tribes from four different language groups that comprised a peaceful social system (Gregor 1990). Correspondingly, Quain observed in the 1930s that these Brazilian peoples, although sometimes raided by outside tribes, did not wage war on each other (Murphy and Quain 1955). Gregor (1990, pp. 105–106), who has conducted fieldwork among these tribes over recent decades, summarizes:

What is striking about the Xinguanos is that they are peaceful. During the one hundred years over which we have records there is no evidence of warfare among the Xingu groups. To be sure there have been instances of witchcraft killings across tribal lines, and rare defensive reactions to assaults from the war-like tribes outside the Xingu basin. But there is no tradition of violence among Xingu communities.

Gregor (1990) has lived among the Mehinaku and the Yawalapití, visited most of the other Xingu tribes, and interviewed people from all of them. He concludes that the Xingu peace system rests on three pillars: intervillage trade, intermarriage, and ceremonial interconnections. The value system also plays an important role in preventing war.

Each tribe produces specialized items to trade with other groups (Gregor 1990; Murphy and Quain 1955; see also Fry 2006). The Wauja make pottery. The Kamayurá produce hardwood bows from *pau d'arco* trees that grow in their area. The Kalapalo and Kuikuru make highly valued shell necklaces and waistbands. The Yawalapití also create shell decorations. The Trumai engage in salt production. Likewise, the Mehinaku make salt from water hyacinth plants, a trade specialty that requires a substantial labor input. Gregor (1990, pp. 111–112) emphasizes that:

Trade means trust, since items offered may not be reciprocated for several months or more. Trade means mutual appreciation, since craft objects, unlike our manufactures, are an extension of the self which the maker hopes will be admired. Trade is a social relationship that is valued in and of itself, and is a conscious reason for maintaining monopolies. As one of my informants explained to me: 'They have things that are really beautiful, and we have things that they like. And so we trade and that is good.'

Widespread intermarriage is a second contributor to peaceful, non-warring relations among upper Xingu peoples (Basso 1973; Fry 2006). The Yawalapití, for example, do not seek spouses from their own village, but instead marry among the Kamayurá, Kuikuru, Kalapalo, and Mehinaku. Among the Kuikuru, 30% of marriages are with persons from other tribes; among the Mehinaku, the figure is about 35%. One man expressed his intertribal identity by gesturing so as to divide his body down the middle, "This side...Mehinaku. That side is Waurá" (Gregor and Robarchek 1996, p. 173; NB: Waurá is an alternative spelling of Wauja). The presence

of relatives, trading partners, and friends in the other groups presents a strong disincentive against the waging of war among these interconnected tribes.

The third contributor to peace involves the ceremonial interdependencies that the Xingu tribes vigorously nourish. A ceremony to inaugurate chiefs and to mourn passed chiefs requires the participation of all the tribes. The ritual reinforces that all the tribes belong to a larger, peaceful social system. As one Xinguanos expresses (Gregor 1990, p. 113): “We don’t make war; we have festivals for the chiefs to which all of the villages come. We sing, dance, trade, and wrestle.”

Finally, a set of shared values promotes peace and discourages violence, including war. In the Xingu value orientation, peace is moral, whereas war and violence are immoral. A person gains prestige and respect through being tranquil and self-controlled. Social approval flows to persons who forsake aggression. Carneiro (1994, p. 208) reports that “the Kuikuru are strongly socialized from childhood to be amiable and to refrain from expressing anger. Indeed, fights among men in the village are unknown.” An acceptable, if not encouraged, Upper Xingu response to conflict is to move to another village. Furthermore, the warrior role among these tribes is neither valued nor rewarded (Basso 1973; Gregor and Robarchek 1996).

Although generally peaceful places, Xingu villages are not totally free of hostility and competition. Spouses sometimes express jealousy, thefts occur, and people are fearful of witchcraft. Among the Trumai, a typical outlet for hostility is to deliver a public harangue. Rivalries also are expressed competitively, yet nonviolently, through wrestling matches between persons of the same or neighboring villages. To the Xingu, expressing their anger through wrestling allows it to subside. “When our bellies are ‘hot with anger’ we wrestle and the anger is gone” (Gregor and Robarchek 1996, p. 180).

Even though Xinguanos are against war and actively nurture their own peace system, they periodically have had to defend themselves from raiding by tribes who live outside the Xingu basin. Nonetheless, their antiwar values are clear. Murphy and Quain (1955, p. 15) point out that the Trumai gain no prestige from war: “Warfare was an occasion for fear, and not an opportunity to enhance one’s status.” Ireland (1991, p. 58) explains that for the Wauja, violence and war are morally degrading:

Far from viewing physical aggression with awe and admiration, they see it as pathetic and a mark of failed leadership. The Wauja term for warrior or soldier, *peyeteke yekeho*, can be translated as ‘man whose greatest talent is losing his self control.’

In the Upper Xingu belief system, three categories of humans exist: peaceful peoples of the Xingu basin, wild and warlike Indians from beyond the Xingu area, and all non-Indians, or basically, the “whites.” The concept of wild Indian reinforces the antiwar value orientation of the Xingu people, and they use this stereotypical image as a point of contrast to what they see as their morally superior, peaceful, civilized way of life. The Wauja antiviolent and antiwar beliefs, for example, are reflected in the following myth recounted by Ireland (1991, p. 58) about how the three different kinds of humanity received their basic characters from the Sun.

