6 Of Badges, Bonds and Boundaries: Ethnocentrism, Xenophobia and War

6.1 Introduction

Evolutionarily, the ultimate causes of war, as of all lethal conflict, have been claimed to be sexual selection and kin selection. Sexual selection in relation to primitive war has been discussed in more detail in chapter 4, leaving us to investigate the implications of kin selection - giving rise to interindividual bonds within and boundaries between human kin groups - for the explanation of primitive war.

In this chapter relevant aspects of the ethnocentrism syndrome in relation to the explanation of primitive warfare will be presented, and theories of its origin in hominid/human evolution will be critically discussed. In order to appreciate what is so special about human group phenomena and ethnocentrism, I start by presenting some observations on human violence generally.

6.1.1 The Collectiveness of Human Violence

Violence in and between human societies, with the exception of some forms of domestic, criminal and pathological violence, is virtually always a collective activity or committed in the name of a collectivity. "Adults kill and torture each other only when organized into political parties, or economic classes, or religious denominations, or nation states. A moral distinction is always made between individuals killing for themselves and the same individual killing for some real or supposed group interest" (Durbin & Bowlby, 1938).

This moral double standard leads to the masquerading of the violence committed in the name of one's own in-group as justified self-defense, or as a well-deserved punishment for transgressions of mores, laws, or ideological orthodoxy. The violence may range from sanctions against a dissenter or potential renegade within the group, to punitive expeditions, and even genocide, between groups.

Total identification with the group makes the individual perform altruistic and heroic acts to the point of self-sacrifice, and at the same time behave with ruthless cruelty towards the enemy or victim of the group. As Koestler (1967) observed: The self-assertive behavior of the group is based on the self-transcending behavior of its members. The egotism of the group feeds on the altruism of its members.
6.1.2 The Justification of Violence

The ulterior justification and legitimation of collective violence invokes complex ideological, symbolic constructions, superordinate goals, spiritual values, high moral principles, and the most noble, virtuous, righteous, self-transcendent and altruistic motives. "The most pernicious phenomena of aggression, transcending self-preservation and self-destruction, are based upon a characteristic feature of man above the biological level, namely his capability of creating symbolic universes in thought, language and behavior" (von Bertalanffy, 1958).

It is the 'good' intentions of mankind, man's 'high' moral principles, his 'noble' strivings that lead to Armageddon. Or, as Koestler (1967) eloquently stated:

It is not the murderers, the criminals, the delinquents and the wild nonconformists who have embarked on the really significant rampages of killing, torture and mayhem. Rather it is the conformist, virtuous citizens, acting in the name of righteous causes and intensely held beliefs who throughout history have perpetrated the fiery holocausts of war, the religious persecutions, the sacks of cities, the wholesale rape of women, the dismemberment of the old and the young and the other unspeakable horrors... The crimes of violence committed for selfish, personal motives are historically insignificant compared to those committed *ad majorem gloriam Dei*, out of a self-sacrificing devotion to flag, a leader, a religious faith, or a political conviction. Man has always been prepared not only to kill but also to die for good, bad, or completely futile causes (Koestler, 1967).

The problem, says Fox (1982), "lies with the capacity of the human imagination to create its encompassing, consummatory systems with violence as their focus and purpose". Thus, collective violence is covered with a thick patina of self-justification, ratiomorphic nonsense and pathos. "Men and women first construct towering structures of theology and religion, complex analyses of racial character and class structure, or moralities of group life and virility before they kill one another... Men will die like flies for theories and exterminate each other with every instrument of destruction for abstractions" (Durbin & Bowlby, 1938; Cf. Q. Wright, 1942; Huxley, 1959). The most extensive, quixotic and disgusting violence is justified with the invocation of a utopian ideology, a paradise myth, a superiority doctrine, an eschatological or millenarian ideal state, or other highly abstract political/ethical categories, metaphysical values, and quasi-metaphysical mental monstrosities: National Security, Raison d'Etat, Freedom, Democracy, God, Volk und Heimat, Blut und Boden, Peace, Progress, Empire, Historical Imperative, Sacred Order, Natural Necessity, Divine Will, and so on and so forth. The human being as the
‘most ferocious of beasts’ as William James called him, is only a beast in the name of some superhuman ideal, which serves as a ‘sanction for evil’ (Sanford & Comstock, 1971); divine or diffuse permission for large-scale destructiveness. The purity and sacredness of our cause, and the divine sanction of our actions (‘with God on our side’) is guaranteed by the wickedness of the enemy, who is envisaged as the incorporation of evil, the devil incarnate.

6.1.3 The Maliciousness of Ideological Conflicts

Ideological conflicts are so malicious and venomous because they are totalitarian in pretense. The collision of two different ideologies (social cosmologies, Weltanschauungen, symbolic universes, or definitions of reality) will have a dramatic course because the other worldview constitutes a threat by the mere fact of demonstrating that the one worldview is not inevitable and absolute, but a more or less arbitrary construction; that our vision of reality is largely fictional; a collective delusional system, a social myth. And nothing is more terrifying and threatening to the ego than the prospect of chaos. As Berger & Luckmann (1966) explain:

The confrontation of alternative symbolic universes implies a problem of power - which of the conflicting definitions of reality will be ‘made to stick’ in the society.

Two societies confronting each other with conflicting universes will both develop conceptual machineries designed to maintain their respective universes. From the point of view of intrinsic plausibility the two forms of conceptualization may seem to the outside observer to offer little choice. Which of the two will win however, will depend more on the power than on the theoretical ingenuity of the respective legitimators. It is possible to imagine that equally sophisticated Olympian and Chthonic mystagogues met together in oeconomical consultations, discussing the merits of their respective universes sine ira et studio, but it is more likely that the issue was decided on the less rarefied level of military might. The historical outcome of each clash of gods was determined by those who wielded the better weapons rather than those who had the better arguments. The same, of course, may be said of intrasocietal conflicts of this kind. He who has the bigger stick has the better chance of imposing his definition of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

But it is not only a matter of power. Ubiquitously evident in all forms of collective intolerance, Willhoite (1977) observes, is an expressed desire by leaders and/or members to protect and promote the uniformity, conformity, ‘purity’ of the group by denouncing or acting intolerantly toward individuals or
groups perceived - simply because, in some sense defined as critical, they are different - as threats to the well-being and integrity of the intolerant collectivity. "Groupings as diverse in size, character, and functions as clans, tribes, warrior bands, religious bodies, political parties, and nation-state have very commonly repressed internal diversity and also have often sought to force their beliefs and way of life upon unreceptive and resistant members of other collectivities" (Willhoite, 1977).

Berger & Luckmann (1966) define the individual’s ‘symbolic universe’ as a set of beliefs "that integrate different provinces of meaning and encompass the institutional order in a symbolic totality". This desired state is most readily achieved when one’s symbolic universe is shared by other persons - above all by a total society. Thus, society-wide, official symbolic universes have commonly existed. Not only do they assuage individuals' anxieties; they also provide legitimation for the structure and character of the society itself. However, "All social reality is precarious. All societies are constructions in the face of chaos. The constant possibility of anomic terror is actualized whenever the legitimations that obscure the precariousness are threatened or collapse".

Serious threats to a well-established, taken-for-granted symbolic universe may arise from deviants within the society (heretics) or from external contact with another society possessing a radically different - but also taken-for-granted internally - symbolic universe. One possible - and historically common - response to such threats is ‘nihilation’, the conceptual liquidation of everything inconsistent with the official doctrine. That is, deviants or foreigners may be labeled as less than human, as ‘devils’ or ‘barbarians’ who dwell in impenetrable darkness. "Whether one then proceeds from nihilation to therapy, or rather goes on to liquidate physically what one has liquidated conceptually, is a practical question of policy".

Berger & Luckmann’s description of this device for protecting a symbolic universe is acutely perceptive, but, as Willhoite (1977) points out, it does not explain why such differences should be perceived as threats that demand a nihilating response. This question is, at least in part, answered by Erikson’s (1964) concept of cultural pseudospeciation.

Man is the cultural animal par excellence. All members of the (sub)species Homo s. sapiens share the characteristic of being capable to create, and be created by, culture. At the same time, however, culture is the great unbalancer, the great catalyst of diversity and reinforcer of differences, underlying universal human cultural pseudospeciation. Owing to this process, human groups (be they ethnies, tribes or nations) tend to differ from one another to such a degree that the groups come to perceive each other as though they were totally different species, and to behave accordingly.

Erikson’s concept of pseudospeciation denotes the fact that while Man is obviously one species, he appears on the scene split into groups (from tribes to nations, from castes to classes, from religions to ideologies) which provide
their members with a firm sense of distinct and superior identity and the illusion of immortality. This demands, however, that each group must invent for itself a place and moment in the very center of the universe where and when an especially provident deity caused it to be created superior to all others, the mere mortals. Thus Man is "indoctrinated with the conviction that his 'species' alone was planned by an all-wise deity, created in a special cosmic event, and appointed by history to guard the only version of humanity... Man once possessed by this combination of lethal weaponry, moral hypocrisy, and identity panic is not only apt to lose all sense of species but also to turn on another subgroup with a ferocity generally alien to the 'social’ animal world" (Willhoite, 1977).

The violence of pseudospeciation, according to Erikson, apparently comes from the manner societies link infantile aggression to role learning. Each culture in training its young exploits the inevitable anxieties of childhood in such a fashion that the infant comes to associate socially defined good with a lessening of anxiety, socially defined bad with its heightening.

Especially Tinbergen (1968, 1981) has pointed out how violence changes in character from intraspecific to interspecific/predatory the more the enemy is dehumanized and 'pseudospeciated’. No holds are barred in hunting down a foreign species.

MacCurdy (1918) foreshadowed this valuable concept of pseudospeciation in his Psychology of War. According to him, early tribal warfare had fixed the idea that strangers were another species, and thus was overcome the natural taboo [i.e., inhibition] against killing conspecifics. Humans by their herd nature were doomed to split into groups, and these groups behaved biologically like separate species struggling for existence. During times of war, he suggested, humans still felt vestigial emotions of hostility to their enemies as species other than themselves (Crook, 1994).

### 6.1.4 Symbol Systems-cum-Sentiment Structures

Definitely involved in human violence are highly complex and elaborate, abstract and rule-governed, cognitive conceptual and symbolic processes, meanings and constructs of reality, attitudes, norms, values, codes of conduct, anticipations, strategies, etc. This, in turn, has its negative side; the ability of Man to create psychological 'distancing devices’, to dehumanize, diabolize, to exterminate his enemies like vermin in fantasy and in reality; and to generate Weltanschauungen in which only a small portion of humanity fits, and social parades from which the 'misfits’ have to be expelled.

Furthermore, the human being has a very vulnerable sense of self-esteem and group identity. These considerations lead to the following formulation that "the capacity for human aggression is an outcome, in part, of natural selection for heightened sentiment structures focused about self-identity and cooperative social structure... It is largely through his ‘sentiment structures’ that man is
capable of the frantic antics of cathection upon diverse symbol clusters, is able to fan up and maintain hostilities in thought and deed toward symbol clusters and their human associations" (Holloway, 1968).

The human self-concept can easily be 'inflated' into narcissism and (in males) machismo, and the group concept into ethnocentrism and Manichaean dualism. The symbolic or conceptual content of such sentiment structures is so obvious that we propose to call them 'symbol systems-cum-sentiment structures'. A very similar concept is perhaps what A.D. Smith (1994) called mythomoteur, the constitutive political myth of the ethnic or national group which may evoke profound 'religious' sentiments.

Perhaps an example of such a 'symbol system-cum-sentiment structure' is Lorenz' (1966) formulation of what he calls 'militant enthusiasm', the unconditional surrender to the Holy Cause, the Sacrosanct Task, which, according to him, is a phylogenetically preprogrammed sentiment-structure originally evolved as a specialized form of communal defensive aggression, and which can rather easily be elicited when the perception of a threat from a hateful enemy, an inspiring leader figure and many other individuals, all agitated by the same emotion, are present (think of the massive Nazi rallies).

Together with the concept of cultural pseudospeciation, dehumanization is probably the most important proximate concept for understanding (mass)-violence phenomena, including warfare, 'ethnic cleansing', massacres and genocide, in humans (and probably as 'dechimpization' [Goodall, 1987] in chimpanzees too). There is a profound paradox involved in the process of dehumanization in the sense that one can only dehumanize what is recognized and acknowledged to be human in the first place.

Another curious paradox is that both superhuman and debased characteristics are ascribed simultaneously to certain groups in order to justify discrimination or violence against them. The foreigner, for instance, is seen at once as 'wicked, untrustworthy, dirty', and 'uncanny, powerful, and cunning'. Similarly, according to the canons of race prejudice, contradictory qualities of exceptional prowess and extraordinary defect, together make them a menace toward whom customary restraints on behavior do not obtain.

In its more complete form, however, dehumanization entails a perception of other people as nonhumans - as statistics, commodities, or interchangeable pieces in a vast 'numbers game'. Its predominant emotional tone is that of indifference and callousness (Bernard, Ottenberg & Redl, 1971; also see Sanford, 1971; Sanford & Comstock, 1971; Kelman, 1973; Volkan, 1988, 1991; Volkan, Julius & Montville, 1990).

Dehumanization is more than calling the enemy 'cockroaches'. It refers to a combination of malignant psychological processes. Dehumanization is a response to the group's need to keep alive the principle of not being like the enemy. It represents an attempt to establish firmer boundaries between the two groups. Hostility and fear maintain dehumanization; in turn, dehumanization
eliminates feelings of guilt, since it is acceptable to kill what is not human. Indeed, under these conditions the act of killing can be accompanied by feelings of pleasure and triumph, as it represents another step towards absolute control over the group’s psychological distance from the enemy.

"It is dehumanization as a pathological human phenomenon which has permitted most of the world’s horrendous acts to occur. The atrocities of war, man’s cruel treatment of his fellow man, have their roots in this mental process” (Volkan, 1991).

Volkan identifies two elements in the group dynamics toward violence and war: the ‘Chosen trauma’ and the ‘Chosen glory’ of the group. Similarly, Galtung (1994) identifies Chosenness, Trauma and Myths of a Glorious Past, which together form a syndrome: the Chosenness-Myth-Trauma (CMT) complex or, more evocatively, the collective megalopara-noia syndrome. Chosenness means the idea of being a people chosen by transcendental forces, above all others, endowed, even anointed, to be a light unto others, with the right and even the duty to govern them. Trauma means the idea of being a people hit and hurt by others, possibly out of their envy, by enemies lurking anywhere, intent on hitting again. Chosenness induces collective sentiments of grandeur relative to all others. This is then built into the Myths of a Glorious Past to be recreated, the present being suspended between the glorious past and the glorious future. But the traumas can also be used to validate the idea of chosenness; "we have suffered so much, there must be a deeper meaning to that suffering". New traumas are then expected for the future, with a mixture of fear and the lustful anticipation of self-fulfilling prophecies coming true. The three parts of the syndrome reinforce each other socially, not only as ideas, in a vicious circle.

The group incorporates the mental representation of the traumatic event(s) into its identity, thus leading to the intergenerational transmission of historical enmity. Once a trauma becomes a chosen trauma, the historical truth about it does not really matter. In war or war-like situations, the leader evokes the memory of the chosen trauma, as well as that of the chosen glory, to galvanize his people and make his group more cohesive. Historical enmity thus acts much like an amplifier in an electrical circuit (Volkan, 1991).

"It is because we possess a symbol system and can formulate ideals and categorical imperatives that it is possible for human beings to achieve both sanctity and pure diabolism" (Huxley, 1959; Cf. Leach, 1968). Symbolic language may influence the stationarity and intransigence of human symbol systems-cum-sentiment structures in several ways; (1) by means of a functional relationship between information reception, storage, and extinction on the one hand, and codability on the other; that is, codability facilitates information storage, introduces redundancy, reduces complexity, labels and tags reality and necessarily distorts it. The human differences caused by pseudospeciation ensure high codability. (2) It may influence the refutability of the social
cosmology or Weltanschauung implied in the language system as a calibrating, constraining Steuerungssystem. The mythomagical universe, for example, requires a language different from the rational one, and, to a large extent these are mutually exclusive. (3) These influences may operate on the input as well as on the output side of the individual, constraining and directing perception into certain habitual channels, synthesizing and reinforcing ways of thinking, feeling, and modes of behavior; as well as discouraging, damning or even making unthinkable alternative ways. Man is entangled in a web of meanings which he himself has spun (Cf. Mead, 1963; Geertz, 1964; Becker, 1968). (This may, in part, explain why the social order is perceived by most people not only as a reified order, but also as a sacred order). Thus, the conceptual universe of ethnocentrism is created and maintained largely by 'semantic magic'.

"The same symbolism that enhances sentimental bonds between kinsmen, and symbolically defined groups outside of biological relationships (clan, tribe, state, nation, ideology), bring in their wake its antithesis: extra-group aggressional tendencies" (Holloway, 1968). He suggested that one of the prime functions of the development of symbolization was social control. Fearing (1950) hypothesized that "communication, as a human activity involving the production and utilization of significant symbols, is always a part of the process through which the field is cognitively structured and operates to increase or decrease group tensions", and Hansen (1980) argued that linguistic communication evolved because it facilitated cooperation for intergroup competition.

In this context it is appropriate to recall that hostility, enmity, and especially cruelty presuppose elaborate, highly evolved abstract symbolization as well as complex information processing, storage and recall facilities, or, in short: good long-term memory.

[I]t is precisely what are widely thought to be the most unusually highly evolved biological characteristics of Homo sapiens, our cognitive and symbolic skills, which offer the readiest facilitation to violence and aggression. The same zest for analytical skill and strong commitment to group norms, which is the essence of science, is at the root of the successful construction of the social and ideological boundaries which are the effective prerequisite to large-scale persistent aggressive interaction. In effect this statement denies that the decisive stimulus for aggression/violence is at the lower-end of the evolutionary scale, for example at the gonadal level. Rather, it locates it at the higher end, for example at the cortical. This is not unreasonable because it means that the evolutionary adaptations which distinguish us most prominently as a species are also those which were and are most centrally involved in the basic processes of our survival (Tiger, 1990).
Leakey (1967) suggested that it was the humanization of Man and especially the development of speech in the last quarter million years or so of human evolution, that turned man against man. The characteristically human aspect of aggression, says Leakey, is that it is organized and premeditated. This requires abstract speech.

Here, as van den Berghe (1974) points out, Leakey unwisely restricts the definition of aggression. Of course, it takes speech to plan military campaigns and execute them; but the scope of human aggression is far wider and the origin far more ancient than the more complexly organized forms of it, such as warfare. Surely, mute hominids were perfectly capable of bashing each other over the head.

