Peace and War

Cross-Cultural Perspectives

Edited by
Mary LeCron Foster
and
Robert A. Rubinstein

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Preface

Anthropologists often say that their intensive fieldwork, the descriptive and comparative analyses resulting from that fieldwork, and the theories concerning the nature of culture and society that they develop from the analyses, provide unique insights into the nature of human problems. Unfortunately, these insights seldom reach those who must deal with global problems on a day-to-day basis. There are various reasons for this, some of which are discussed in this volume.

Motivated by a concern that anthropological insights which might be of value in finding solutions to the world's most pressing problems were available only to the initiated, we organized a series of symposium panels on peace and war, held at the Eleventh Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, in August 1983. Our hope was to stimulate further anthropological involvement with this topic and to encourage anthropologists to increase their role as policy consultants on a national and an international scale.

Because many of the participants had little experience in addressing a constituency broader than their own peers, yet were interested in exploring how their work could have a broader impact on policy, we invited a group of experts on war and peace policy and research from other areas of social science to join us in Vancouver and help us to broaden our perspective.

Our discussions began with a two-day pre-Congress workshop at Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia. Most participants attended both this session and the two-day series of symposia at the Congress proper. The preliminary, less formal, discussions gave us the opportunity not only to think theoretically about a selection of papers delivered within the workshop setting, but to begin to think of steps in the process of enhancing the policymaking potential of anthropology.

Out of these discussions emerged the decision to give our efforts a more permanent character by proposing the establishment of a commission on peace studies as one of a series of already established IUAES commissions on global problems. Such a commission would provide a forum for research and discussion of peace and war-related issues on a worldwide scale.

In Vancouver, we formalized our proposal and presented it to the Executive Council of the IUAES, which voted unanimously to include a

Commission on the Study of Peace as one of its ongoing activities. The Commission has since set up a series of international committees to pursue the goals outlined in the commission proposal.

The traditional focus of social and cultural anthropology, or ethnology, is a relatively small, easily bounded geographical area with a fairly homogeneous population which can be studied over time in such a way as to isolate shared belief systems, social institutions, ritualized activities, methods of production, and social and environmental interaction of various kinds. The passage of time may or may not be taken into account. Formerly, it was usually ignored, and societies were studied as if isolated in time and space. At present, outside influences are increasingly viewed as fundamental to the understanding of any society, and all societies are viewed as dynamic, constantly changing entities, influenced by, and influencing the world around them.

Focusing on different aspects of conflict, the papers in this volume build from the role of the individual in his or her society, through the dynamics of specific conflict situations, to discussions of the global nature of modern militarism, finally discussing more specifically a role for anthropology in policy formation leading toward a more peace-oriented future.

Mary LeCron Foster

Robert A. Rubinstein

Introduction

Mary LeCron Foster and Robert A. Rubinstein

With the dawn of the nuclear age, the gap between our ability to resolve technical problems and our knowledge about how to solve social problems took on new and ominous dimensions. The problems that beset us in the nuclear era, although triggered by technological advances, are largely social; we must organize our international relations to cope with the military implications of this destructive force. To date, attempts at designing such international relations have relied primarily on physical science expertise. In the face of the broadening scope of nuclear-related technology there are signs of increasing reliance on physical science knowledge, often to the exclusion of social considerations. Yet, instead of increasing our reliance on physical science, it seems to us especially prudent and important to strengthen the role played by the systematic understanding of human behavior in attempts at devising new methods of furthering international understanding and cooperation.

As science and its product, technology, have become our twin gods, we have neglected the behavioral knowledge necessary to control the threat of destruction that our technological advances have created.

Anthropology is the behavioral science that has delved most deeply into the question of how diverse societies solve their social problems. Anthropologists, almost uniquely, also appreciate the degree to which members of human societies are affected by the cultural milieu into which they have been born and in which they are raised. It is customary to take for granted the subtle chains of belief and institutionalized values that govern our daily reactions to social and physical phenomena. It is especially easy to overlook the fact that these are *not universal* to the human condition.

The nuclear confrontation that threatens us today, and the dangers to global survival that it entails, force us to realize that we must change the fundamental premises of what constitutes power among and within groups of individuals if we are to avoid the prevailing deadly pattern of threat, counterthreat, and escalation.