The Sun offers a rifle to the ancestor of the Wauja, but the Wauja merely turns it over in his hands, not knowing how to use it. The Sun takes the rifle from the Wauja and offers it to the ancestor of the warlike Indians who live to the north of the Wauja. This Indian is also baffled by the rifle, and so the Sun takes it away again and this time hands it to the ancestor of the whiteman.

...Next the Sun passed around a gourd dipper from which each man was asked to drink. The ancestor of the Wauja approached, but found to his horror that the dipper was filled to the brim with blood. He refused to touch it, but when the warlike Indian was offered the dipper, he readily drank from it. When the Sun finally offered the dipper of blood to the whiteman, he drank it down greedily in great gulps.

That is why the whiteman and the warlike Indian tribes are so violent today; even in ancient times, they were thirsty for the taste of blood. To the Wauja, however, the Sun gave a dipper of manioc porridge. And that is why the Wauja drink manioc porridge today, and why they are not a brutal and violent people.

The Xingu peace system was already in place when first observed over 120 years ago, and since that time there have been no acts of war among these tribes. Institutionally, friendly peaceful interaction among the tribes in the Upper Xingu basin are created and recreated on a daily basis through exchange, kinship, ritual, and reiterated antiwar values. Xinguanos differentiate between their own civilized, peaceful nature and the violent natures of wild Indians and whites. For the Xinguanos, war and violence constitute uncivilized, immoral conduct, which they shun.

The Nilgiri and Wynaad Plateaus

The peace systems on the Nilgiri and Wynaad Plateaus in southern India are not as well documented as the one in the Upper Xingu River valley, but they nevertheless suggest some additional ideas about conditions that might apply among societies that rarely if ever fight one another or go to war.

The two plateaus are really higher and lower portions of the same mountain system, located near the southern end of the Western Ghats. They are located at the northwestern corner of the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu on the borders of Kerala and Karnataka. The mountains are known in the literature as the Nilgiri Plateau, the Nilgiri-Wynaad Plateau, or the Blue Mountains. The massif can be divided into two physiographic regions: the Nilgiri Plateau itself, the higher area to the east; and the Nilgiri-Wynaad Plateau, a lower area to the northwest.

The societies living in the higher eastern area, referred to from here on simply as the Nilgiri—the Toda, the Kota, the Badaga, and the Kurumbas—have been well-described in numerous ethnographies dating back more than 100 years. The societies in the northwestern area, referred to from here on as the Wynaad—the Nayaka, Paniya, Chetti, Mullu Kurumba, and Betta Kurumba peoples—have received much less attention from ethnographers. The different societies of both areas speak distinct languages—Badaga, Toda, Kota, and so forth—that are affiliated with three of the four major Dravidian languages: Tamil, Kannada, and

Malayalam. Both areas of the massif have been peaceful for the past century, especially the Wynaad, which has a peace system comparable to the one in the Upper Xingu.

Hockings (1989, p. 365) contrasts the relative amity that has persisted among the societies in the Nilgiri with the social patterns of many mountain peoples in places such as the Caucasus, the sub-Himalaya, and the Hindu Kush, where violence and raiding have been common. Marauding was never a pattern in the Nilgiri, and the societies, he argues, “possessed no militia or weapons of war.” He maintains that the complex economic trading system among the societies, operating on a system of trust, was a factor in their peace system.

His earlier book on the Badagas (Hockings 1980) describes in much greater detail the trading and inter-society relationships of the Nilgiri peoples. Bird-David (1997) amplifies that description with additional information about the Wynaad societies, and she provides an effective comparison of the two regions. In the paragraphs that follow, the names and spellings of the different societies will follow Bird-David (1997), the most recent of the relevant works.

While the peoples of the Nilgiri may have had a relatively peaceful system, Bird-David and Hockings both describe the tensions and witchcraft killings that occurred there in the past, patterns reminiscent of the Upper Xingu as well. The Wynaad, in contrast, appears to have a history completely free of sorcery and witchcraft killings, as well as intertribal warfare. A comparison of the social, economic, and cultural structures of the Nilgiri and the Wynaad will indicate some of the factors that have contributed to the peace system of the latter.

The Nilgiri Plateau

The Toda, Kota, Badaga, and Kurumbas may be relatively peaceful toward one another, but their relationships have been rigid, formal, separated, highly structured, and strictly stereotyped. The four societies inhabit quite distinct communities, each of which emphasizes its own unique economic patterns and social roles. Each society accentuates its uniqueness and differences from the others, although, in fact, there are multiple, overlapping, economic practices. The Kurumbas are primarily known as food gatherers in the forest, though they are also shifting agriculturalists, and they work as watchmen for the other groups on the Nilgiri.

Everyone thinks of the Badaga as farmers, though they also keep some livestock, primarily buffaloes. The Kota are known as musicians and artisans, but they, too, farm and keep some livestock. People think of the Toda as herders, though they also cultivate some farmland and gather foods in the forest. The important point is that the stereotypes the societies maintain about each other’s specializations provide the bases for complex, ritualized, intergroup exchange relationships.

These four Nilgiri societies live in distinctly separate locations, and their folk traditions confirm this long-time sense of separateness. They do trade with one another, though they base their economic exchange patterns on formalized gifting