6.1.5 Fear Susceptibility

From his protohominid past early Man must have inherited a great susceptibility to fear, which must have been amplified by his primordial intellectual and symbolizing capacities. His growing self-consciousness must have been accompanied by a great deal of anguish. Not only real dangers such as natural catastrophes, famines, diseases, and predators became more terrifying as he gradually came to realize their consequences, but internally generated, fantasized, imaginary fears began to haunt his overloaded brain as well. These fears include fear of revenge of killed animals and slaughtered enemies, fear of the spirits or ghosts of the dead, fear of malevolent demons or deities, fear of black magic, the evil eye, witchcraft, fear of the gods or other supernatural forces, fear, in short, of the nightmarish figments of his own imagination; but also more realistic fears: Fear of the stranger and the potential danger the stranger incorporates, the unknown, fear of death and dying, fear of anything that could demolish the vulnerable identity and the so painfully acquired social cosmology.

The magical-animistic universe of primitive Man may, at least in part, be understood as a protective device against the ubiquitous fears and anxieties generated by a hostile world.

Hebb & Thompson (1968) hypothesized that development of a higher level of intelligence (phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically) would mean an increased vulnerability to emotional disturbance. The evidence of the phylogenetic development of fear susceptibilities is particularly convincing.

First, in most primitive societies it is clear that man has generally found himself ringed around by malignant ghosts and devils, with beneficent spirits in the minority, and has found it constantly necessary to spend time, effort and wealth to propitiate even the friendly ones. Fellow members of the tribe commonly possess evil powers; and the one who has the evil eye is feared and hated, or killed according to circumstances. For any one of the members to be
greatly different from the others in appearance, habits, skills or tastes would be more than apt to cost him his life. As for an outsider, even of the same race, language and culture - any foreigner is distrusted and feared. These are well-established facts of human behavior, and not rare exceptions either. However, if they are cited, and if one cites also the concentration and slave-labor camps of our own generation, to show that man is to be thought of as a wild animal, emotionally unstable and often vicious, the answer will be that these things may happen if people are taught as children to behave in these ways, but that fear, hatred and cruelty are not inherent in man’s nature. If so, one might wonder at the coincidences that allowed the same teaching to originate in so many parts of the globe (Hebb & Thompson, 1968).

### 6.2 Ethnocentrism

The concept proposed to unify the observations made above is ‘ethnocentrism’. Ethnocentrism is considered to be a schismatic in-group/out-group differentiation, in which internal cohesion, relative peace, solidarity, loyalty and devotion to the in-group, and the glorification of the sociocentric-sacred (the own cosmology, ideology, social myth, or Weltanschauung; the own ‘godgiven’ social order) is correlated with a state of hostility or permanent quasi-war (status hostilis) toward out-groups, which are often perceived as inferior, subhuman, and/or the incorporation of evil. Ethnocentrism results in a dualistic, Manichaean morality which evaluates violence within the in-group as negative, and violence against the out-group as positive, even desirable and heroic.

This is, admittedly, a rather extreme definition. The usual dictionary definition of ethnocentrism is "the tendency to regard one’s own group and culture as intrinsically superior to all others" (Webster’s Dictionary). Superiority of the own group and culture, however, (psycho)logically implies inferiority of other groups and cultures. And viewing other groups/cultures as inferior empirically appears to imply some degree (however small) of contempt, stereotyping, discrimination and dehumanization of, and at least a modicum of hostility toward, members of those other groups/cultures. Ethnocentrism and its canonical variants (tribalism, nationalism, patriotism, parochialism, jingoism, etc.) also appears to be intimately connected with xenophobia, a complex attitude system-cum-sentiment structure involving dislike, distrust, aversion, revulsion, fear and antagonism vis-à-vis strangers/foreigners/aliens and everything the stranger/foreigner/alien represents.

The phenomena of 'moralistic' aggression (Anstoßnehmen, conspecific mob-
bing, ostracism, prosocial aggression, disciplinary aggression, conformity-enforcement behavior, aggression towards deviants), xenophobic aggression (fear and enmity aroused by strangers), in-group/out-group differentiation, collective intolerance, ethnocentrism and intergroup violence - all these phenomena appear to show similarities and overlap to such a degree that in these paragraphs they will be considered together as one complex and composite syndrome.

Two forms of the ethnocentric syndrome must probably be distinguished: (1) A belligerent, megalomaniac, superiority-delusional form (Chosen People complex), and (2) a relatively peaceful, self-conceited, isolationist form (e.g., the true Hellenes in relation to the 'Barbaroi'; the Han Chinese vis-à-vis the peripheral 'yêmán' peoples).

Hardin (1972) introduced the related concept of tribalism: "Any group of people that perceives itself as a distinct group, and which is so perceived by the outside world, may be called a tribe. The group might be a race, as ordinarily defined, but it need not be; it can just as well be a religious sect, a political group, or an occupational group. The essential characteristic of a tribe is that it should follow a double standard of morality - one kind of behavior for in-group relations, another for out-group".

It is one of the unfortunate and inescapable characteristics of tribalism that it eventually evokes counter-tribalism, it 'polarizes' society (E.O. Wilson, 1975).

There are two prevailing views of the fundamental nature of ethnicity. One emphasizes the ascriptive, or primordial, nature of ethnic group membership and the importance of kinship, early socialization, and strong emotional ties. The other insists that ethnicity is situationally defined, that ethnic group boundaries are malleable and permeable, and that ethnicity may be acquired or divested at will (Richmond, 1987). This has been called the instrumentalist position. Van den Berghe (1981) has attempted to show that the primordialist-instrumentalist controversy is based on a simple-minded antinomy, and that the two views complement rather than contradict each other.

### 6.3 Ethnocentrism: Brief History of the Concept

'Ethnocentrism' is a major theme in both biological and cultural theories of the causes of primitive war. Furthermore, it is a relatively old one. Though the term 'ethnocentrism' was to be coined a few decades later, the concept was by no means unknown among 19th century anthropologists such as Tylor (1871):

> The slaying of a man is scarcely held by the law of any people to be
of itself a crime, but on the contrary it has been regarded as an allowable or praiseworthy act under certain conditions, especially in self-defence, war, revenge, punishment and sacrifice. Yet, no known tribe, however low and ferocious, has ever held that men may kill another indiscriminately, for even the savage society of the desert or the jungle would collapse under such lawlessness. Thus all men acknowledge some law of "thou shalt not kill", but the question is how this law applies... The old state of things is well illustrated in the Latin word hostis, which, meaning originally stranger, passed quite naturally into the sense of enemy. Not only is slaying an enemy in open war looked on as righteous, but ancient law operates on the doctrine that slaying one's own tribesman and slaying a foreigner are crimes of quite different order, while killing a slave is but a destruction of property (Tylor, 1871).

Thus Tylor viewed ethnocentrism (as well as the obligations of the blood feud) as making sense within a framework of primitive concepts of law and justice. Also Darwin (1871) had noticed that early humans and contemporary primitive peoples as a rule confined their sympathy to the own tribe and generally did not regard violence against other tribes as a crime. He clearly saw the correlation between intergroup competition and intragroup cooperation, which is the core of the ethnocentrism syndrome, in human evolution.

In his Cours de la philosophie positive (1830-42) Comte dismissed the notion of a peaceful golden age at the dawn of history. On the contrary, perennial and savage warfare forced, according to his rather gloomy view, social solidarity as a defense against enemy groups. Also Spencer (1850) thought that war had fostered 'social cohesion' in 'conquering races'. Bagehot (1872), whose Physics and Politics heavily influenced Darwin's thinking on hominid/human evolution (Crook, 1994), had observed that the most obedient, the 'tamest' and the most compact (meaning approximately the same as Spencer's 'social cohesion') tribes had been the strongest in the early stages of human evolution: "The compact tribes win, and the compact tribes are the tamest. Civilisation begins, because the beginning of civilisation is a military advantage". In his Der Rassenkampf, Gumplowicz (1883) claimed to have found the genesis of society in the primal conflicts of primitive hordes bonded together by intense feelings of kinship and instinctive pugnacity against rival hordes and aliens.

In 1892-1893, after half a century of work, Spencer completed his vast system of philosophy with two volumes on The Principles of Ethics. In his studies of evolution he had hoped to find a code which placed human conduct on a scientific footing. Instead, he discovered that evolution, as seen to work in human communities, spoke with two voices, each enunciating a separate code.
He called the one the ‘Code of Amity’, and the other the ‘Code of Enmity’:

Rude tribes and... civilized societies... have had continually to carry on an external self-defence and internal co-operation - external antagonism and internal friendship. Hence their members have acquired two different sets of sentiments and ideas, adjusted to these two kinds of activity... A life of constant external enmity generates a code in which aggression, conquest and revenge, are inculcated, while peaceful occupations are reprobated. Conversely a life of settled internal amity generates a code inculcating the virtues conducing to a harmonious co-operation: justice, honesty, veracity, regard for each other’s claims (Spencer, 1892).

Sumner (1906; 1911), who coined the term ‘ethnocentrism’ for this dual code of conduct (See also Kulischer, 1885), heavily implicated ethnocentrism, and its collateral xenophobia, in the evolution of warfare. In his *Folkways*, Sumner (1906), echoing Spencer and Bagehot, writes: "The exigencies of war with outsiders are what make peace inside, lest internal discord should weaken the in-group for war. The exigencies also make government and law in the in-group, in order to prevent quarrels and enforce discipline. Thus war and peace have reacted on each other, and developed each other, one within the group, the other in the inter-group relations. The closer the neighbors, the stronger they are, the intenser the warfare, and then the intenser is the internal organization and discipline of each".

Subsequently, Sumner (1911) elaborated his concept of ethnocentrism as follows:

Each group must regard every other as a possible enemy on account of the antagonism of interests, and so it views every other group with suspicion and distrust, although actual hostilities occur only on specific occasions. Every member of another group is a stranger; he may be admitted as a guest, in which case rights and security are granted him, but, if not so admitted, he is an enemy. We can now see why the sentiments of peace and cooperation inside are complementary to sentiments of hostility outside. It is because any group, in order to be strong against an outside enemy, must be well disciplined, harmonious, and peaceful inside; in other words, because discord inside would cause defeat in battle with another group. Therefore the same conditions which made men warlike against outsiders made them yield to the control of chiefs, submit to discipline, obey law, cultivate peace, and create institutions inside. The notion of rights grows up in the ingroup from the usages established there securing peace. There was a double education, at the same time, out of the same facts and relations. It is no paradox at all to say
that peace makes war and that war makes peace. There are two codes of morals and two sets of mores, one for comrades inside and the other for strangers outside, and they arise from the same interests. Against outsiders it was meritorious to kill, plunder, practice blood revenge, and to steal women and slaves, but inside none of these things could be allowed because they would produce discord and weakness. Hence, in the ingroup, law (under the forms of custom and taboo) and institutions had to take the place of force. Every group was a peace group inside, and the peace was sanctioned by the ghosts of the ancestors who had handed down the customs and taboos. Against outsiders religion sanctioned and encouraged war, for the ghosts of the ancestors, or the gods, would rejoice to see their posterity and worshippers once more defeat, slay, plunder, and enslave the ancient enemy...

The sentiment of cohesion, internal comradeship, and devotion to the ingroup, which carries with it a sense of superiority to any outgroup and readiness to defend the interest of the ingroup against the outgroup is technically known as ethnocentrism. It is really the sentiment of patriotism in all its philosophic fullness, that is, both in its rationality and in its extravagant exaggeration... Perhaps ninetenths of all the names given by savage tribes to themselves mean 'men', 'the only men', or 'men of men'; that is, 'We are men, the rest are something else'... Religion has always intensified ethnocentrism; the adherents of a religion always think themselves the chosen people, or else they think that their god is superior to all others, which amounts to the same thing (Sumner, 1911).

In his *Folkways*, Sumner (1906) had already emphasized this superiority-delusional aspect of ethnocentrism, which he regarded as universal, in describing it as "this view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it... Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt on outsiders. Each group thinks its own folkways the only right ones, and if it observes that other groups have other folkways, these excite its scorn".

Though Sumner's thesis, as Shaw & Wong (1989) observed, imposed a rather reductionistic and mechanistic interpretation on the relationship between ethnocentrism and war proneness⁴, it has been widely adopted (e.g., Murdock [1949]: "[I]ntergroup antagonism is the inevitable concomitant and counterpart

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⁴ It should be noted that the causal arrow in most explanations is from ethnocentrism to intergroup interactions of a more or less antagonistic nature. This cause-effect relationship is not sacrosanct of course. Silverman (1987) has argued that ethnocentrism may be a consequence rather than a cause of intergroup strife. I think some kind of circular causality is most adequate.
of in-group solidarity"), supported by a substantial body of evidence (vide infra), and widely debated since its inception\(^2\).

The herd psychologists and instinctivists of the fin de siècle period also acquitted themselves well in the evolution and ethnocentrism debate. McDougall (1908) developed Darwin's theme that social solidarity and altruism arose from the need to organize for war. As group combat superseded individual fighting in early human history, he contended, success came to depend more and more upon the capacity of individuals for "united action, good comradeship, personal trustworthiness", and especially the ability "to subordinate their impulsive tendencies and egotistic promptings to the end of the group".

According to Patrick (1915), 'man the fighting animal' had evolved out of conditions of incessant conflict between races, with the continuous extermination of the unfit. Survival in this perpetual struggle had been the product of order and mutual aid within groups, but with fear, hatred, and the rule of might prevailing between groups. Read (1920) contended that hominids and early humans formed hunting packs that were predisposed to be aggressive toward all outsiders. "Wars strengthened the internal sympathies and loyalties of the pack or tribe and its external antipathies, and extended the range and influence of the more virile and capable tribes".

Far from being the uncritical devotee of the 'Noble Savage' myth as he is often represented, Kropotkin (1902) argued that the life of 'savages' was split between two sets of actions and ethics, that applying within the group, and that applying to outsiders: "Therefore, when it comes to a war the most revolting cruelties may be considered as so many claims upon the admiration of the tribe. This double conception of morality passes through the whole evolution of mankind, and maintains itself until now" (quoted in Crook, 1994).

The next author, after Sumner, to elaborate the theme of ethnocentrism in relation to primitive warfare was Davie (1929), who sketches a truly Hobbesian

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picture of the 'savage' world, pointing out that the relation of primitive groups to one another, where agreements or special conditions have not modified it, is one of isolation, suspicion, hostility and war; a status hostilis, if not a regular status belli. Yet within the tribe the common interest against every other tribe compels its members to unite for self-preservation. "Thus a distinction arises between one's own tribe - the 'in-group' - and other tribes - the 'out-group'; and between the members of the first peace and cooperation are essential, whereas their inbred sentiment toward all outsiders is one of hatred and hostility. These two relations are correlative".

Thus Davie did not add much to Sumner's arguments in terms of theoretical sophistication. He did, however, summarize the then available ethnological evidence from Africa (Steere, 1872; Dundas, 1913; Macdonald, 1893; Tate, 1904; Torday & Joyce, 1906; Weeks, 1909-10; Stannus, 1910; Tremearne, 1912), Australia (Curr, 1886; Basedow, 1913; Radcliffe-Brown, 1913), North America (Cremony, 1868; McGee, 1898; Nelson, 1899), South America (Im Thurn, 1883; Markham, 1895), New Guinea (Lawes, 1879; Krieger, 1899), Borneo (Bock, 1881), Celebes (Letourneau, 1881), Melanesia (White, 1884), Bismarck Archipelago (von Pfeil, 1898), and the Naga Hills of India (Godwin-Austen, 1872). In the accounts of contemporary anthropologists, the theme or Leitmotif of ethnocentrism, whether implicit or explicit, is clearly recognizable (e.g., Rappaport, 1968; Koch, 1974; Huber, 1975; Chagnon, 1977; Herdt, 1981; Paula Brown, 1982; Knauft, 1983; among many others).

Such a state of affairs has resulted in the isolation of many primitive peoples, their ignorance of one another, and the great variation in their mores (Davie, 1929), and languages (Bigelow, 1972). There are, for example, more than 700 mutually unintelligible languages in New Guinea today, and American Indians spoke several thousand different languages a few centuries ago. As Bigelow (1972) suggests: "When they cannot understand one another beyond the level of smiles and grunts and blatant gestures, people rarely achieve deep cultural bonds and common loyalties. It is therefore most unlikely that a sense of belonging and of mutual concern could have been extended through the whole of mankind during prehistoric times or that it could have persisted for several million years. The evolution of linguistic capacities, therefore, would have served to reinforce territorial and other segregating forces during prehistoric times. And greater linguistic abilities would have simultaneously increased the social cohesion within each separate group. Conceptual and emotional differences between 'us' and 'them' would have been accentuated".

Tiger & Fox (1971) similarly hypothesized that the evolution of linguistic capacities would have served to reinforce segregating forces during prehistoric times, while simultaneously increasing social cohesion within each separate group.
6.4 Ethnocentrism and Nationalism

Ethnocentrism is not a monopoly of primitive peoples. It is also a common theme, in the guise of nationalism, in the history of civilization (See e.g., Boehm, 1935; Rosenblatt, 1964; Snyder, 1964; Fuller, 1972; Le Nationalisme, 1972; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Russell, 1975; van der Dennen, 1979; Gellner, 1983; Loewenberg, 1985; Volkan, Julius & Montville, 1990; Pfaff, 1993; A.Flohr, 1994; Ignatieff, 1994; A.D. Smith, 1994). Nationalism and ethnocentrism are similar in the sense that usually they both involve positive attitudes toward an in-group and negative attitudes toward some or all out-groups. They do not overlap completely, however. Nationalism, more often than ethnocentrism, involves loyalty to a politically distinct entity, membership in an elaborately organized and relatively populous social grouping, adherence to a formalized ideology, and performance of relatively stereotyped allegiance-expressing behavior (Rosenblatt, 1964).

Bauer (1907) defined a nation as a community shaped by shared experiences. The nation is a Schicksalgemeinschaft - a community of fate (see also Loewenberg, 1985). This is, psychologically, a much more sensible conception of the nation than the formal definitions of the political scientists.