Never has there been a period in which human wisdom is more needed, nor a period when the right decisions must be made if humanity is to survive. Yet policy is too frequently shaped by unexamined ideological

assumptions that were more appropriate to a past technological era, or by assumptions that conflict in unrecognized ways with those of other peoples with whom we disagree, or by assumptions so rigidly fixed that alternative ways of devising strategies for reaching agreements never come to mind. Knowledge of how other societies cope with problems of inter- or intra-group conflict often suggest helpful new methods for conflict resolution. Wisdom in resolving social problems is best derived from knowledge of possibilities and past experiences.

Anthropologists have gathered data on a wide range of cultural solutions to human problems, and they share theoretical insights that make anthropology a potentially useful policy tool. Unfortunately, anthropologists have said little on the subject of peace and war. During and immediately after World War II, Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson worked on the topic, and later Mead (1962, 1965) proposed that anthropology engage in war-related research with a view to making policy recommendations. Since 1965, a handful of books as well as scattered articles written by anthropologists have dealt with aspects of peace/war issues (e.g., Fried et al., 1967; Nettleship et al., 1975; Simonis et al., 1983; Ferguson, 1984). The predominant focus of these works has been on war, mainly among nonliterate people, and few have sought to contribute to contemporary policy discussions for building peace. Moreover, despite this sporadic interest, war and peace research has never become a central topic for discussion in anthropology. Contributors to this book feel strongly that anthropologists must move toward policy involvement, applying their knowledge of the dynamics of human conflict to the problem of securing a peaceful world.

Both anthropological and social-psychological research show that individuals learn at a very early age the value systems reflected in the institutions and rituals practiced by their societies. This institutionalization is what many anthropologists mean by the term "culture." A child's reality, as an adult's, is a cultural reality; the child's caretakers reflect their cultural heritage in every gesture, every word, every social encounter, every prohibition or approbation, and every organization of the child's time, space, and human interactions. All societies provide means both to encourage and discourage conflict. It is a psychobiological universal that frustration can lead to aggression. Hence, to be viable, a society must provide an acceptable means of directing the anger that stems from frustration. Warfare is, in many societies, an acceptable outlet. It is not, however, innate or inevitable. Human groups can and do exist without warfare.

To have warfare, military institutions must be created and warfare and warriors glorified. To be sustained, martial institutions must be reinforced by the periodic elevation of competitors to the status of enemies of society. The papers in this volume show that because warfare requires institu-

tionalization and social reinforcement, its causes are multiple, covert, and culturally generated. Groups create institutions, and the interaction between individual and group tends to maintain and reinforce the belief systems that the institutions represent. Military power and its dangers have increased steadily, in part because of the transformation from state to nation-state in the process of world industrialization (Gellner, 1983; Worsley, 1984), coupling technological advances with the fusion of diverse ethnic and religious groups into larger political units. Often these powers have also elevated belief systems to national loyalties that often crosscut internal ethnic and religious differences. Since groups create institutions, the interaction between individual and group tends to maintain and reinforce the belief systems that the institutions represent. On the level of the nation-state, with technological advances in communication systems, this reinforcement and perpetuation achieve great power.

Although the papers in this volume focus principally on the cultural factors that give rise to or support war, several authors explicitly recognize the underlying psychobiological imperatives that require solutions for the aggressive and other drives, of which warfare is but one among a variety of possible solutions (Clark, Frank, Foster). None of the contributors believes war to be a human biological necessity.

The papers in this volume have been grouped into labeled sections in order to point out convergences of salient points in the authors' arguments. By so doing, we have tried to build from an initial focus on the individual and the meaning of conflict in his or her particular cultural environment, through the dynamics of particular conflicts, to more specific considerations of the potential role of anthropology in confronting peace/war issues. That these papers can be fitted together in other equally enlightening combinations highlights both the nascent state of anthropological studies of peace and the richness of the anthropological data that can be brought to bear on those studies.

Part I, The Individual, Community and Conflict, discusses the interplay between psychobiological and cultural universals as they are reflected in social institutions. Goldschmidt selects anthropological data from a variety of social groups in order to demonstrate how individual role gratification is encoded into particular military institutions. Lomnitz provides a case study showing the way in which the lack of socially approved outlets for masculine self-realization leads to the formation of urban street gangs which gain power and self-esteem through intimidation and threat. This is a socially disruptive expression of Mexican adherence to an ideal of *machismo.*

Huyghe, like Goldschmidt and Lomnitz, focuses on means of establishing male role gratification. He describes the ritual channeling of the mas-

culine need for power among a group of New Guinea head-hunters and the way in which a variety of social institutions work together to support and perpetuate the practice and the associated belief systems. Although this form of warfare seems particularly abhorrent to Westerners, it demonstrates that there seems to be no universal norm by which degrees of cultural pathology can be measured. Our periodic mass killings would quite possibly seem far less moral to New Guinean tribal peoples than the selective or sporadic taking of a few heads.