The cognitive approach to nationalism, as exemplified by Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm (1972, 1990), regards it as a historical phenomenon concomitant with the rise and decline of the nation-state. Thus Hobsbawm (1972) argued that nationalism is a historical phenomenon, the product of the fairly recent past, and unlikely to persist indefinitely. Nationalism, he predicts, "will decline with the decline of the nation-state" (Hobsbawm, 1990). This approach would deny any primordial, individual human propensity to one form of ethnocentrism or another. The rational choice, marginal utility, and transactional theories of ethnic and nationalist identification do not, however, take into consideration the often irrational, passionate animosities, equally passionate loyalties, strong affective attachments to sacred symbols and myths, threat perceptions, and other emotional aspects involved. All too often in

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3 The literature on nationalism is an enormous ocean in which one soon drowns. I do not pretend, therefore, to even try to be complete with these references. Many authors on nationalism (being historians and sociologists mordicus against selection thinking) would probably deny that nationalism has anything to do with ethnocentrism. More realistic is the following quotation from Tullberg & Tullberg (1997): "Some scholars date the emergence of nationalism some 600 years ago, but most see it as a post-French Revolution phenomenon (e.g., Connor, 1994). However, why did something as strong and profound as nationalism emerge so late? If it is so primitive, how can the trigger mechanisms be so loosely connected to recognition markers? These questions resolve themselves if nationalism is not regarded as such a new and separate phenomenon (as most political scientists seem to regard it). Instead, it can be seen as a variant of ethnocentrism, somewhat different from more regional affiliations that may now be less appropriate vehicles for group egoism."
human affairs passion overrides reason, and ethnoprophias turn into hatred, hostility, and violence (Loewenberg, 1994; Richmond, 1987). As Falger (1991, 1994) reasoned, the view of nationalism as a recent historical phenomenon is valid only for those who are insensitive to its underlying ultimate dimension. The association of nationalism with the nation-state is indeed relatively recent, but it is only one phenotypic expression of the deep in-group/out-group structure inherited from human prehistory. See also A.D. Smith (1971 et seq.), Lynn (1976), Barash & Lipton (1985) and Pfaff (1993).

In the view of LeVine & Campbell (1972), nationalism represents an advance over earlier forms of ethnocentrism in the sense that it obtains the more intense and broad responsiveness of a large population to the state leadership.

In a recent perceptive contribution to the problem of (ethnic) nationalism (Ignatieff, 1994), he notes that nationalism is everywhere characterized by a deeply insincere and unauthentic rhetoric functioning as an excuse for excesses and atrocities. Everywhere historical truth is the 'first casualty'.

Wilson & Daly (1985) and Daly & Wilson (1987) noted the preponderance of young males in all kinds of criminal violence. They called it the "Young Male Syndrome". Ignatieff noticed that most nationalist violence, too, is committed by a small minority of young males (some of whom may be psychopathic; most, however, are perfectly sane). Apparently not everyone abhors or fears violence. Presumably, it is deeply pleasurable and satisfactory for young armed males to have the power of life and death over other people; to fanatically assert themselves at the cost of others and to escape from insignificance; to rebel against and disrupt the deeply resented order of the state; to massively rape; to psychologically and morally and phylogenetically regress (see Bailey, 1987, for the theory of phylogenetic regression).

Wrangham & Peterson (1996) note that the underlying psychology is no different for urban gangs, motorcycle gangs, criminal organizations, American football teams, pre-state warrior societies, and contemporary armies: "Demonic males gather in small, self-perpetuating, self-aggrandizing bands. They sight or invent an enemy 'over there' - across the ridge, on the other side of the boundary, on the other side of a linguistic or social or political or ethnic or racial divide. The nature of the divide hardly seems to matter. What matters is the opportunity to engage in the vast and compelling drama of belonging to the gang, identifying the enemy, going on the patrol, participating in the attack"

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4 Phylogenetic regression may be viewed as a form of hierarchic disintegration where neocortically mediated sociocultural functions give way to lower, more urgent and powerful functions in the paleomammalian and reptilian brain structures. MacLean's (1973 et seq.) theory of the triune brain hierarchy implies momentary phylogenetic regressions and progressions as the focus of brain activity fluctuates between lower and higher functions in ongoing behavior. As Bailey sees it, the brain works as a dynamic cerebral system of regression-progression processes and MacLean's three-brains-in-one gives meaning to the sheer complexity of it all. Phylogenetic regression is premised on the idea (1) that considerable phylogenetic continuity exists for many human morphological and behavioral traits, and (2) that regression is inherently pleasurable.
The special blend of militant nationalism, pugnacious patriotism, and expansionist imperialism is called jingoism. In his *The Psychology of Jingoism*, Hobson (1901) attributed it to man's 'ancient savage nature' lurking somewhere in 'sub-conscious depths', under the superstructure or thin veneer of civilization. He spoke of the "animal hate, vindictiveness, and bloodthirstiness" that lurked in the mildest-mannered patriot. Also Inge (1915) traced the 'perverted patriotism' that according to him caused war to "the inborn pugnacity of the bête humaine". These are by now familiar variants of Plato's 'Beast Within'.

Marshall (1898), also writing in the *fin de siècle* instinct psychology tradition, included among his 'tribal instincts of a higher type', the patriotic instinct, which was aroused by aggressive threats from neighboring nations, or by opportunity for tribal aggrandizement. He explained the self-sacrificial behavior of warriors in terms of biological sacrifice, a form of extreme altruism that paid off in 'tribal advantage' (Crook, 1994), anticipating kin selection theory by more than half a century.

Sir Arthur Keith (1919) discovered 'somehow' (as Shafer [1972] condescendingly put it) that the feeling of nationality arose out of the 'tribal instinct', fostered on 'nature's cradles' among early men. Nature had, he divined, separated "mankind into herds and tribes and kept them isolated and pure for an endless period... by real and most effective barriers in the human heart" (Keith, 1919, p.33).

'Nationalism', according to A.D. Smith (1994), signifies both an ideological doctrine and a wider symbolic universe and fund of sentiments. The ideology holds that the world consists of separate, identifiable nations, each with its peculiar character; that the nation is the sole legitimate source of political power; that every individual must belong and owe supreme loyalty to one and only one nation; and that nations must be autonomous, preferably in states of their own, for only then can global freedom and peace be assured. To this 'core doctrine', nationalists add their own secondary elaborations, themes and motifs that express the peculiar history and character of each nation, be they German Romantic notions of linguistic purity, or Russian theories of a national-religious mission in Pan-Slavism, or African ideas of Negritude (see Kedourie, 1960; A.D. Smith, 1973, 1983).

But there is also a wider 'culture of nationalism' which underpins the political doctrine and its variations: First, the recurrent central motifs or ideals of autonomy, unity and identity; and second, the panoply of symbols and rituals associated with the drama of the nation. The key motifs continually reappear in the writings and actions of nationalists everywhere, though in varying degrees, The nation, we are told, must have its own character, it must be distinctive, we must 'think our own thoughts' as Herder put it, be 'authentic’ and ‘individual’ in
a national sense. The nation must, for that reason, be 'free', in the special sense of being autonomous, of operating according to the 'inward laws' of an abstract community, without any external constraint. These 'inward laws' or 'rhythms' express the seamless unity of a community of citizens who share a common pattern of values and beliefs and are animated by a single will. Fraternity, the familial equality and integration of the nation's members, is as much a social ideal as a territorial and legal expression; as in David's great painting of the single, dynamic compact of the three brothers in The Oath of the Horatii, the union of citizens in a political community is founded upon a myth of fictive descent and heroic destiny (Berlin, 1976; Barnard, 1965; Rosenblum, 1967). From these key motifs spring the whole gamut of symbols that express the culture and evoke the salvation drama of the nation. In the nation's flags and anthems, its memorials and monuments, its parades and ceremonies, its coins and insignia, its capitals and assemblies, its arts and crafts, and its music and dance are distilled the pride and hope of a 'community of history and destiny' which seeks to shape events and mould itself in the image of its ideals. To this end, the modern nation of fraternal citizens must always return to the idealizations of its past, to its myths of ethnic origin, descent and development, and above all, to the 'golden ages' that guide its path and endow it with a confidence to face the unknown, and to the heroes whose virtues inspire public emulation and exalted faith. For as Durkheim (1915) reminded us: "There can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which make its unity and its personality" (quoted in A.D. Smith, 1994).
6.5 The Adaptive Significance of Xenophobia

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

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

Also Barash & Lipton (1985) postulated an adaptive significance of (mildly) paranoid thinking. In situations of strong intergroup competition, they explain, the payoff for vigilance, suspiciousness, and aggression could be substantial. He who takes responsibility for the consequences of his aggression, and feels guilty or remorseful, would be far less successful than his colleague who murders without a second thought. In a fiercely competitive situation, both natural and cultural selection operate in favor of the individual who competes without internal conflict and self-doubt (In addition, the paranoid feels no internal conflict whatsoever, and might therefore be more successful as a leader, provided, of course, that his delusions are not especially flagrant.) Another reason for paranoid thinking is that self-deception can be adaptive when it gratifies self-esteem, and transfers responsibility for behavior from oneself to others. Accordingly, biological evolution can account for the development of mental mechanisms such as projection and denial, which prevent cognitive dissonance, even at the cost of self-deception.

All too often nationalism and patriotism become intolerant chauvinism and militaristic jingoism. Barash & Lipton’s thesis is that because of our biological ancestry, given certain historical and cultural factors - notably conditions of stress or trauma - the policies and practices of nations may come to be dominated by paranoid attitudes, which in turn result in self-perpetuating cycles of aggression, hostility, and war (Cf. Mead, 1968).

Similarly, Shaw & Wong (1989) contend, mechanisms which prompted
appropriate behavior on the first encounter with potentially dangerous predators/strangers would be favored through selection over alternate mechanisms where behavior required experience with strangers. Indeed, the costs of not suspecting strangers, and being wrong, would have been so high that natural selection would not likely have left defensive behaviors to an open-minded experimental strategy alone. Flohr (1987) makes a similar point with respect to nonhuman animals. Cognitive appraisals of threats would not have been limited to imminent danger but to any special circumstances that might have upset the status quo. As Thomson (1979) and Fromm (1973) point out, objects of our fear and anxiety need not be causal antecedent conditions. Rather, they can be anticipated events which might or might not happen.

"Thus, the evolution of weapons which could be thrown, combined with selection for increased intelligence in human predation, might well have produced ‘free-floating’ anxiety states or paranoia toward any potential predators, including other nucleus ethnic groups, clans, tribes, and so on. A genetically coded aversion toward strangers would have enabled individuals to avoid attack more readily or immediately than would learning alone, and by avoiding injury and death, survival would be enhanced, leaving more offspring from these individuals. Over time, those with the genetically coded aversion toward strangers would come to prevail in the population" (Shaw & Wong, 1989).

In their fictional reconstruction of the social world of Homo erectus, Lumsden & Wilson (1983) imply that warfare (in the broadest sense) already existed at this stage of human evolution. "Some of the men will organize long-distance marches to hunt big game. Their parties will move with growing circumspection as they approach a distant stream that runs to the sea. There lie the territorial boundaries of strangers. During vicious raids those aliens have killed members of the band, and a few have fallen in turn. Although they look the same (and are in fact Homo erectus), these creature seem wicked and not truly human. They are almost as little known as the unseen forces patrolling the night. If they could be destroyed or driven away, the entire band would experience indescribable relief and joy".

The element of ethnocentric/xenophobic fear is clearly discernible here. Indeed, as Lumsden & Wilson observe: "Better to have a generalized fear of the dark and to shrink thrilled and apprehensive from the unknown than to take time to learn and deal with each menace in turn".

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

The general principle here is that if one knows that at least some members of a group are deceivers, but does not know exactly which ones, the best policy it to assume that all are deceivers if this policy has no negative consequences. Such a strategy also makes good evolutionary sense for the explanation of the overperception of threat. An organism contemplating *sine ira et studio* every new situation arising in its immediate environment probably would not survive its first encounter with a predator. To be overcautious, overperceptive of threat or oversensitive to even minor signs of danger carries with it high costs in terms of vigilance (time/energy budget), sheltering, hiding, fleeing, etc., but these costs are insignificant compared to the costs of making the error of being not cautious enough. Such an error is fatal and final. An evolutionary strategy of being overcautious - jumping to conclusions given the slightest indication of danger - thus pays off in terms of survival and reproductive success, and may therefore be expected to be selected for (On the other hand, it may be argued that humans evolved as Tit-for-Tat strategists; i.e., cooperate on the first move, and subsequently reciprocate in kind).

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

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

Xenophobia is a widespread trait throughout the animal kingdom, according to Southwick et al. (1974), but it is by no means universal. It has been shown experimentally in various species of social insects, especially bees and ants (Chauvin, 1968; Wallis, 1970; E.O. Wilson, 1971; 1975), but it evidently does not occur among other aggregational insects. Among vertebrates, xenophobic aggression has been demonstrated experimentally in a great number of species, especially those with prominent territorial and/or relatively closed social
groups, which are organized on a hierarchical basis (Lorenz, 1931; Alverdes, 1935; Carpenter, 1942; Collias, 1944; Holloway, 1974; Southwick et al., 1974; E.O. Wilson, 1971, 1975; See van der Dennen, 1987 for a review). The introduction of unfamiliar conspecifics to such groups (e.g., rodents, many monkey species) may release massive attacks and even killing from the resident animals. As we have seen (Ch. 3), primate social units appear, in general, to be intolerant to close proximity of extra-group conspecifics. Moreover, Goodall (e.g., 1986) documented discrimination of, and even attack on, a group member deformed and paralyzed by poliomyelitis (who was probably perceived as a fear-inspiring stranger due to his ‘odd’ behavior).

On the other hand, xenophobic behavior has not been observed, nor would it be expected to occur, in most typical encounters of vertebrates with relatively open societies.

It is important to point out, according to Southwick et al. (1974), that xenophobic aggression is not the same as territorial aggression or aggression related to dominance hierarchies. In both territorial and hierarchical behavior, aggression is often directed toward socially familiar animals. The territorial animal may interact aggressively most often with his nearest neighbor, and the socially-ranked animal may interact most often with his nearest-ranked peer. The essence of xenophobia is an aggressive response toward a complete social stranger. This may occur, of course, in either territorial or socially ranked animals, so there is considerable overlap in these behaviors, but there are also significant differences. Territorialism and hierarchical behavior are very often maintained by display, whereas xenophobic aggression frequently involves lethal violence.

When it occurs in natural settings, xenophobia is a functional and adaptive trait in that it maintains the integrity of the social group. It ensures that group members will be socially familiar. It limits the flow of individuals between groups, and can therefore affect patterns of both social and genetic evolution. Xenophobia has apparently evolved in those species and populations where discrete, bounded social groups are adaptively favored (Southwick et al., 1974).

Also Hebb & Thompson (1968) cite the evidence in favor of the mammal’s xenophobia; the fear of and hostility towards strangers, even when no injury has ever been received from a stranger. The enmity aroused by conspecifics which are different (in anatomy, in coloration, in behavior, in language use) or by strangers, may easily lead toward discrimination, ostracism and cruelty in animals as well as man. Children too will attack another child who is perceived as being an outsider (McNeil, 1965). In observing young children in her own nursery school during the 1920s and 30s Susan Isaacs (1933) found extreme hostility toward newcomers. Adults, as well as children, often ‘test out’ newcomers or strangers by violent behavior (Gerson, 1968). Aggressive behavior may also serve the newcomer as a means of winning his way into the
group (Bridges, 1931; Jersild, 1947). Markl (1976) deduced the following general rule from observations such as these: Species with highly cooperative social behavior within the group are particularly apt to be very aggressive towards conspecifics that are not members of their group.

Dubos (1973) has suggested that mistrust and fear of the foreigner or the stranger may have biological origins. A similar but even broader idea is suggested by Bolles (1970): "What keeps animals alive in the world is that they have very effective innate defensive reactions which occur when they encounter any kind of new or sudden stimulus. These defensive reactions vary somewhat from species to species, but they generally take one of three forms: animals generally run or fly away, freeze (thanatosis, catatonia), or adopt some type of threat... The animal which survives is the one which comes into the environment with defensive reactions already a prominent part of its repertoire" (Cf. Archer, 1976).

McGuire (1969) discussed the possible genetic transmission of xenophobia: "[I]t appears possible for specific attitudes of hostility to be transmitted genetically in such a way that hostility is directed toward strangers of one’s own species to a greater extent than toward familiar of one’s own species or toward members of other species. It would not be impossible for xenophobia to be a partially innate attitude in the human". Vine (1987) argued for a genetically primed, generalized, weakly xenophobic and suspicious tendency as a defense against being deceived. This is a mild version of the paranoia thesis. Holloway (1974) would submit that at least for adult humans, xenophobic responses are normative unless there has been strong cultural training and conditioning against it. Clannishness, or strong intragroup affiliation coupled with distantiation of other ethnic, religious, racial, or political groups, is an enforcing mechanism for continued xenophobias. The demagogue knows this fact only too well.

Trivers (1971) speculated that ‘moralistic aggression’ - an urge to attack someone who is acting unjustly or unfairly - evolved in humans as indispensable protection against excessive failure to reciprocate altruistic acts. ‘Moralistic aggression’ seems to be readily mobilized against individuals believed to be deviating from basic group norms and symbolic allegiances; that is, it can help enforce collective intolerance.

Hebb (1946) and Hebb & Thompson (1968) argued that fear or dislike of the stranger is not innate, since it depends on certain prior experiences, yet it still does not have to be taught. "If, therefore, man is not born with a dislike for those who differ from him in habits or appearance, he can still pick up the dislike with no help or encouragement" (Hebb & Thompson, 1968). Also Hamilton (1975) and Alexander (1979) argue that social interactions of
an individual with his close relatives can provide all of the experiential background necessary to produce xenophobia. We tend to react negatively to countenances which are uncommunicative, and which convey contradictory or paradoxical messages.

"If, for whatever reason, the countenance of a stranger is noncommunicative - or confusing in its messages - the response of an individual to it, which would be termed xenophobia, could very well be entirely a consequence of previous learning experiences involving countenances familiar to the reacting individual" (Alexander, 1979). It is possible that morphological differences alone can make different countenances more or less communicative, so that differences between individuals belonging to different populations could lead to xenophobic reactions solely on the basis of conditioning that occurred within each population.

It is not clear whether the transient phenomenon of the fear of strangers in infants - which predictably develops between 6 and 9 months of age - has any impact on adult xenophobia (See Allport, 1954; Freedman, 1961 et seq.; Bowlby, 1969, 1973; Ainsworth, 1973; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1973, 1979, 1982, 1984; Morgan & Ricciuti, 1973; Gouin Décarie, 1974; Argyle & Cook, 1976; Sroufe, 1977; R.A. Russell, 1979; P.K. Smith, 1979; Feinman, 1980; Firrari, 1981; Markl, 1982; R.Flohr, 1987; Konner, 1990; Maxwell, 1990; A.Flohr, 1994). This infantile fear of strangers is also reported in other social species (e.g., canids), and its development does not depend upon aversive experience with strangers. Furthermore, it also develops in congenitally deaf and blind children (e.g., Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1982).

Although the expression of these predispositions varies, Emmert (1984) and Shaw & Wong (1989) conclude, it seems that initial distrust of social strangers is universal among humans and nonhuman primates. Also R.Flohr (1987) concludes that xenophobia seems to be universal, i.e., it seems to occur in all cultures. This is no proof, he states, but strong evidence in favor of a biological basis of xenophobia (Cf. Dickstein, 1979; Gerard, 1979; Neumann, 1979; Markl, 1982; A.Flohr, 1994). The biological basis concerns, of course, the tendency towards xenophobic prejudices, not their specific content.

Peck (1990) has shown through formal models that mechanisms of outsider exclusion can be favored by evolution, thereby enhancing altruism within the group (Warnecke, Masters & Kempter, 1992).
6.5.1 The Function of Enemies and the Need to Have Enemies

Studies of conflict in settings ranging from small-scale primitive societies to international disputes suggest a fundamental need to have enemies. For the psychological functions of the enemy and Feindbilder see: Meerloo, 1940 et seq.; Newcomb, 1947; Gladstone, 1959; Finlay, Holsti & Fagen, 1967; Horn, 1970 et seq.; Senghaas, 1972; Fornari, 1974; Stein, 1976; Mitchell, 1980; Wecke & de la Haye, 1980; Hartmann, 1982; Volkan, 1985, 1988; Herdt, 1986; Ross, 1986; Barnes et al., 1987; Volkan et al., 1990.

Having an enemy provides many pragmatic advantages. It provides a clear Manichaean structuring of the world; it simplifies the social cosmology. It provides an affirmation of one's own moral superiority, and, by implication, the moral inferiority - even to the point of dehumanization and/or diabolization - of the enemy. Moreover, it provides the opportunities for gratification of the satisfactions inherent in all kinds of ego-defense mechanisms, especially those of projection and scapegoating. "And there is the red-blooded satisfaction of being able to hate and to prepare to kill and destroy without feeling qualms of conscience" (Gladstone, 1959).

Furthermore, when 'the enemy' is a member of the out-group in a social conflict, one of the major pay-offs is the increased sense of purpose and personal identity that participation with others (the in-group) in a conflict can bring. Often, the act of transforming a category of individuals into a collectivity, and then an organization consciously sharing goals, policy and purposeful behaviors, brings a tremendous increase in positive self-evaluation, and sense of belonging to a worthwhile cause and solidarity with a worthy grouping (a very rewarding sensation).

In the case of the 'lunatic fringe' members of such 'hate-monger' groups as e.g., the Ku Klux Klan, a grandiose pseudo-personality is provided for those who would otherwise be insignificant social 'non-entities' or peripheral psychotics. Apart from increasing an individual's sense of identity with a larger social entity, engaging in a conflict can also result in the release of a considerable amount of personal tension, fear and frustration in a legitimate manner.

Categories and concepts, generalizations and unifications, enable us to create order out of chaos. At the same time, however, these are necessarily simplifications of reality, and may easily lead to stereotypes and prejudices. One of the latter is the enemy image, which may be partly based on real experience, but virtually always has an aspect of prejudice. Enemy images have several functions in relation to individual and collective processes. Wecke & de la Haye (1980; see also: Finlay, Holsti & Fagen, 1967) distinguish the following functions:

Order and stability: The determination and clear demarcation of friend and foe is a necessary precondition of interstate (intertribal, intergroup) and intrastate
(intratribal, intragroup) order and stability. It is not necessary for the enemy to be real; he may be totally imaginary.

**Projection:** Direct and complementary projection, and the 'mote-beam mechanism' (Allport, 1958) increase the group’s self-esteem, while at the same time attributing to the enemy evil intentions creates a redirection potential for hostility and aggressiveness. Because the enemy is by definition the perfect 'outsider', all violence directed at the enemy is positively sanctioned.

**Solidarity:** Internal or external scapegoats can be effective means to increase internal solidarity. Perception of a dangerous, threatening enemy produces fear in the population, which can be exploited and manipulated in many ways.

**Justification:** The enemy must be criminal, inhuman and immoral, if our own threat and destruction potential is to be human and moral. Enemy image thinking has its own (psycho)logic: If we are good, the enemy must be evil; if we are moral creatures, the enemy must be immoral; if we are virtuous, the enemy must be lascivious and vile; if we are human, the enemy must be less than human (See e.g. Osgood, 1960; Rokeach, 1960; Harary, 1961; Jaspers et al., 1965).

Enemy images are not easily susceptible to change, among other things because they lead to the institutionalization of selective perception. Only that, whatever, confirms the threat and the evil intentions of the enemy is perceived. Contradictory information does not pass this perceptual filter.

### 6.6 Theories of Ethnocentrism

Several theories have been proposed to explain the phenomenon of ethnocentrism. LeVine & Campbell (1972), whose work on the subject is a classic, listed the following: Realistic group conflict theory; evolutionary theories; reference group theory; sociopsychological theories (including a.o. group narcissism theory, projection theory, protest masculinity theory, and frustration-aggression-displacement theory which has been discussed more fully in Ch. 5); cognitive congruity theories; transfer theory; and reinforcement theory. The most relevant of these theories will be briefly discussed.
6.6.1 Realistic Group Conflict Theory

This theory assumes that group conflicts are rational in the sense that groups do have incompatible goals and are in competition for scarce resources (Sumner, 1906; Davie, 1929; White, 1949; 1959; Sherif et al., 1953; 1961; Coser, 1956; Bernard, 1957; Newcomb, 1960; and Boulding, 1962; among others). Such 'realistic' sources of group conflict are contrasted with the psychological theories that consider intergroup conflicts as displacements or projective expressions of problems that are essentially intragroup or intraindividual in origin.

"Real threat causes in-group solidarity" is the most recurrent explicit proposition of the theory. A parallel mechanism is the rejection of deviants and vengeance against renegades, apostates, revisionists, and heretics as a solidarity-promoting mechanism. Leaders may also seek out an enemy or create a fictitious one just to preserve or achieve in-group solidarity. This is certainly one of the most ubiquitous observations in the literature.

Evolutionary theories of ethnocentrism - which will be presented in more detail later on - comprise a subset of realistic-group-conflict theory.

6.6.2 Sociopsychological Theories

6.6.2.1 Group Narcissism

In *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), Freud regarded ethnocentrism as a form of narcissism at the group level. Later, in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), he stated explicitly that the social function of group narcissism lay in its facilitating the displacement of aggression from in-group to out-group: "It is clearly not easy for men to give up the satisfaction of this inclination to aggression. They do not feel comfortable without it. The advantage which a comparatively small cultural group offers of allowing this instinct an outlet in the form of hostility against intruders is not to be despised. It is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness".

Ethnocentrism may also be interpreted as redirected expression of individual narcissism, providing individual group members with narcissistic gratification (e.g., MacCrone, 1937; Alexander, 1941; Fromm, 1964; Kohut, 1973).

"In the setting of history, thwarted narcissistic aspirations, hurts to one’s pride, injuries to one’s prestige needs, interferences with conscious, preconscious, or unconscious fantasies concerning one’s greatness, power, and specialness, or concerning the greatness, power, and specialness of the group that one identifies with are important motivations for group behavior" (Kohut, 1973). A further narcissistic aspect of tribalism and nationalism is that the idealized people or nation supplies grandeur to those who feel personally inadequate and
flawed: "The last refuge of a scoundrel" as Samuel Johnson aptly remarked. The various human pseudospecies also exploit what Freud called the "narcissism of minor differences" to exaggerate their own distinctiveness and, by implication, their superiority. All too often the behavior of national governments or group leaders provides ammunition to those who revel in these differences, especially when they permit the luxury of dehumanization. "The easiest way to persuade ourselves that someone else deserves to die is to convince ourselves that he or she isn't quite human. It is an old trick - define someone as different, and killing becomes merely exterminating a pest rather than murdering a fellow human being" (Barash & Lipton, 1985).

Frank (1985) has convincingly argued that being a low-ranking member of a group (as the majority of members must be) is such a strain that compensation is needed, or else the person will withdraw from the group if possible. One way to compensate for low rank is to emphasize group narcissism and superiority versus the out-group (not infrequently placed outside humanity). E.O.Wilson (1979) makes the generalization that the poorer the in-group, the more group narcissism is generated as compensation.

6.6.2.2 Projection
Perhaps no concept has been more consistently applied to group stereotypes by psychoanalytic observers than that of projection, that is, the attribution to others of unacceptable impulses within one's self (Ackerman & Jahoda, 1950; Bettelheim & Janowitz, 1950; Horn, 1970 et seq.; among many others). Taken in its most extreme form this approach argues that stereotypes of out-groups are simply fantasies wholly derived from the unconscious needs of in-group members with no correspondence to the objective attributes of out-groups.

"Identity formation", Erikson (1964) argued, "involves a continuous conflict with powerful negative identity elements: what we know or fear or are told we are but try not to be or not to see; and what we consequently see in exaggeration in others. In times of aggravated crises all this can arouse in man a murderous hate of all kinds of 'otherness' in strangers and in himself". Pseudospeciation may, therefore be understood - at least in part - as an expression of one group's projection of its demonology and displacement of its self-generated aggression onto another. In brief, undesirable characteristics will turn up attributed to an out-group (projection) which will then serve as a rationalization for violence against the out-group (aggression displacement) (Erikson, 1964; T.Smith, 1976).

Loewenberg (1994) expressed the ambivalence within us and the projection of the bad internal objects thus: "The good is what is me and mine - my family, village, clan, and people. The bad is outside - the others, them, the aliens, foreigners, the strangers. The strangers are uncanny because they contain parts of the self which are unacceptable, asocial, dirty, foul, lascivious, murderous and cruel. Therefore these parts are projected onto outsiders and strangers".
Elkin (1938) described how Australian Aboriginal tribes attributed 'evil' practices to other tribes, an attribution increasing with distance. "Thus the cannibals and the savage treacherous natives are always those of the next tribe or the next but one, though when the investigator visits and studies them, he finds them quite as peaceable and courteous as those he just left, but now it is the latter who are credited with savage attributes".

6.6.2.3 Compensatory or Protest Masculinity

Bacon, Child & Barry (1963) present the basic position succinctly, in their discussion of the sex role identification of males as especially pertinent to the development of violent behavior. "It is assumed that the very young boy tends to identify with his mother rather than his father because of his almost exclusive contact with his mother. Later in his development he becomes aware of expectations that he behave in a masculine way and as a result his behavior tends to be marked by a compulsive masculinity which is really a defense against feminine identification".

The authors identify a particular pattern of child training factors which tends to produce in the child persistent attitudes of rivalry, distrust and hostility which would probably continue into adult life (Cf. Whiting et al., 1958; Whiting, 1965; Burton & Whiting, 1961). The protest masculinity hypothesis may have even broader application to the phenomena of intergroup conflict. LeVine & Campbell (1972) speculate "that it is protest masculinity, with its heightened group narcissism, its hypersensitive, proud, prestige-conscious belligerence, that lies behind the ethnocentrism syndrome in its most extreme and irrational forms, not only in fighting gangs and feuding warriors but in the contemporary nationalistic leadership of competing states".

6.6.3 LeVine & Campbell’s Conclusion

LeVine & Campbell (1972; to which I have added Rosenblatt (1964), Eldridge (1979), and other sources) present a number of propositions on conflict, ethnocentrism and nationalism which seem to be to a large extent empirically substantiated:

(1) To the extent that the group is perceived as a source of defense, nationalism and ethnocentrism increase in time of competition or threat (Pillsbury, 1919; Hayes, 1926; Murdock, 1931; Williams, 1947; Alexander, 1951; Coser, 1956; Berkowitz, 1962). However, when the group is obviously powerless to defend itself against threat, nationalism or ethnocentrism is unlikely to increase.

(2) Sensing the advantage of ethnocentrism or nationalism for themselves and for the group, militarily, administratively, and otherwise, group leaders frequently act to increase group ethnocentrism and nationalism, often through opportunistic exploitation of fear or hate of some out-group.
(3) The greater the difference between groups, summing across dimensions of similarity, the greater the contempt one groups has for another. The propensity of any two groups to fight increases as the differences between them (in language, religion, race and culture style) increase (Richardson, 1960; Wilkinson, 1980).

(4) Frustrations may produce increased ethnocentric or nationalistic hostility (Freud, 1922; Lasswell, 1935; Dollard et al., 1939; Williams, 1947; Bettelheim & Janowitz, 1950; Grodzins, 1956; McNeil, 1959; Buss, 1961; Campbell & LeVine, 1961; Berkowitz, 1962; Yates, 1962).

(5) Nationalism and ethnocentrism make it easier for one to cheat, to fight, or to kill an outsider (Cooley, 1902; Krehbiel, 1916; Lasswell, 1927; Davie, 1929; Murdock, 1931; Katz, 1940; Bernard, 1944; Gilbert, 1950; Coser, 1956; Green, 1956; Goffman, 1959). Nationalism and ethnocentrism increase one’s motivation to fight to defend the group (Murdock, 1931; Coser, 1956).

(6) There is considerable evidence that group cohesiveness and intergroup hostility both cause and affect each other. The technical term for such a relationship is bidirectionality. In everyday usage, this means that intergroup conflict can stimulate group solidarity. As group solidarity increases, ethnocentric sentiments tend to emerge, promoting intergroup hostilities (Deutsch, 1973). This 'spiral effect' can and usually does result in aggressive conflict (Eldridge, 1979).

(7) All in-groups, as judged by the average member, hold most out-groups at some degree of social distance, even if not that all in-groups hold all out-groups at some social distance (Bogardus, 1959; LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

(8) ”[M]ost societies condemn killing as a means of attaining power within society, but all societies encourage killing of enemies in that struggle for power which is called war” (Morgenthau, 1948).

After their extensive review of the theoretical and empirical literature, LeVine & Campbell (1972) conclude: ”Thus recent anthropological studies have produced a number of cases that are not consistent with the assumption that the ethnocentrism syndrome, as Sumner described it, is universal”. Yet, if perhaps not universal, ethnocentrism and its canonical variants (nationalism, parochialism, patriotism, tribalism, etc.) may still be easily appealed to, and easily surfacing, with the proviso that ”the altruistic willingness for self-sacrificial death in group causes may be more significant than the tendency for covetous hostility toward outgroup members” (LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

But, if ethnocentrism and political boundedness is advantageous for ethnic survival and has been selectively propagated through evolutionary mechanisms operating over a long period of time, LeVine & Campbell wonder, how is it that ethnocentrism and sharp political boundaries are not universal among human social systems? Many North American Indian peoples, for example, were characterized by the absence of any real political organization above the
band level and the absence of any feeling of tribal unity (e.g., Kroeber, 1925; Newcomb, 1961). How could ethnocentrism remain an evolutionary tendency for so long without becoming an accomplished fact?

LeVine & Campbell provide two answers. The first is that environmental pressures for survival were not the same everywhere. When a group can survive without creating sharp boundaries, it might not only find no need to create them but may even turn the flexibility of unbounded organization into an adaptive asset. The variety of physiographical environments in which human beings live and the varieties of economies that have survived to the present makes it inevitable that some ecological niches would exist in which environmental pressures were not operating toward boundedness, or were operating too weakly to achieve sharp boundaries. If a group can survive at a stable level of efficiency and is protected by geography from direct competition with better coordinated, bounded groups, then its evolution toward sharp political boundaries could be very slow or nonexistent, and this was true in many isolated areas of low population density.

The second answer is that ethnocentrism destroys boundaries as well as creates them, and sometimes empires disintegrate under external attack and revolt from within without being fully replaced by stable political units.

6.7 Social Identity Theory and Group Animosity

Tajfel (1970 et seq.) argues that in-group/out-group distinction is necessarily based on belonging. To relate self to group the individual uses categorization, identity, comparison and psychological distinctiveness. It is the awareness of the existence of categories which generates the in-group response, not necessarily past hostility nor objective conflict. Tajfel provides experimental support for the hypothesis that an individual will discriminate against a member of an out-group even when (a) there is no conflict of interest; (b) there is no past history of intergroup hostility; and (c) the individual does not benefit personally from this behavior. Mere (random) categorization is sufficient to produce intergroup discrimination and prejudice (Cf. Allport, 1954; Tajfel et al., 1971; Doise et al., 1972; Kahn & Ryen, 1972; Billig, 1973, 1976; Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Doise & Sinclair, 1973; Ehrlich, 1973; Tajfel & Billig, 1974; Allen & Wilder, 1975; Brewer & Silver, 1978; Doise, 1978; Turner, 1978; Austin & Worchel, 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Anderson, 1980; Locksley, Ortiz & Hepburn, 1980; Milner, 1981; Tajfel, 1981 et seq.; Turner, 1981 et seq.; Turner & Giles, 1981; Rabbie, 1982, 1992; R.Brown, 1985; Horowitz, 1985; Hogg & Abrams, 1987, 1993; Tönnesmann, 1987; Vine, 1987; Abrams & Hogg, 1993; Triandis, 1990; MacDonald, 1992, 1996).

Social identity theory - which was largely developed after the appearance of
LeVine & Campbell’s classic *opus* - proposes that individuals engage in a process in which they place themselves and others in social categories. There are several important consequences of this process:

1. The social categorization process results in discontinuities such that individuals exaggerate the similarities of individuals within each category (the *accentuation* effect). By this mechanism, continuous distributions are re-conceptualized as sharply discontinuous, and the effect is particularly strong if the dimension is of importance to the categorizer. In the case of intergroup conflict, the dimensions are in fact likely to be imbued with great subjective importance.

   The shared characteristics of the out-group as perceived by the in-group are likely to be negative, while the shared characteristics of the in-group as perceived by the in-group are likely to be positive.

   Moreover, the individual also places himself/herself into one of the categories (an in-group), with the result that similarities between self and in-group are exaggerated and dissimilarities with out-group members are exaggerated. An important result of this self-categorization process is that individuals adopt behavior and beliefs congruent with the stereotype of the in-group (MacDonald, 1992).

2. Social identity research indicates that the stereotypic behavior and attitudes of the in-group are positively valued, while out-group behavior and attitudes are negatively valued. Individuals develop favorable attitudes toward in-group members and unfavorable attitudes toward out-group members. The in-group develops a positive distinctness, a positive social identity and increased self-esteem as a result of this process. Within the group there is a great deal of cohesiveness, positive affective regard, and camaraderie, while relationships outside the group can be hostile and distrustful.