Although many anthropologists find modern warfare morally reprehensible, Greenhouse shows clearly that for many American (and in her example, Christian) fundamentalists the question of the morality of wartime killing does not arise. Their enculturation toward militarism is as unquestioned as is that of Huyghe's New Guinea headhunters. In both cases war is fought because of belief in some higher good, and not because of personal aggressiveness or anger—in fact local conflict is studiously avoided. For the Americans described by Greenhouse there is no moral opposition between peace and war because both are supported by a transcending belief in the need for order, discipline, and faith.

Randall provides a chilling picture of the barrenness, uniformity, and lack of personal creativity of American peacetime military service abroad. It provides little personal satisfaction for soldiers and their dependents, except the security of an enduring job with monetary compensation and some possibility of moving up the hierarchical ladder through faithful service. Randall speculates that the lack of personal self-realization that such a rigidly organized and hierarchically determined life provides may be, in truth, a cultural pathology.

In trying to better understand the causes of war it is necessary to ask what individual and group satisfactions war provides, and for what innate drives it provides an outlet. This question is explored in the papers by Foster and Clark. Their analyses suggest that if war is to be abolished because its cultural utility is diminished or eliminated, other institutions providing alternative outlets for the same drives must be substituted.

Conflict between groups tends to develop its own internal dynamic. The papers in Part II, The Dynamics of Conflict, explore this tendency in specific situations. This dynamic is often perpetuated by the perception of those who are different from oneself as inferior, evil, and hence to be feared, or by conflicting claims for possession of resources. Often both factors are involved. Exclusive possession of a particular religious "truth" or other cherished ideology frequently justifies dominance over, or elimination of, those who do not share it.

Furst provides us with a microcosmic, ethnohistorical account of land disputes among lineages in ancient Mexico. Battles were fought and claims

justified by appeal to contrasting origin myths. Doughty's theme is also ethnic, revolving around the right of one Peruvian group to control the productive lives of another. Gonzalez shows that ethnic differences can also be exploited, though misunderstood, in planning modern military strategy. Gamst meticulously describes the history of the interplay among ethnicity, control of resources, and technological means in the unending struggles among peoples in the Horn of Africa. Kehoe's dicussion of the history of the spread of Christianity nicely illustrates the fact that a pacifist ideology can be made to serve military purposes.

Part III, Social Scientists React, includes some strongly expressed arguments against the military practices and policies of today's superpowers by a varied group of social scientists: Frank, a psychiatrist well known for his insightful analyses of war and its causes (Frank, 1967); Nader, a social and legal anthropologist; Melman, a specialist in the social aspects of industrial engineering and a pioneer in advocacy of industrial conversion from military to nonmilitary uses; Sarkesian, a professor of military history; and Tishkov, a Soviet ethnologist. These papers form an interesting group because they are examples of the advocacy positions that stem from exposure to and identification with a variety of disciplinary sources. Social scientists often fail to speak out on issues that they are particularly well suited to address. Well-reasoned protest can play a useful role.

Part IV, Conflict and the Nation-State, is also concerned with more general political and social issues rather than the more particularized conflict dynamics that was the focus of Part II. Brucan discusses the connections between the ideologies and the institutions of modern nation-states. He argues that by broadening the scope of a given ideology in the service of social control, today's nation-states have overcome some of the earlier conflicts between social classes and ethnic units. However the expansion of nationalist ideology increases the power of the state at the cost of cultural diversity (see also Gellner, 1983:39). Ideology and the drive for power become inextricably interwoven, creating an intolerable international situation which can be overcome only by the shifting of ideological priorities toward the goal of world peace.

Brucan's paper sets the stage for the major theme of the papers in this section: that there is a great need to discover ideological commonalities among the world's communities and to focus on interdependencies rather than differences, in both research and policy recommendations. As much of the dependency is economic, these papers emphasize the fact that durable peace will be impossible to achieve if the world is polarized between the haves and the have-nots.