   Furthermore, people very easily adopt negative stereotypes about out-groups and these stereotypes possess a great deal of inertia (i.e., they are slow to change and are resistant to countervailing examples). Resistance to change is especially robust if the category is one which is highly important to the positive evaluation of the in-group or the negative evaluation of the out-group.

   Stereotypes are learned at a very early age, even before a child has much awareness or explicit knowledge of the other group. Finally, the stereotypes tend to become more negative and hostile in situations where there is actual intergroup competition and tension.

   Social identity theorists propose that it is the need for high self-esteem which drives the entire process (MacDonald, 1992, 1996).

   Also Horowitz (1985) posits the quest for the affirmation of ‘personal worth’ as a central motive of human behavior: "[S]elf-esteem is in large measure a function of the esteem accorded to groups of which one is a member". Hence, "the sources of ethnic conflict reside, above all, in the struggle for relative group worth". This threat to group (and hence personal) worth was, he argues,
a real and sufficient motive for mass involvement in ethnic conflict. Legitimacy gives ethnic claims to pre-eminence or exclusive domination a moral basis. This moral justification is most often (and effectively) based on prior occupation or 'indigenousness', but it may also be rooted in a belief that the group has some special mission to perform in the territory, a leading role in the independence movement, and so on. The contest for group legitimacy, for political inclusion and exclusion, merges with the quest for group worth to form "a politics of ethnic entitlement". For Horowitz, this is the engine of mass ethnic conflict. He also understands ethnicity to be a form of "greatly extended kinship".

The particular fierceness, bitterness and cruelty of ethnic conflicts can be understood, at least in part, through the relatedness of familial and ethnic consciousness: "If group members are potential kinsmen, a threat to any member of the group may be seen in somewhat the same light as a threat to the family" (Horowitz, 1985), to which Meyer (1987) added: "[P]rior investments into offspring within a genetic population will make common defence against non-members very economical and very likely".

(3) The result of these categorization processes is group behavior which involves discrimination against the out-group; beliefs in the superiority of the in-group and inferiority of the out-group; and positive affective preference for the in-group and negative affect directed toward the out-group. Although groups may be originally dichotomized on only one dimension, there is a tendency to expand the number of dimensions in which the individuals in the groups are categorized and do so in an evaluative manner. Besides categorization on specific negatively evaluated traits, social identity theorists have noted that the stereotyping process can also result in scapegoating (i.e., the explanation of complex events as resulting from the behavior of the out-group). Another common correlate is the process of dehumanizing the out-group. These tendencies toward in-group cohesiveness and devaluations of the out-group are exacerbated by real conflicts of interest.

There is evidence that where there are proportionate differences in group size, individuals from minority groups are generally more prone to ingroup bias than are majority group members (Mullen, 1991; MacDonald, 1996).

The empirical results of social identity research are highly compatible with an evolutionary basis for ethnocentric group behavior. Vine (1987) notes that the available evidence supports the universality of the tendency to view one's own group as superior. "Its cross-cultural ubiquity in human social life provides a prima facie reason for hypothesising that at least some of its facets reflect genetically rooted features of our species-specific nature". Roberts (1990) argued that ethnocentrism is easily learned and unlearned only with difficulty - a condition we would expect of an evolutionary based trait. Also Kellas (1991) states: "The universal presence of ethnocentrism gives some support to the
argument that it is genetically determined”. A.Flohr (1994) similarly concludes her extensive review that there is a biological disposition toward ethnocentrism. Lopreato (1984) and Irwin (1987) provide some compelling arguments why humans are genetically predisposed to ethnocentrism (Cf. also Wuketits, 1993).

Tullberg & Tullberg (1997) argue that if ethnocentrism (they use the term 'group egoism') "is a product of natural selection, it follows that it has been rational in the sense that is has increased individual survival and reproduction... Several writers consider ethnocentrism irrational (e.g., Connor, 1994), in that it is ultimately not tied to real interests, even if ethnocentric proponents refer to such interests. We disagree with this view and think that group egoism is consistent with a crude rationality and therefore ethnocentrism also has a rational foundation”.

Current evidence indicates that the minimal group findings can be generalized across subjects of different ages, nationalities, social classes, and a wide range of dependent variables (Bourhis, 1994), and anthropological evidence indicates the universality of the tendency to view one's own group as superior (Vine, 1987; MacDonald, 1996).

In addition to the suggestion of universality, an evolutionary interpretation of these findings is supported by results indicating that these social identity processes also occur among advanced animal species such as chimpanzees. Social identity processes also occur very early in life, prior to explicit knowledge about the out-group.

Moreover, the powerful affective component of social identity processes is very difficult to explain except as an aspect of the evolved machinery of the human mind. As Hogg & Abrams (1987) note, this result cannot be explained in terms of purely cognitive processes, and a learning theory seems hopelessly ad hoc and gratuitous. The tendency for humans to place themselves in social categories and for these categories to assume immense affective, evaluative overtones is the best candidate for the biological underpinning of ethnocentrism (MacDonald, 1992, 1996; Shaw & Wong, 1989).

Finally, the fact that social identity processes and tendencies toward collectivism increase during times of resource competition and threat to the group (see Hogg & Abrams, 1987; Triandis, 1990, 1991) is highly compatible with the supposition that these processes involve facultative mechanisms triggered by between-group conflict (MacDonald, 1996). As emphasized by evolutionists such as Alexander (1979) and G.Johnson (1995), external threat tends to reduce internal divisions and maximize perceptions of common interest among group members.

Also the social dominance theory developed by Sidanius (Sidanius, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1993) argues that the many forms of group-based oppression, plus the culturally shared justifications for them (e.g., religions) are as pervasive as they are because they have been of survival value for the human
group throughout its evolutionary history.

Within the framework of social identity theory, there is clearly no requirement that the beliefs regarding the in-group or the out-group be true. Bigelow (1969) notes that "each group requires something intimate, unique to itself, around which its members can cohere. Irrational beliefs serve this purpose far better than rational ones; they are not only easier to produce, but also less likely to be confused with enemy beliefs. Irrational fantasies produce a continuous supply of 'group uniforms', promoting and maintaining internal cohesion within each group, and segregation between groups". Also Tiger (1969) suggested that "males bond in terms of either a pre-existent object of aggression or a concocted one". As Krebs, Denton & Higgins (1988) note, evolution is only concerned with ensuring accuracy of beliefs and attitudes when the truth is in the interests of those having those beliefs and attitudes.

Natural selection in man, as Monod (1971) suggested, may well have favored group conformism and automatic respect for tribal law rather than individual initiative. The more effectively a belief - whatever its objective validity - could facilitate self-confidence and cohesiveness in a people (and thereby subserve each individual’s 'indirectly selfish' goal of group-preservation), the less likely they would be to tolerate challenges to that belief. They would be more likely to feel impelled by their gods or sacred cause to impose their 'truth' on unbelievers, even by force of arms. Therefore, Lorenz’s (1967) assertion that natural selection would have established as a psychological predisposition in Man a "phylogenetically programmed love for traditional custom", seems eminently plausible.

6.8 Dynamics of In-group/Out-group Differentiation

Newcomb (1947), Senghaas (1971, 1972), and Scherer, Abeles & Fisher (1975) suggest that the separation of ethnic, racial, or social groups fosters hostility by blocking off communication. Without interaction, it is impossible for people to discover that they are basically similar to each other in their values, beliefs, concerns, and experiences. In addition, without communication between people or groups, it is easy for autistic spirals of hostility to develop. Especially, Newcomb (1947) pointed out the vicious circle by which an individual or a group once ready for hostile responses gradually reduces the channels of communication with the potential enemy, thus preventing rectification of the early impression of hostility and redress by friendly actions. Hostile isolation or autistic hostility is likely to make hostile tension more enduring.

Indeed, numerous studies of interracial contact show that equal-status contact reduces prejudice and intergroup hostilities (Allport, 1954). However, when
people are separated, they tend to exaggerate differences, and this increases their hostility and the probability of conflict.

In a series of experiments (Rabbie & Wilkens, 1971; Rabbie & de Brey, 1971; Rabbie et al., 1974; Rabbie & Huygen, 1974; Rabbie & Visser, 1976), it was found that subjects classified into two distinct groups and expecting to work with each other showed a significant bias in favor of their own group. As could be expected, cooperative processes during the actual intragroup interaction invariably increased the intergroup bias (Homans, 1950; Deutsch, 1973). The increased bias, moreover, could be attributed to an enhancement of the in-group evaluation rather than to a devaluation of the out-group. Other studies have obtained similar results (Wilson & Miller, 1961; Dion, 1973; Reyen & Kahn, 1975; Worchel, Lind & Kaufman, 1975; Stephenson, Skinner & Brotherton, 1976). The expectation of intergroup competition per se does not appear to produce greater solidarity than the expectation of intergroup cooperation (Rabbie & Wilkens, 1971; Rabbie & de Brey, 1971; Rabbie et al., 1974; Rabbie & Visser, 1976).

In-group cohesion is not necessarily accompanied by out-group hostility. This result calls into question that group goal incompatibility per se is sufficient to generate negative attitudes toward other groups unless the intergroup conflict is quite intense.

The findings by Rabbie & Bekkers (1976; 1978) suggest that under some conditions threatened leaders are more likely to engage in intergroup conflict and to be more hostile toward other groups than leaders who feel more certain in their tenure of power.

The dynamics involved in these experimental studies of in-group/out-group differentiation can be summarized as follows: Within the groups the members close ranks; there is an increase in group cohesiveness and solidarity; the one group is considered to be superior to the other group; each group becomes more hierarchically organized; there is a greater willingness to accept centralized leadership; deviating opinions are barely tolerated; the group demands more loyalty and conformity from its members. Between the groups negative stereotypes tend to develop; communication between the groups decreases preventing the correction of negative stereotypes; during intergroup negotiations, members pay more attention to points of disagreement than they do to agreement; distrust and hostility towards the other group rises, sometimes erupting into open aggression; tactics and strategy for winning are emphasized at the expense of concern about the merits of the problem to be negotiated (Rabbie, 1982; Janis, 1971, 1972).

Realistic conflict does not always involve an opposition of material and objective interests, as is sometimes suggested. Sherif & Sherif (1966), for example, make it clear that groups may compete about both material and nonmaterial interests; "the issues at stake may relate to values and goals shared by group members, a real or imagined threat to the safety of the group, an
economic interest, a political advantage, a military consideration, prestige, or a number of others". Mutually incompatible goals between groups are themselves considered to be sufficient condition for the rise of hostile attitudes and deeds toward another group.

Simmel (1904) held that conflict sets boundaries between groups within a social system by strengthening group consciousness and awareness of separate-ness, thus establishing the identity of groups within the system. Coser (1956) noted that Simmel did not explicitly distinguish between feelings of hostility and the actual acting out of these feelings; and he rephrased Simmel's proposition as follows: Conflict serves to establish and maintain the identity and boundary lines of societies and groups. Conflict with other groups contributes to the establishment and reaffirmation of the identity of the group and maintains its boundaries against the surrounding social world. Patterned enmities and reciprocal antagonisms conserve social divisions and systems of stratification.

Simmel may be said to advance a 'safety-valve theory' of conflict. Conflict serves as an outlet for the release of hostilities which, were no such outlet provided, would sunder the relation between the antagonists. The German ethnologist Schurtz (1902) coined the word Ventilsitten for those mores and institutions in primitive societies that provide institutionalized outlets for hostilities and drives which are ordinarily suppressed by the group. Orgiastic feasts in which ordinary rules of sexual behavior and avoidance can safely be infringed is a convenient example. Such outlets, as Vierkandt (1928) pointed out, serve as a kind of river bed for repressed drives and thus preserve the rest of social life from their destructive impact. Hallowell (1940) and Kluckhohn (1944), for example, describe witchcraft, malevolent magic, and sorcery as institutions permitting covert and indirect displacement of hostility onto substitute objects.

According to the Simmel-Coser theory of conflict, external threat would be expected to increase internal cohesion. Illustrative anthropological studies generally tend to support the external conflict/internal cohesion hypothesis. There are also many observational as well as experimental studies of individual behavior in situations of stress, disaster and/or extreme threat, such as wartime, and most such studies find increased cohesion present in some way. Not only during wartime, but in times of general threat as well, ethnocentrism and nationalism increase. It is generally felt that ethnocentrism and nationalism promote group cohesion and integration (see van der Dennen, 1987 for references). And reversely, some studies have shown that more cohesive groups express more hostility (e.g., Pepitone & Reichling, 1955; Lott & Lott, 1965).
Schopler et al. (1993) hypothesized that the discontinuity effect (i.e., the tendency for intergroup interactions to be more competitive than interindividual interactions) is mediated by a fear of the out-group’s competitiveness and, when this fear is less salient, by a greedy desire to exploit the out-group’s expected cooperativeness.

Risk taking tends to be greater in groups than in individuals because no one person must (or can) take responsibility for the outcome. And contrary to the widespread belief that ‘tough’ leadership makes would-be aggressors back down, there is convincing evidence to show that the likelihood of war increases when leaders are willing to accept a high level of risk (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita, 1981 et seq.; Vasquez, 1993).

Moreover, the greater the outside threat, the greater the tendency to put up a united front, to suppress personal doubts, and foster an illusion of unanimity. In addition, high-level leaders tend to surround themselves with ‘yes men’, people who agree with them and who rarely present contrary views. Leaders become victims of ‘groupthink’: "Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures" (Janis, 1972). In addition, Janis emphasizes that groupthink "is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against out-groups".

Like social identity processes, tendencies toward collectivism are exacerbated in times of external threat, again suggesting that the tendency to collectivism is a facultative response that evolved as a mechanism of intergroup conflict. According to MacDonald (1992, 1996), the existence of such a mechanism implies that the group has been the vehicle of selection, in Wilson & Sober’s (1994) terms. In times of threat, group and individual interests increasingly coincide (see also Barkow, 1989). On the other hand, Tullberg & Tullberg (1997) emphasize that there is no assumption of group selection in their group egoism concept, but since the original human groups consisted of close kin, kin selection may well have been a stepping stone in the evolution of human group egoism (see § 6.10.3).

Sherif and his coworkers (Sherif, 1956 et seq.; Sherif & Sherif, 1953; 1966; Sherif et al., 1961) have been particularly interested in the experimental production and reduction of friction, conflict and negative stereotypes between groups. All the field experiments verify the hypothesis that "conflict between two groups tends to produce an increase in solidarity within the groups". In the first experiment, the introduction of a common enemy (another competing group) was successful in reducing conflict between the original two groups. This set of studies substantiate the point that the external threat that increased internal cohesion must involve an achievable superordinate goal (Stein, 1976).

One of the few attempts to replicate the Sherif experiments was that of Diab (1970). This experiment had some frightening consequences for the subjects as
well as for the researcher who had to be hospitalized for exhaustion after the experiment was abruptly terminated. He had been too successful in arousing intergroup hostility. The conflict got completely out of hand; some boys knifed each other and the police had to evacuate the camp to prevent further violence (Rabbie, 1982).

Some of the intricate dynamics of the process of in-group/out-group antagonism, escalating into downright 'warfare', may be grasped from the accounts of McNeil (1961), living with a group of 70 "aggressive, anti-social, anti-adult boys" in a therapeutic summer camp. At once, the boys began a pattern of militant probing of one another in their individual and group relations seeking to establish a basis for dominance and submission. The camp’s aggressive pecking order was established through a number of interpersonal devices which resemble those used by primitive communities as well as civilized states to establish their position in the world: Saber rattling, recounting past glories, the role call of allies, and deterrence by attack.

See van der Dennen (1987) and Flohr (1987) for a review of scapegoating, ostracism, rejection of deviants and dissenters, discrimination, conspecific mobbing, and moralistic aggression in the context of within-group dynamics, as well as the role of anonymity, deindividuation, obedience, compliance, conformity, dehumanization and suspension of personal responsibility on the facilitation of atrocities and other extreme violence when people act as part of a group.

6.9 The Logic of Ethnocentrism: The Duality of the Human Mind

The particular logic of ethnocentrism, its Manichaean duality which dichotomizes the world into A and non-A, self and other, in-group and out-group, us and them, friend and foe, seems to spring from the cognitive capacity of Man to juxtapose, classify, categorize, distinguish, differentiate, dichotomize and discriminate, but also his ability to abstract, generalize and detect common determinators in things highly diverse.

In this section I shall examine the cognitive aspects of the ethnocentrism syndrome, i.e., information processing and its distortions and biases, the mental representation of the social world, and the evolutionary algorithms underlying decision processes based on these cognitive maps.

The concept of 'social construction of reality' (Berger & Luckmann, 1969), contemplated in extremis, inevitably leads to the conclusion that reality is nothing but a collective delusion, a shared folie à tous. And, indeed, such a position could be defended. But in this context it is only necessary to remember the Thomas theorem: Whatever people define as real will be real in its
consequences. Which in plain language means that when people believe in their racial superiority, rampant and rabid racism is not far around the corner (to mention only one example from recent history).

The human tendency to think in binary categories or oppositions has often been noted, ever since Boole in his *Laws of Thought* (1854) made a strong case for its inevitability (Cf. Lévi-Strauss, 1966; Lorenz, 1973; E.O. Wilson, 1978; Douglas, 1981; Lorenz & Wuketits, 1983; Flohr, 1987; Konner, 1990). It is part of our phylogenetic substrate of basic problem-solving strategies and cognitive heuristics; it is, in fact, the most basic analytical tool available. It is already evident in the animal that can successfully distinguish between predator and non-predator. Perhaps it is, in origin, as simple as the distinction between ego and non-ego, self and other, the 'I-in-here' against 'the-rest-of-the-world-out-there'. The world view of many peoples seems to be made up of a number of binary opposites or antinomies (self/other; order/chaos; safety/danger; friend/foe; peace/war; clean/dirty; human/nonhuman; good/bad; familiar/alien, etcetera), which, furthermore, tend to cluster together at the positive and negative poles, such that the self (and, by extension, the in-group) is good, clean, and associated with order and safety; while the other (and, by extension, the out-group) is alien and strange, and associated with chaos, danger, dirt, and potential violence.

The human being has a powerful urge to dichotomize, E.O. Wilson (1978) states, and "We seem able to be fully comfortable only when the remainder of humanity can be labelled as members versus nonmembers, kin versus nonkin, friend versus foe". Possibly ethnocentrism operates as a primordial psychological mechanism which brings about a distinction of 'us' and 'them', in-group and out-group, and it may be hypothesized that 'advanced' species like chimpanzees and humans have extra-strong needs for group boundaries, demarcations or delimitations, the strength of which must somehow be related to the species' affective systems (See Ch. 3).

MacDonald (1996) agrees with this observation and suggests that one such affective mechanism is in fact the self-esteem mechanism proposed by social identity theorists. Other emotional mechanisms that may be involved are the social conscientiousness/guilt mechanism discussed in MacDonald (1994), and the experience of psychological relief obtained by individuals who join highly collectivist, authoritarian groups such as religious sects (Galanter, 1989). Altemeyer (1994) found associations among attraction to cohesive groups, authoritarianism, feelings of ingroup superiority, hostility toward outgroups, a heightened concern for social identity, and religious fundamentalism. Collectivist cultures such as sects develop an unquestioned attachment to the ingroup, including the perception that ingroup norms are universally valid, automatic obedience to ingroup authorities, and willingness to fight and die for the ingroup. These characteristics are usually associated with distrust of and
unwillingness to cooperate with outgroups (Triandis, 1990; MacDonald, 1996). Meyer (1987) pointed to the phenomenon that members of primitive groups frequently take their traditional enemy group as a kind of negative identity. For the ‘logic’ of totemistic classification systems see: Leach (1976) and Meyer (1987).

"[It] is a rather widely-held notion that the brain evolved to think, particularly about technical matters such as hunting and gathering, tool-making, painting on cave walls, and the like. This is likely to be wrong. It evolved to act, not to think; not only to act, but to interact; not only to interact, but to interact sexually, in the imperatively pleasurable and ramified action which is the immediate engine of change in species" (Tiger, 1990).

Our way of thinking has evolved as a response to the practical problems of living and reproducing in the Environment of Evolutionary Adaptedness, and not to solve academic puzzles. We tend to think more in terms of categories or classes than in terms of individuals. Using these generalizations we form schemata. These schemata are extremely useful, but at the same time they enable us to form stereotypes. With regard to this regrettable side-product one could say with Anderson (1980): "Stereotyping reflects the dark side of schema abstraction". This tendency culminates in a tendency to dichotomize phenomena. This involves the classification of objects within the nervous system - often beginning with our sensory perception - according to some kind of either-or rule (Flohr, 1987).

Prejudices thrive on polarization, on the maximization of differences between classes. Stereotypes and prejudices are, unmoralistically considered, heuristics or cognitive templates which work most of the time, and which prevent the stimulus overload of the cognitive system, and which provide some degree of self-esteem by creating a simple order out of chaos and uncertainty.

6.9.1 Limited Sympathy

All these phenomena can be understood, in the last analysis, as pertaining to our finite time-and-energy budgets, and consequently our limited capacity for problem-solving, the limited ‘channel capacity’ of the human brain, and our limited capacity to sympathize with, identify with and be emotionally involved with more than a very limited number of conspecifics (Warnock, 1975; Ike, 1987). It may seem odd to discuss man’s limited sympathy in the context of cognitive constraints, but a moment of reflection may reveal that the ability to identify has strong cognitive overtones (as well as emotional and motivational ones).

"Being a limited resource, affectivity in man favors interaction units where this resource may be invested in the most economical manner: it can be bestowed on a limited number of persons only" (Meyer, 1987). Hence the individual’s limited niche in the nexus of cross-cutting human configurations. Human affectivity is of major importance in the establishment of social boundaries.
Any social system requires boundary maintenance and mutual identification of actors (Meyer, 1987; Ike, 1987; Cf. Little, 1964; Moreno, 1967; Goffman, 1976; a.o.).

The human sympathy group seems to be limited to about 11 individuals (Buys & Larson, 1979). These authors suppose that this magnitude possibly has co-antecedents in the human social-biological evolution, i.e., in the small hunting bands of our ancestors: "We believe that the data suggests a possible relationship between our evolution into social beings and our apparent limited capacity for human sympathy". So too, Washburn & Harding (1975) state: "Man evolved to feel strongly about few people, short distances, and relatively brief intervals of time; and these are still the dimensions of life that are psychologically important to him".

Limited sympathy, according to Ike (1987), is one of the basic propensities of the human animal, together with obedience and Manichaean dualism, which do not in themselves constitute causes of war, but which make war possible.

6.9.2 Group Identification and Prejudice

For most of our evolutionary history group identification was essential to the survival and well-being of the individual (Wallace, 1864; Darwin, 1871; Alexander, 1974 et seq.; Corning, 1983; Barash & Lipton, 1985; Dunbar, 1987; Flohr, 1987; Slurink, 1994; Caporael, 1996; a.o.). Thus we see that an important element in the psychological make up of human beings is a profound inclination to belong, to be part of a group, and the bigger and more powerful the group, the better. Moreover, it even feels good to defend that group, since our personal well-being has typically been so closely tied to the success and well-being of the group, and the personal costs of engaging in such defense were generally not all that great: "Our ancestors were almost certainly selected to identify with and fight for social groups, against other human beings in other social groups. For adults, then, security came in large part from the defense of the tribe against other tribes" (Barash & Lipton, 1985).

Our existence has always depended and our continued existence still depends largely on cooperative living, and this often means subserving our own reproductive goals to those of the group (as a collection of individuals) in order to benefit from the advantages of group living. Survival depends on the cooperative assistance of one’s fellow group members. It is this intrinsic willingness to acquiesce in group decisions that lays us, as a species, so open to cultural manipulation for political or ideological/religious ends (Dunbar, 1987).

Alexander (1974 et seq.), Slurink (1994) and Caporael (1996), among others, argued that during hominid/human evolution (see also Ch. 8) to the extent that exploiting a habitat and solving intergroup conflicts are more successful as collective group processes than as individual processes, not only would more successful groups persist, but so also would individuals better adapted to
group-living. "We would expect humans to be obligately interdependent; that is, their prospects for survival or reproduction outside group contexts would be greatly diminished" (Caporael, 1996), which is rather mildly put. At all times we had to rely on support by the group, and also on being accepted by the group. For this reason we had to adapt to the group; we had to adopt its modes of behavior and its value orientations. High respect for one's group more or less (psycho)logically implies devaluing out-groups. A tendency to form prejudices can thus be derived from our striving for group identity (Flohr, 1987).

Because prejudices contribute to supporting exchange, they fulfil an adaptive function. "We love our prejudices, because they not only provide us with cognitive, but also with social stability" (Bergler, 1976). Prejudices acquired at some time are stabilized not only by selective perception, but also by the fact that the behavior of those who are discriminated against is changed due to our discrimination in a way that further seems to justify our stereotypes and feelings. Using the example of prejudices, Merton (1957) demonstrated some time ago the way in which 'self-fulfilling prophecies' influence human behavior.

Ethnic and racial prejudices are not necessarily based on personal experiences and that they do not necessarily have to reflect private interests. Instead they can be acquired early in life along with other values and attitudes that are normative in their social environment. There seems to be something like 'symbolic racism' which can persist independent of 'realistic threats' (Kinder & Sears, 1981). According to Kinder & Sears conformity pressures as well as the willingness to accept socially given distinctions between in-group and out-group are involved in the acquisition of these prejudices (Flohr, 1987). Prejudices are particularly resistant to change when they are integral parts of a 'culture pattern'.

6.9.3 Stereotypes

Stereotypes exaggerate the differences between groups (dichotomization) and underestimate the differences within them (generalization). They can result from erroneous attribution or from simplified judgment. Erroneous attribution can be the consequence not only of social pressures but also of endogenous factors. The ease, however, with which even absurd stereotypes are being formed all the time point in itself towards an innate tendency to think in stereotypes (Flohr, 1987).

Pinderhughes (1979; see also Abraham, 1983) has presented the thesis that stereotyping may represent a psychobiological need for cognitive stability, which suggests that a psychological need to dichotomize reality into positive and negative categories may not be as much Manichaean as it is a drive to create affiliative, loving bonds and differentiative, aggressive ones. Such a
psychological process he calls ‘differential bonding’.

Lorenz (1966) hypothesized that the formation of bonds between members of the same group are intensified by aggression directed towards individuals outside of the group: "The principle of the bond formed by having something in common which has to be defended against outsiders remains the same, from cichlids defending a common territory or brood, right up to scientists defending a common opinion and - most dangerous of all - fanatics defending a common ideology. In all these cases aggression is necessary to enhance the bond".

But as Pinderhughes points out, the creation of an affiliative bond may have as a consequence the sacrifice of perceptual objectivity: "The biological process of differential bonding offers stability and certainty at the expense of objectivity and validity, producing a biologically mature organism that may know it is right even when it is wrong. This, in my opinion, constitutes the main source of bias in human thinking and behavior and the primary basis for social conflict".

MacCauley (1990) has objected that stereotyping and ethnocentrism are found in both warlike and peaceful groups and, therefore, these phenomena cannot alone explain the difference between peace and war. R.Brown (1985) offered an analysis that puts ethnocentrism together with group stereotyping and perceived inequity in resources to explain group conflict. He regards the individual’s desire for a positive self-image and in-group preference a basic tendency of humanity, and perception of inequity as a factor that moves a group from ethnocentrism to aggression and hostility. Here it is not the fact of inequality of resources (either material or status resources) that is crucial, but the perception of unfair distribution or illegitimate inequality that leads to anger, aggression and violence. "Of course, war is not an automatic reaction to either inequity or iniquity. These may explain the transition from ethnocentrism to hostility toward outgroup, but neither contributes much to our understanding of the transition from hostility to conflict and war. It appears then that either perception of iniquity or the impact of that perception is moderated by the potential costs of conflict" (MacCauley, 1990).

6.9.4 Self-system and Self-deception

Vine (1987) suggests the possibility that organized aggressive competition between groups of hominids did not appear during hominid evolution until the ‘self-system’ had evolved to an appreciable degree - making strong yet fluid collective social loyalties possible.

Vine proposes that self-awareness has as its concomitant self-deception. All that is required is that gene-based natural self-system biases should be able to distort the processing of information which affects our social evaluations and intentional choices.

The overarching ‘meta-motive’ of self-esteem makes adaptive sense for a species that relies heavily upon the self-system for the mediation of goal-directed activities. The ‘psychological integrity’ of this system is a precondition
for effective engagement with the outer world. Without self-esteem we are indeed vulnerable to a range of maladaptive mental, behavioral and even physiological conditions (Crook, 1980).

In a pioneering analysis of the evolution of the self, Hallowell (1959) had seen "the social as well as the individual adaptive value of universal psychological processes such as repression, rationalization, and other defence mechanisms". Thus we can understand that selectively screening negative social feedback from awareness, and distorting self-perceptions of one’s degree of conformity to norms are varieties of self-deception serving the goal of self-esteem. During the evolutionary transition to self-awareness, Vine (1987) proposes, selection would have favored moderate levels of self-bias, in preference to strictly realistic self-consciousness - especially if the former protected the individual from excessive self-sacrifice.

**6.9.5 Pre-judgments: The Logic of Probability**

All animals have to rely to a considerable degree on extrapolations based on their experiences, i.e., they have to make inferential judgments, so to speak, whenever they cannot rely on genetically controlled behavioral instructions. Based on inferential judgments an animal will develop behaviors which could turn out to be wrong, but which could, by and large, overcompensate for this disadvantage by an increase in security and in rapidity (Flohr, 1987).

Riedl (1980, 1985) has pointed to the enormous role that pre-judgments play in the behavior of all living systems. As he puts it: "The algorithm of living systems is not founded on the apparent contradictions of our inductive logic, but on probability". In order to perceive and to evaluate, we have innate pre-judgments at our disposal, a whole system of phylogenetically acquired orientations that has been called 'ratiomorphic apparatus' by Brunswik (1955). This apparatus induces us to make judgments that are on the whole correct and make sense with regard to practical problems, but in a certain way this apparatus is uncritical and misleads us by suggesting wrong conclusions.

Pre-judgments are, according to Riedl (1980), a precondition for our existence. As long as they are more likely than a random search to lead to correct judgments, thereby protecting the conditions of survival, they are functional.

**6.9.6 Reduction of Uncertainty**

From a purely biological perspective one would definitely expect that humans have evolved mechanisms to cope with the problem of reduction of uncertainty (Flohr, 1987). Insufficient reduction of uncertainty leads in humans and animals to 'learned helplessness' (Seligman, 1975). Seligman’s research points to the extremely great importance of information that reduces uncertainty. If such information is not available, humans will create it or otherwise employ strategies to at least have the illusion of control (Kalma, 1986, 1989).
The psychology of perception shows that our emotions and cognitions have a considerable impact on the selection, retention, and distortion of information. It has also been demonstrated that the processing of the perceived information is not some kind of objective, 'interest-free' registration. It is influenced instead at each important junction by emotional and cognitive commitments (wishful thinking).

The frequent overestimation of environmental conditions ('force of circumstances') when accounting for our own behavior, and the overestimation of personality characteristics (or evil intentions) in observations of other people is one such perceptual (attributional) distortion.

By sorting information from past experiences or environments through the use of behavioral predilections, such as rules of thumb or habit, adaptive rationality permits the efficient management of considerable information. More than this, rules of thumb reduce uncertainty by prescribing paths of action that have worked, in the past, to yield positive net returns (Shaw & Wong, 1989).

### 6.9.7 Reification

Reification ('ideas-become-real'), also called 'hypostatization', refers to the human capacity to treat an abstraction as a real thing, substance or entity. It may even be anthropomorphized, taking on human or quasi-human form. A familiar example of reification would be the following: The category of 'things and acts considered to be bad' gives rise to the abstract concept of 'evil', which in turn can be easily reified and quasi-anthropomorphized as 'the devil' (and subsequently 'evil' can now be 'explained' as the works of the devil). Other familiar examples are the anthropomorphized and personalized representations of the mother- or fatherland in nationalistic hymns, patriotic battle songs, and national anthems from all over the world. Such images are almost always employed as powerful mobilization devices in warfare.

Reification is critical to human action (Peterson, 1981; Lumsden & Wilson, 1981, 1983). It imposes familiarity and order on an otherwise chaotic environment.

The leader as the reification of the group is perhaps the most powerful form of symbolization. As Ike (1987) observes "An individual person cannot identify himself with a large number of people; he needs a small group, a reference group, a peer group. Or he wants a symbol, a leader as stand-in for the larger mass of individuals with whom he cannot identify. The leader is the symbol, and the larger and stronger the number of individuals he represents, the better qualities are attributed to, or 'projected' on him".

History abounds in charismatic leaders who symbolize the group and successfully mobilize their followers. Many adopt a patriarchal role, representing themselves as symbolic fathers and their followers as symbolic children. Followers, in turn, are typically consumed by familylike devotion and, not infrequently, by fanatic loyalty (Shaw & Wong, 1989).
6.9.8 Emotions

Strong emotions are likely to accompany perceptions of one’s ethnicity. Reviewing an extensive anthropological literature, Isaacs (1975) concluded that we have a deep-rooted propensity to respond emotionally to the name of our own group, sounds of our mother tongue, signs of the group’s traditional religion, and other symbolic representations of our in-group. These emotional qualities may include spontaneous joy, a sense of pride, and the security of belonging. The larger group becomes emotionally integrated into the individual's self-system or identity (Tönnesman, 1987). In the expanded group context, emotions are typically aroused and reinforced through the language of kinship and the use of rituals, flags, anthems, drums, marches, and various kin-related heuristics (sacrifice for the Motherland) that have proven highly effective in promoting group solidarity (e.g., Stokes, 1982; Patterson, 1983; G.R. Johnson, 1986).

Emotions attached to cognitions and perceptions of threatening out-groups can be very intense. As White (1984) observed, "what emerges is the really startling importance of fear (sometimes realistic but usually exaggerated) as a cause of aggression and therefore of war".

A rather neglected aspect of the dangers human groups constitute for each other is their emotional aspect, Elias (1987) observed. Human groups seem to take a strange delight in asserting their superiority over others, particularly if it has been attained by violent means. The feeling of group superiority appears to provide its members with an immense narcissistic gratification. People in power can usually count on a warm response of approval and often of affection and love from their compatriots whenever they praise or add to the glory of the social unit. The remarkable propensity of people for projecting part of their individual self-love into specific social units, to which they are linked by strong feelings of identity and of belonging, is one of the roots of the dangers which human groups constitute for each other.

Anne Flohr (1994) lists the following cognitive mechanisms: selective perception and perceptual distortions (double standard in judging the same behavior of members of ingroup and outgroup), avoidance of dissonant information, 'boomerang effect' (Jervis), 'confirmation bias' (Peterson), 'availability heuristic', 'halo effect', and 'evoked sets'. Furthermore, she identifies 'fundamental attribution error', 'black-white thinking' (dualities), 'worst-case thinking', 'self-fulfilling prophecies', and 'projection'. Also personality factors may play a role, such as authoritarian personality, dogmatism, intolerance of ambiguity, and misanthropy (all positively covarying with ethnocentrism). She concludes: 'Ethnozentrismus erfüllt wichtige Funktionen für den 'Psychohaushalt' des einzelnen... Andere Funktionen von Ethnozentrismus sind die Reduzierung von Komplexität und
die Aggressionskanalisierung”.

### 6.10 Evolutionary Theories of Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is a major *explanans* in contemporary theories of primitive warfare. The founding father of modern sociobiology, E.O. Wilson (1978) regards it as a culturally hypertrophied biological predisposition, drawing heavily from Leach’s (1965) split universe imagery:

The practice of war is a straightforward example of a hypertrophied biological predisposition. Primitive men cleaved their universe into friends and enemies and responded with quick, deep emotion to even the mildest threats emanating from outside the arbitrary boundary...

The force behind most warlike policies is ethnocentrism, the irrationally exaggerated allegiance of individuals to their kin and fellow tribesmen. In general, primitive men divide the world into two tangible parts, the near environment of home, local villages, kin, friends, tame animals, and witches, and the more distant universe of neighboring villages, intertribal allies, enemies, wild animals, and ghosts. This elemental topography makes easier the distinction between enemies who can be attacked and killed and friends who cannot. The contrast is heightened by reducing enemies to frightful and even subhuman status (E.O. Wilson, 1978)

Also Meyer (1977 et seq.) regards ethnocentrism and xenophobia as cultural hypertrophies. He argues that the extreme ethnocentrism on the primitive level sets preconditions for violent interaction, while specific conditions serve as triggers ["Der extreme Ethno-Zentrismus in der primitiven Stufe bildet Rahmenbedingungen für das Eintreten in eine destruktiv-gewaltsame Interaktion, spezifische Bedingungen sind die Anlässe"].

Meyer suggests that the basic motivation in violent encounters between members of distinct groups is not 'aggression' impelled by some sort of drive, instinct, or appetite, but 'fear'. Fear generated by the position of the cultural 'we-group' in a threatening universe made up of 'they-groups', endangering the social cosmos by their very existence, as well as a vast array of non-intelligible forces. The degrees of enmity are dependent upon the respective groups' ideologies, i.e., their psycho-cultural interpretations of the cosmos.

While any social system requires boundary maintenance and mutual identification of actors, man's condition as a psycho-cultural animal brings about hypertrophies of these needs.
6.10.1 Kin Selection and Inclusive Fitness

Evolutionary and sociobiological explanations of ethnocentrism and xenophobia are for the most part rooted in kin selection, inclusive fitness, and altruism theories (See Ch. 1). Inclusive fitness, as Alexander (1979) explains, is a simple idea. As social organisms we tend to lead our lives embedded in networks of near and distant kin. The concept of inclusive fitness simply tells us that not merely our offspring but any genetic relative socially available to us is a potential avenue of genetic reproduction. Altruism toward relatives is of course not really altruism at all, but rather the tendency of individuals to maximize the reproductive success of their genes via their relatives, that is, via the other bodies in which copies of these genes reside. Alexander & Borgia (1978) argued that nepotism to nondescendants and distant descendant relatives is an extension of (evolutionarily) earlier altruism in the form of parental care. Alexander (1979) argued that reciprocity (or 'selfish cooperation' as Corning [1983] called it) is in turn largely derived from nepotism (On nepotism see also: Hamilton, 1987; Wells, 1987; Kenrick, 1989; S.Johnson & R.Johnson, 1991; and A.Flohr, 1994; Vanhanen [1992] considers tribalism, casteism, nationalism, etc. as forms of nepotism adapted to large societies).

In the small bands in which humans are generally presumed to have lived during most of their evolutionary history, virtually all social interactions were among relatives. The same is probably true for contemporary hunter-gatherer societies. 'Generalized reciprocity' involves mostly one-way flows of benefits because it is largely nepotism (the return is genetic), and 'negative reciprocity' involves one-way flows because it consists of one-time interactions accompanied by a great deal of social cheating. 'Balanced reciprocity', on the other hand, tends to occur between distant relatives or nonrelatives that are likely to interact repeatedly, and therefore involves balanced flows of benefits (see also Masters, 1964; Service, 1966; and Shaw & Wong, 1989).

The moral gradient and the vector of violence and dehumanization running through these concentric circles was already clearly seen and eloquently formulated by Marett (1933):

Taking, then, the average community of savages who, thanks mostly to the custom of exogamy, have reached the tribal stage of society, we can represent its moral relationships by three concentric circles. That which immediately surrounds the centre stands for the consanguine group, or kin, which whether it counts descent in the mother's or the father's line, restricts this veritable homecircle to that one side of the family. The intermediate zone contains the rest of the tribe, and marks what is roughly the outer limit of the criss-cross of affinities which exogamy produces. A
tribesman as opposed to the kinsman by blood is thus any possible connexion by marriage who does not happen to be a pure stranger. There remains the vast outer circle of those who are neither kith nor kin, neither acquaintances nor birth-mates, but live beyond the bounds of tribal law and religion. Correspondingly, then, there are three degrees of moral responsibility severally involving an intense solidarity, a half-hearted neighborliness, and an utter aloofness. Hence there will be as many different ways in which fighting and killing may come about, namely, through intestine strife, through feud, or through downright war. These distinctions are by no means arbitrary, since they are based on a real and well-recognized departmentalization of the social life. The stupidest savage is not likely to confuse in his mind the occasions on which he is liable to commit the abominable sin, to become implicated in an affair of honour, and on behalf of home and country to take up arms against foreign devils. There are bound to be marginal cases, of course, as when duty towards the mother’s clan begins to include the father and his people as well, or, again, when distant or disaffected members of the tribe rank as hardly better than sworn foes. On the whole, however, there stand out in sharp contrast to each other three spheres of conduct, to which entirely separate commandments apply as follows: to the first, Thou shalt commit no murder; to the second, Thou shalt compound with thy neighbor on the principle that a life for a life is fair give-and-take; and to the third, Thou shalt utterly destroy the destroyer (Marett, 1933).

In discussing the absence of war in some Inuit tribes, Irwin (1987) predicted (in contrast to Hamilton, 1975) that social behavior can be polarized at all population boundaries where there is some variation in the coefficient of relatedness between adjacent demes. In other words, Irwin said, rivalry between closely related human populations is as predictable a phenomenon as sibling rivalry. Brothers have been known to kill each other and closely related tribes sometimes do indeed go to war. So the fact that the Inuit tribes of the Central Canadian Arctic are closely related to each other can not, in and of itself, explain their state of relative peace. If the humans in these populations stopped making war then something must have happened to the coefficient of relatedness, or the cost/benefit ratio, or both. Irwin’s explanation of Inuit peacefulness is that at some point in history the cost of war (the loss of male protein harvesters), came to exceed the benefits of war (more females and territory).
6.10.2 Cultural Badges (Markers) and the Proximate Mechanisms of Kin Recognition

The importance of kin recognition mechanisms as intermediaries of kin selection was recognized by Hamilton in his 1964 classic paper. He proposed four possible mechanisms: (1) recognition alleles; (2) spatial distribution or location (depending upon a high correlation between location and kinship); (3) association or familiarity (due to living and rearing arrangements, individuals with whom one is familiar are more likely to be kin than others); (4) phenotypic matching (dependent upon an assumed correlation between genotype and phenotype). Phenotypic matching, or self-referent phenotype matching (also known as the armpit effect because many animals recognize each other olfactorily - through the smell of their sweat) is based on perceived similarities and differences.


To deal with the problem of in-group membership recognition, natural selection has repeatedly evolved a proximate mechanism known as badging. Badges can be learned and may be one of the simplest, most rudimentary forms of culture presently known (e.g., bird song dialects).

As related individuals possess genes in common, they may produce a cue which is genetically determined and thus possessed by all kin. Detection of such a cue (innate badge) is possible due to a genetic mechanism in which a genetically coded phenotypic trait is tied to a genetically coded basis for recognition of that trait. This is the idea behind recognition alleles.

Of the mechanisms of kin identification, Holmes & Sherman (1983) consider the possibility of recognition alleles (‘innate feature detectors’ as Rushton [1989] called them) as most problematic. However, this ‘green beard effect’, as Dawkins (1976; 1981) calls it, is essentially what badging is; the only difference is that humans (and some song birds) do not grow differently colored beards to identify kin, they may wear false beards of different colors in the form of culture. Human dialects, like bird song dialects, may also function as population markers.

Thus, as Irwin (1987) suggests, many aspects of culture which vary dramatically from tribe to tribe could be understood as learned and culturally transmitted ethnocentric expressions of a genetic predisposition to group bonding and badging, rather than as adaptations of tribe to tribe differences in immediate ecology. Differences in dialect, dress, art, symbol, ritual, scarification, tattoos and/or body paint symptomatic of group membership could fall into this
class of culture traits. Most cultural differences may be assumed to be of the 
badging variety. This would be especially true when sexual organs are 
involved, as in various forms of circumcision, which become cultural and tribal 
requirements for acceptable mates (Irwin, 1987).

As badging of the kind described here evolved, at least in part, to determine 
questions of mate choice, then it would follow that tribal enculturation of this 
variety should be completed prior to mating (Bateson, 1979; Shields, 1982). 
Thus it comes as no surprise that young adolescents are particularly impres-
sionable and prone to the creation and wearing of badges with which to 
identify their ethnic in-groups.

Association/familiarity is a very likely candidate for kin recognition among 
humans. But it seems probable that phenotypic matching is another and 
supplementary mechanism (Alexander, 1979; Essock-Vitale & McGuire, 1980; 
Michod, 1982).

From a sociobiological perspective, as Tönnesmann (1987) points out, one 
should not expect a human being to be willing to cooperate indiscriminately 
with any other conspecific, but to apply criteria such as similarity in physical 
appearance in order to assess the possibility of a genetic relationship. Thus one 
could say with Barkow (1980) that the theory of ethnocentrism is "the converse 
of altruism", and "that we should most readily learn distrust and hostility 
towards those who least resemble us, and towards those with whom we have 
no personal relationship, that is, strangers" (Barkow, 1980; Cf. Rushton, 1980). 
In fact, similarity seems to be related to empathic responses, and, more 
generally, liking between individuals is increased when they perceive each 
other as similar (e.g., Turner, 1982).

Although similarity in physical appearance may serve as an indicator of 
consanguinity in the absence of genealogical knowledge, as Barkow (1980) 
suggests, such knowledge could be fabricated, at least in superficial terms, by 
making people believe that they have descended from common ancestors. 
Ethnic markers, such as skin color, clothing, or behavioral peculiarities, could 
be used for the purpose of making an ethnic group appear to be a group of 
genetically related individuals. Altruistic acts on behalf of non-kin can be 
elicited by taking advantage of the cues produced by evolution for kin 
recognition. According to G.R. Johnson (1986), patriotism in contemporary 
large-scale societies is a brand of manipulated altruism. Large-scale human 
societies have evolved processes of socialization which exploit the cues by 
which altruism originally came to be elicited in the course of several million 
years of hominid evolution.

Rushton (1986, 1989) and Rushton, Russell & Wells (1984) developed 'genetic 
similarity theory': "If a gene can better ensure its own survival by acting so as 
to bring about the reproduction of family members with whom it shares copies, 
then it can also do so by bringing about the reproduction of any organism in
which copies can be found... It can be expected that two individuals within an ethnic group will, on average, be more similar to each other genetically than two individuals from different ethnic groups" (Rushton, 1986; see also Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1989). Kenrick (1989), on the other hand, argued that "people are not so much attracted to similar others, as they are repulsed by those who are not similar". The consequence, however, a biologically based disposition toward ethnocentrism, would be the same (A.Flohr, 1994).

In the remainder of this chapter I shall give the floor to van den Berghe (1981) and Shaw & Wong (1989), who have contributed most to the development of evolutionary ethnocentrism theory.

6.10.3 The Ethnic Phenomenon

In The Ethnic Phenomenon, van den Berghe (1981) formulated the first theory of ethnocentrism as extended kin selection. Van den Berghe’s basic argument is quite simple: Ethnic sentiments are extensions of kinship sentiments. Ethnocentrism is thus an extended form of nepotism - the propensity to favor kin over nonkin. There exists a general behavioral predisposition, in our species as in many others, to react favorably toward other organisms to the extent these organisms are biologically related to the actor. The closer the relationship is, the stronger the preferential behavior. Genes that predispose their carrying organisms to behave nepotistically will be selected for, because, by favoring nepotism, they enhance their own replication. This genetically selected propensity for nepotism is also called kin selection.

The degree of cooperation between organisms can be expected to be a direct function of the proportion of the genes they share. Conversely, the degree of conflict between them is an inverse function of the proportion of shared genes. Ethnicity is a matter of degree of relatedness. People typically form both alliances and cleavages, and grade the violence and destructiveness they inflict on each other on the basis of their real or perceived degree of relatedness. That is, both cooperation and conflict in human societies follow a calculus of inclusive fitness.

An ethnic group (or ethny) can be represented as a cluster of overlapping, ego-centered, concentric kin circles, encompassed within an ethnic boundary. The ethnic boundary is seldom completely closed. More typically, there is some migration, principally of women, among groups. Ethnicity is defined, in the last analysis, by common descent. Ethnic boundaries are created socially by preferential endogamy and physically by territoriality. The prototypical ethny is thus a descent group bounded socially by inbreeding and spatially by territory.

We have evolved, van den Berghe argues, the kind of brain to deal with small-scale, Gemeinschaft-type groups, the prototype of which is the ethny, the 'we-
group’, the ‘in-group’ of intimates who think of each other as an extended family. Indeed, the ethny represents the outer limits of that inbred group of near or distant kinsmen whom one knows as intimates and whom therefore one can trust. One intuitively expects fellow ethnics to behave at least somewhat benevolently toward one because of kin selection, reinforced by reciprocity. The shared genes predispose toward beneficence; the daily interdependence reinforces that kin selection. Fellow ethnics are, in the deepest sense, ‘our people’.

Ethnicity can be manipulated but not manufactured. Unless ethnicity is rooted in generations of shared historical experience, it cannot be created *ex nihilo*. If kinship in the most restricted circle of the nuclear family is sometimes a biological fiction, it is little wonder that the greatly extended kind of kinship implicit in ethnicity should often be putative. The larger the ethny, the more likely this is. Yet - and this is what begs explanation - the fiction of kinship, even in modern industrial societies, has to be sufficiently credible for ethnic solidarity to be effective. One cannot create an instant ethny by creating a myth. The myth has to be rooted in historical reality to be accepted.

What features will be chosen as ethnic markers or badges? There are many possibilities, tending to fall into three main categories of traits. The three are not mutually exclusive, and their respective effectiveness varies greatly according to circumstances. *First*, one can pick a genetically transmitted phenotype, such as skin pigmentation, stature, hair texture, facial features or some such ‘racial’ characteristic. Groups that are socially defined by genetic phenotypes are called ‘races’, and societies that put emphasis on biological traits to differentiate groups within it can be called ‘racist’.

*Second*, one can rely on a man-made ethnic uniform. Members of one group are identified by bodily mutilations and/or adornments carried as visible badges of group belonging. These markers range from clothing and headgear to body painting, tattooing, circumcision, tooth filing and sundry mutilations of the lips, nose and earlobes.

*Third*, the test can be behavioral. Ethnicity is determined by speech, demeanour, manners, rituals, ceremonies, etiquette, esoteric lore or some other proof of competence in a behavioral repertoire characteristic of the group. Language is the supreme test of ethnicity (e.g., the *shibboleth*), because it is almost absolutely ‘fake-proof’. Many, including non-ethnic groups, use particular attitudes or idiosyncrasies as litmus tests of group membership. Some criteria seem to have more staying power than others, and the ones with high heritability appear to have an edge.

The ultimate scarce resource for competing males in the fitness game is reproductive females. Thus, the capture, defense and seduction of women often plays as salient a role in intergroup relations, as it does between the individual
members of the same ethny. One may look at ethnic relations from the point of view of the circulation of women, and arrive at the following formulation. Within the ethny, a group of related men peaceably exchange kinswomen for wives among themselves. After the system has been in operation for several generations, the wives are also related to their husbands; frequently, they are preferentially cousins, in fact. This leads to a certain degree of inbreeding that is all the greater as the ethny is small.

Between ethnies, men use power and violence to secure access to women from other groups, and this reduces the level of inbreeding. When the ethnies in presence are equally matched, male competition for foreign women takes the form of interethnic raids. After an ethnic hierarchy has been established, subordinate-group men loose all or part of their control of ‘their’ women and their reproductive success is curtailed, while upper-group men are polygynous and incorporate subordinate-group women. An ethnic hierarchy, therefore, generally results in a reduced fitness for subordinate-group males. The classical scenario for conquest is to rape the women and kill, castrate or enslave the men.

Asymmetry of reproductive strategies for males and females has another important corollary for ethnic relations. In a situation of ethnic hierarchy, ethnic solidarity between men and women is undermined. The men of the subordinate group are always the losers and therefore have a reproductive interest in overthrowing the system. The women of the subordinate group, however, frequently have the option of being reproductively successful with dominant-group males. Indeed, even where forced into relationships with dominant males, they must cooperate in the interest of their children.

Human hierarchies are vastly more complex that anything found in other species because:

1) Humans form not only individual dominance hierarchies, as do other animals, but also establish group hierarchies.

2) Humans have the capacity to magnify, indeed to reverse, through an increasingly lethal technology of violence, biological inequalities of strength or intelligence between individuals. Biological differences of strength based on age and sex still explain human dominance orders within small groups, such as families or gangs, but human group-based hierarchies are explainable almost entirely in terms of social organization of the technology of violence.

3) The human capacity for conscious deceit (through ideology, *inter alia*) further enhances our species’ capacity for group inequality beyond anything known in other species. Human systems of group inequality, especially the ones perpetuated by all large, centralized states, are almost invariably bolstered by an ideology that disguises the parasitism of the ruling class as either kin selection or reciprocity.

Group stratification is a relatively recent phenomenon in human evolution; it
accompanied the so-called Neolithic Revolution. Group stratification co-evolved with the state. Plunder and predation between human societies existed long before the rise of states. With the emergence of the state, however, parasitism was extended within societies.

In addition to territoriality and hierarchy, humans have also developed group specialization, so that different sympatric ethnies have adapted to different ecological niches. Much of ethnic relations represents niche specialization between ethnies that are thus in much the same ecological relationship to each other as symbionts of different species in the rest of the animal kingdom. Indeed, members of different ethnies often treat each other and regard each other as if they did indeed belong to different species. Treating each other as prey - cannibalism - is but a widespread illustration of this human capacity to draw a sharp line between in-group and out-group, and to create pseudospecific lines between ethnies. Racist ideologies are another example.

6.10.4 The Genetic Seeds of Warfare

Building on Alexander’s (1971, 1979) balance-of-power hypothesis, McEachron & Baer’s (1982) hypothesis on the evolution of weapons, and especially the principle of kin selection (Hamilton, 1964, 1975), Shaw (1985) and Shaw & Wong (1987, 1989) present an elaborate theory of kin selection, ethnocentrism, and the evolution of human warfare. They propose that inclusive fitness considerations have combined with competition over scarce resources, intergroup conflict, and weapon development, to
1) reinforce humanity’s propensity to band together in groups of genetically related individuals;
2) predispose group members to act in concert for their own well-being; and
3) promote xenophobia, fear, and antagonism among genetically related individuals towards strangers.

Shaw & Wong interpret these responses as ‘emerging’ or reinforcing proximate causes which shaped the structure of social behavior in hunter/gatherer groups for 99 percent of humanity’s existence. Their model rests on three premises: That individuals have evolved not only to be egoistic, but to be nepotistically altruistic; that individuals in nucleus ethnic groups, are predisposed to mobilize for resource competition in ways that will enhance inclusive fitness and reproductive potential; and that intergroup conflict/warfare has been positively functional in humanity’s evolution.

An evolutionary approach, the authors emphasize, is essential to understanding humanity’s propensity for warfare. Behavioral strategies to enhance biological goals of survival, reproduction, and genetic fitness have not evolved independently of humanity’s environment: They have coevolved. To decipher
the 'deep structure' of warfare propensities it is thus crucial to bear in mind that evolution always involves adaptation to past, not present environments. Moreover, most genetic evolution of human behavior has occurred over a span of hundreds of thousands of years prior to civilization. A 'red line' throughout the theory is that the evolution of much contemporary social behavior has originated during the past 1 to 2 million years when our ancestors lived in small, tight-knit kin groups. Shaw & Wong call these groups 'nucleus ethnic groups'. Numbering approximately 100 individuals at most, a nucleus ethnic group comprises one’s offspring, one’s siblings’ offspring, and one’s parents and their siblings and their offspring. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that their theory is most relevant to understanding central tendencies in humanity’s propensity for warfare. It does not presume to explain all wars.

Kin selection implies that sexual organisms, such as humans, have evolved not only to be egoistic but to be fundamentally nepotistically altruistic (Flinn & Alexander, 1982). Inclusive fitness and, more specifically, kin selection also provide an ultimate, evolutionary rationale for anticipating origins of ‘self-sacrifice to the death’. As individuals are motivated to maximize their inclusive fitness rather than personal survival and reproduction alone, sacrifice to the death can still have a genetic payoff; it can enhance reproduction and survival of close relatives who share the same genes by common descent. That is, an individual’s genes - the units of natural selection - can still be propagated even though personal fitness is lost in the process.

On the basis of inclusive fitness considerations and coefficients of genetic relatedness, Shaw & Wong show that an individual could emulate ‘true’ sacrificial behavior (go to war and die in the process), without violating rational strategy considerations since indirect gain (assuming success in conflict) outweighs the alternative of nonaction in units of inclusive fitness. Inclusive fitness has also been demonstrated to be an Evolutionarily Stable Strategy (ESS). This means that it would not likely be easily displaced by competing ‘behavioral strategies’ (that is, pure selfishness or unrestrained altruism) because of its superiority in maximizing reproduction and survival throughout evolution (Breuer, 1982; von Schilcher & Tennant, 1984).

The axiom of inclusive fitness is crucial to understanding the importance of ethnicity in the expression of humanity’s propensity for warfare for five reasons. First, it implies that individuals judge net benefits of engaging in competition not only in terms of direct private gain but also in terms of indirect gain associated with the well-being of genetically related individuals. It thus provides a social rationale for related individuals banding together to pursue competition (nepotistic altruism).
Second, inclusive fitness considerations militate against free-riders (cheaters). Third, inclusive fitness considerations reduce problems of unequal distribution of the spoils of warfare. Fourth, inclusive fitness considerations enhance the process of selecting a group leader. Finally, the axiom of inclusive fitness allows to postulate how death can be tolerated in warfare situations. As shocking and destabilizing as the death of a group member may be, inclusive fitness considerations provide a rational basis for accepting costs of death in warfare. The considerations raised above interact to make mobilization for conflict or warfare a more viable, cohesive strategy if pursued among related kin. From an evolutionary perspective, these considerations are the bedrock upon which Shaw & Wong link ethnic mobilization and the seeds of warfare.

To assume that ethnocentrism is a universal syndrome, and thus a primary cause of warfare, is appealing, according to the authors, for several reasons. First, it seems to be virtually universal. The crucial change in humanity’s past involved an increased prevalence of other human groups competing for scarce resources. To counter this competition, groups of tightly related kin (nucleus ethnic groups) began to ally and merge through intermarriage. Failure of nucleus ethnic groups to cooperate in fending off competition or threats from a larger group meant reduced access to scarce resources, subjugation, and even extinction. Alternatively, the capacity of Homo sapiens to respond to competition, to counter a larger group with an equally large group, would have yielded a balance of power necessary to assure security and, perhaps, the status quo. Since failure to maintain a balance of power could have resulted in extinction, groups and their expansion figure as forces of selection in Shaw & Wong’s theory. Motivated by resource competition, conflict, and warfare, struggles to maintain balances of power gave rise to more complex societal units (e.g., chiefdoms, states) which continued the legacy of intergroup warfare. Groups as forces of selection must have reinforced suspicion and intolerance of out-group members as well as war proneness during a long period of humanity’s past. Because evolution always involves adaptation to past, not present, environments, Shaw & Wong interpret the processes involved as a seed of humanity’s propensity for warfare. They are indicative of the ‘deep structure’ of human nature itself. Alexander (1971, 1979) proposed that other human groups would have become a problem under three conditions. First, a particularly successful group may have reproduced to the extent it reached a critical mass, fissioned, and produced two groups. These, in turn, may have competed for scarce resources in the same, familiar niche. Second, the distribution of scarce food resources may have become increasingly concentrated, prompting groups to reside and compete in closer proximity to one another. Third, groups may have migrated
into already occupied territory, fostering competition and conflict. It is the first and second process, accompanied by increasingly rapid population growth, that likely triggered sustained intergroup competition. Joyce (1987) argued that changes in the distribution of food resources were probably the single most important catalyst in this competition.

If resources are defensible, and if conflict is inevitable, as McEachron & Baer (1982; see Ch. 4) have explained, it makes better evolutionary sense for groups to compete to resolve ownership of the resources as groups rather than being submitted to both the internal conflict and decreased inclusive fitness that would accompany a merger.

In accordance with Alexander’s balance of power hypothesis, Shaw & Wong stress the point that in the past one million year or so an increasing proportion of man’s ‘hostile environment’ has been other nucleus ethnic groups engaged in resource competition. While the unit of selection remains that of the gene and their individual carriers, intergroup conflict has rendered groups of ever-expanding size and internal structure effective forces of selection. Expansion of nucleus ethnic groups through intermarriage, or their expansion via amalgamation with other nucleus ethnic groups, was motivated by the fact that other groups were doing so. Failure to maintain a balance of power (initially in terms of numbers only), would inevitably mean the domination of one group by a larger group and, consequently, unequal access to fitness enhancing resources.

As Hamilton (1975) observed, to raise mean fitness in hunter-gatherer groups either new territory or outside mates had to somehow be obtained. Capture of out-group females through successful warfare, Shaw & Wong continue, serves three functions: (1) It reduces inbreeding depression by increasing the number of available partners for reproduction; (2) it increases variation in the warring group’s genetic stock; and (3) it contributes to group size. The latter consideration would have been especially important in environments where groups were effective forces of selection. The practice of taking females for loot would undoubtedly have set rival groups on edge and reinforced xenophobia and out-group enmity in the process.

Avoidance of inbreeding depression could have been accommodated by (1) the transfer of males between groups, (2) the transfer of females between groups, or (3) raiding of other groups for females. With everything else held constant, any of these strategies would have served the purpose. However, a propensity for kin selection and nepotistic altruism would favor some inbreeding. This would have led to an aversion toward extensive intergroup transfers. Not to have done so would have led to a weakening of kin cohesion within groups. So, raiding for females would have thus been most preferable.

Furthermore, groups as forces of selection and the balance-of-power process would have placed a priority on larger group size. Since reciprocal exchange of individuals between groups would have stabilized group size, raiding for
women would again have been attractive. It is also important to acknowledge that males would have been the predominant fighters in offensive or defensive war. Balances of power and intergroup competition would thus have placed a premium on retaining males in the group. Related males would be more inclined to fight to the death in the service of inclusive fitness than would unrelated males (brought in by intergroup transfer). This consideration would further tip the balance against intergroup transfer of males, which is so prevalent among nonhuman primates, toward plunder for females. A second-best strategy would have been the intergroup transfer of females between nucleus ethnic groups to maintain alliances. Indeed, intermarriage involving transfer of females between nearby and perhaps related nucleus ethnic groups (through group fissioning) would have helped to make alliances possible, thus contributing to groups as forces of selection. The indirect effect of these inbreeding/outbreeding strategies would have been reinforcement of fear and hostility toward members of out-groups as individuals who might steal one’s wife and daughters. Taking of females through raiding and warfare is, of course, evident in the behavior of tribes today (van den Berghe, 1981). Plunder and rape are also well recorded aspects of virtually every war involving postindustrial society and can reasonably be expected to be one of the fears promoting xenophobia between hostile states.

From Shaw & Wong’s perspective, the important point is not whether warfare per se was or was not the singular force in the rise of tribes, chiefdoms, and states. Nor do they feel obliged to argue that groups were in a constant state of warfare with one another. Rather, it is the threat of resource competition, competitive exclusion, and warfare that matters. With Alexander (1971), Schmookler (1984), Falger (1987), and others, they submit that balance of power strategies evolved to help minimize these threats from expanding out-groups. The motivation of one group to expand (ally or merge) was essentially that another competing group had done so. Balance-of-power strategies thus represent a major vehicle by which ‘peace’ was extended beyond members of one’ own nucleus ethnic group to members of the newly expanded group. As a raison d’être for alliances or mergers of nucleus ethnic groups, balances of power also broadened the boundaries of ethnocentrism and redirected out-group enmity to competitors of ever-increasing size and societal complexity. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that regardless of the exact process that led to group expansion, larger groups would likely have enjoyed a competitive advantage over smaller groups (everything else being equal). In the evolutionary long run, larger groups would have displaced smaller groups and their members would thus have staked out a larger share of humanity’s gene pool. This implies that behavioral predispositions that facilitated group expansion would have been retained and incorporated into the more permanent repertoire of individual and group behavior (see also Bigelow, 1969, 1972).
6.10.4.1 Identification Mechanism
To understand how humanity’s alleged propensity for warfare finds continuous expression in a given group context, let us briefly examine the bond between the individual and his or her membership in the larger group.

The first variable in Shaw & Wong’s model, the recognition markers (RM), takes on potent heuristic and emotive value in demarcating in-group/out-group boundaries. RMs include language, religion, phenotype, homeland, and myth of common descent. Language, religion and phenotypic characteristics are highly effective stimuli in shaping perception and stereotyping (Ashmore & Delboca, 1981; Hamilton, 1987). In situations of congruence, recognition markers reinforce each other as criteria of group allegiance. Most effective congruence will occur when RMs are convincingly anthropomorphized in the person of a charismatic leader.

The second variable in the model is affective intensity (AI). This refers to the extent that cognitively perceived recognition markers are accompanied by emotively charged motivation for action.

The third variable is size of the larger group. Group size (GS) denotes in-group membership as prescribed by the territorial boundaries of the larger group. It is reasonable to expect that the larger the group, the more the identification mechanism will have difficulty in functioning. The reason is that Homo sapiens is best equipped to deal with small groups in terms of intense emotional relationships (Ike, 1987).

To determine the strength of the bond (GB) between an individual and his or her group, the identification mechanism (IM) functions as follows:

\[ GB = f(IM) \mid [RM, AI_i, GS] \]

The equation states that the effectiveness of the identification mechanism (IM) in linking the individual’s inclusive fitness concerns to the welfare of the given larger group is a function of three factors. These are the degree of congruence of the five recognition marker (RM), the affective intensity associated with each of the five recognition markers (AI), and the population size of the larger group (GS). As the degree of congruence of the recognition markers increases, cognitive processes in the identification mechanism are expected to function more effectively to select and bond the individual to a preferred larger group. As affective intensity associated with each recognition marker increases, the individual’s emotional bond to the group is expected to become stronger. And, everything else equal, the efficiency of cognitive and emotive processes in the identification mechanism is expected to decline as group size increases.

When one or more of the five recognition markers are out of step or not present, ambiguity presents itself to the cognitive and emotive processes in the identification mechanism. Allegiance to the larger group is automatically weakened. The identification mechanism tends to function most effectively...
(with least ambiguity) in an ethnically homogeneous society. When the identification mechanism operates in situations of nonambiguity (cultural ethnic groups), strong nationalism results. Inclusive fitness priorities are well aligned with interests of the larger group, in-group amity/out-group enmity is easily transferred to the larger group’s boundaries, mobilization for conflict against out-groups is relatively easy, and continuities in humanity’s propensity for warfare are highly visible. When the identification mechanism operates in situations of ambiguity, such as multiethnic states, group cohesiveness is threatened. In environments shaped by balance-of-power considerations, this becomes problematic - a noncohesive group may not be trusted by its members to foster and protect their inclusive fitness priorities. When group cohesion is threatened, the identification mechanism will tend to direct membership and allegiance to a subgroup, thus fostering intergroup strife, secessionist movements within the larger group, and perhaps civil war. To avoid this, cultural incentives must be introduced to foster and protect inclusive fitness priorities. In this case, patriotism is typically used by leaders to promote group cohesion and mobilize for warfare.

In the case that the identification mechanism fails to function, individuals may cease to identify with the larger group, and realign themselves into smaller groups. These smaller groups would represent new foci where recognition markers, group size, and affective intensity tend toward congruency, at least in sufficient strength to enable the identification mechanism to function.

A perspective very similar to van den Berghe’s and Shaw & Wong’s theories has been presented by Vanhanen (1991, 1992).

6.10.5 Criticism

So far a brief outline of Shaw & Wong’s theory of kin selection, ethnocentrism and the seeds of warfare. "Inclusive fitness may account for xenophobia and kin group warfare", Somit (1990) commented, "but I find it unpersuasive when stretched to explain nationalism, patriotism, and contemporary warfare. I doubt, for example, that very many of the millions of soldiers who died during the last two great wars were motivated to any significant degree by the desire, conscious or unconscious, to maximize their inclusive fitness". Furthermore, one gets the impression that the authors view war as a spontaneous manifestation of mass sentiment. Little weight is given to the personal ambitions and animosities of those in high office, political rivalries, dynastic aspirations, or the capacity of the regime to compel, as well as persuade, military service. Not the many but the few make the ultimate decision to take up arms (Somit, 1990).

When forced to explain variability of culture and diversity of social behavior found in different parts of the world and at different periods of time, van den
Berghe and Shaw & Wong as well as other evolutionary theorists have to do this by invoking the usual and proximate *explananda* such as specific historical circumstances and contingencies, particular cultural patterns, sociological processes and psychological mechanisms (Richmond, 1987).

The question, for example, "why were some primitive peoples more belligerent than others, and some not belligerent at all?" cannot be easily answered by Shaw & Wong’s theory. Given that band-level and tribal peoples were all more or less ethnocentric, where does the huge variation in belligerence stem from? Clearly factors such as the intertribal political constellation, ecological constraints, cultural traditions and mores, historical contingencies, societal configurations, and individual cognitions and inclinations here interact in a highly complex fashion. Other than Shaw & Wong seem to believe, many non-belligerent primitive peoples are known to have existed (besides the Eskimo, Semai and Siriono they mention), and many of them even still exist (see Ch. 7). The institute of (primitive) war has been subject to changes in form, function and motivation related to sociopolitical levels and historical stages. The development of warrior sodalities within tribal societies, and of military aristocracies within states, for example, have brought about new levels of typical social motivation for war which had not existed previously.

For the evidence of historical wars (wars in recorded human history) - in order to illustrate human ‘war proneness’ - Shaw & Wong quote the ‘magical’ figures of 14,500 wars during the last 5,600 years of recorded history, with peace comprising only 8% of the entire history of recorded civilization. These figures have been shown, however, to be a hoax or a mystification (Jongman & van der Dennen, 1988). It is one of those myths which have acquired the status of ‘scientific fact’ due to uncritical quoting of ‘authoritative’ sources. Jongman & van der Dennen have shown that these imaginary figures have no factual basis whatsoever.

Wars and warlike actions have been, were, and are in the contemporary world highly exceptional (and mostly marginal) events (in spite of the history books which capitalize on war and the rumours of war): See Harbottle, 1904; Bodart,

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5 Jongman & van der Dennen (1988) discovered, partly by sheer luck, the historical source of these ‘magical figures’: the work of an obscure French philosopher, Odysse Barot, *Lettres sur la philosophie de l'histoire* (Paris, 1864), in which Barot claims to have counted 8397 treaties between 1496 B.C. and A.D. 1861 (which were later extrapolated to 14,500 wars during a period of 5560 years), and, furthermore, to have found the ratio of 13 years of war to every year of peace (which is the basis for the rather nonsensical figure of 8% of peace during the history of civilization). These figures are total fantasy to begin with (Barot nowhere presents any shred of evidence), erroneously interpreted, and tenaciously presented as facts in the pertinent literature, mostly with the addition of the equally ‘magical’ number of 3,640,000,000 people killed in these wars. The war figures hoax has been exposed earlier by Haydon (1962), and Singer & Small (1972), but they were unable to explain the arbitrariness of the figures, or to trace the historical source of the grandiose claims.

The total number of war casualties during the last 5 centuries - including the 20th century with its two World Wars - fluctuates between 1.5 and 3 percent of the total population. Indeed, compared to the number of victims of the infectious diseases that plague mankind, this number dwindles into insignificance. "Those who enjoy wars can excuse their taste by saying that wars after all are much less deadly than disease" Richardson (1960) remarked sardonically in his *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels*. These figures are not meant to disparage the problem of war, but to put it in proper perspective. The sober fact is that wars are not nearly as frequent or normal as Shaw & Wong seem to envisage. Neither normatively/idealtypically nor statistically (summing over all possible dyads in the international system) can wars be considered 'normal'. Recently, Barash (1991) reached a comparable conclusion: "By some measures, war has actually been relatively unimportant on the human scene. Based on the number of national states existing since 1815, there have been approximately 16,000 nation-years, and during this time, war has occupied 'only' 600 of these nation-years, or somewhat less than 4 percent of the possible total. The twentieth century has been, overall, a very warlike one, and yet modern warfare, even with its enormous capacity for devastation, was directly responsible for fewer than about 2 percent of all human deaths occurring during that time" (Barash, 1991).

What seems to be the most serious problem in the evolutionary ethnocentrism theory as exposed by Shaw & Wong is that as soon as group competition for resources and the balance-of-power concept is introduced, the foregoing considerations of kin selection, nepotism, xenophobia and ethnocentrism seem to dwindle into insignificance as their role as explanatory categories vanishes. The theories presented by van den Berghe and Shaw & Wong also do not adequately explain why warfare is not more widely distributed in the animal kingdom.

The most scathing criticism of (evolutionary) ethnocentrism theory has been formulated by Ferguson & Whitehead (1992):
"With astonishing frequency, in popular media and even scholarly tracts, one finds collective violence explained as an outgrowth of 'tribal loyalties'. With greater or lesser biologism, it is asserted that humans are fundamentally tribalistic in orientation, and that relations between tribes are inherently hostile. In other words, people tend to identify blindly with their own social group or 'tribe', and to react with virtually instinctive animosity toward those belonging
to other groups...
Stereotypes of savages notwithstanding, it would be an extremely rare occurrence for members of one tribe to attack members of another simply because they are different, apart from any other source of conflict... Any idea that an innate sense of tribalism inclines people toward collective violence is sheer fantasy". In other words, ethnic conflicts do not occur in an economic or political vacuum; but at the same time the salience of the political and economic dimensions of the conflict make it increasingly invisible as an 'ethnic' conflict.

6.10.6 Epilogue

As soon as xenophobic fear of other groups combines with feelings of moral and social superiority of one's own group, it takes relatively little effort to escalate conflicts to violent levels of settlement. Without some form of group-conforming collective perception, however, intergroup violence would be hardly imaginable (Falger, 1987, 1994).