Like Brucan, Cohen takes a social-evolutionary perspective. Both are interested in the processes of nationalization, competing ideologies, and

the struggle for power. Cohen reviews the history of industrialization of the world's societies, arguing that industrialization decreases rather than increases war-proneness, and that a primary international goal should be the development of industry and technology in the Third World. Pinxten futhers this argument by stressing that military use of economic resources for "deterrence" saps the strength of social and economic development efforts (cf. Melman, this volume).

Silverberg emphasizes the need to integrate social resources and, like Cohen, is optimistic about the trend and the outcome. He uses anthropological data to support the view that worldwide social integration is not just desirable but also likely. Although complex societies are characterized by an internal organization of social and ideological diversity, most individuals have multiple interests and social identifications which work for integration of the whole because of crosscutting social networks. The spread of such networks across national boundaries bodes well for ultimate ideological and social integration and world security.

Worsley challenges widespread assumptions about the nature of international affairs with the assertion that, in reality, politics is always ultimately about ideas, whether political, religious, or economic. Since "political realism," based on the threat of force, leads toward nuclear destruction, it is clearly failing. This dangerous situation can be averted only by a search for alternative conceptions of the goals of international relations.

If the dangers of nuclear disaster are to be avoided, new approaches to international relations must be explored. International security can best be achieved if nations forgo the temptation to denounce one another as evil or demonic and attempt instead to resolve common problems by establishing common goals.

War has no single cause; neither can peace be achieved through a single act. Causality derives from a multitude of interconnected factors. To avoid mass slaughter in the interests of securing the power of one's own group, it is essential to begin to view other societies as aggregates of human beings who have evolved solutions different from our own to human problems which we all share, rather than as adversaries. A correlate need is to understand ourselves and the underlying reasons for our own propensity for international confrontation. The contributors to this volume believe that anthropology can make a significant contribution to the achievement of both of these goals.

To this end, the papers in Part V, Anthropology and Policy, address the question of anthropology as a policy science. To date, anthropology's greatest policy contributions probably have been in the fields of health care and development programs in Third World countries. Here, planners, those carrying out the plans, and those affected by the planning, have been in

immediate contact with one another. In contrast, in international planning there is little or no direct contact between policymakers and those most affected by their plans. Despite this difference, anthropology can provide insights into the nature of the intersection of belief systems and social institutions, as well as into factors underlying change and stability, can add a valuable dimension to both national and international planning.

Mandelbaum believes in the virtual inevitability of a nuclear disaster, a disaster that will thrust the world into a second stage of the nuclear age in which we will be forced into a reorganization of values and priorities. Governments should foresee such an eventuality and start preparing to cope with it. In this task anthropology can make a significant contribution. Maday points out why, to date, anthropology has not been notably successful as a policy science. Brucan calls attention to still further limitations to the effectiveness of social science, including anthropology, and calls for a methodological revolution. The new methodology would study social systems from the top down, rather than moving from the particular to the global. He also calls for increased objectivity. Although total objectivity is undoubtedly impossible, there is little doubt that social scientists in all countries need to expand their own ideological flexibility if they are to be as effective as the international crisis requires.

Beeman provides an example of the kind of ideological inflexibility that too often guides foreign policy decisions and makes them counterproductive. He argues that in the Iran/American hostage crisis, "principles of belief" served as rationalizations for actions already undertaken and blocked actions that were potentially more promising for reaching an agreement. Rubinstein examines the structure of the policymaking process in order to provide insight into the factors that determine whether strategies are open-ended and flexible, or of the rigid and entrenched type, as criticized also by Beeman. He explores ways in which policymakers can increase the likelihood of choosing strategies that allow for a greater number of possible options, providing a greater possibility for reaching satisfactory agreements. Such an approach would take account of a wider variety of information, including not only the cultural premises from which an adversary's strategies are derived but also one's own cultural biases that may be impeding progress.

The goal of this book is to encourage anthropologists to explore the potential of their own discipline in the task of increasing internal and external stability, as well as to give nonanthropologists some understanding of the kind of insights that anthropology can provide. This book is an invitation. It does not answer the questions: Why war? and, How do we achieve peace? Rather, by displaying the range of questions and a part of the value anthropology holds for better answering these questions, we hope

that anthropologists and other behavioral scientists will begin to treat the study of peace as a legitimate and central topic of inquiry. We see this book as a beginning because it builds toward the prospect of a broadened role for anthropology in helping to improve policy strategy in the task of creating a more stable world.

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PART I

THE INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY, AND CONFLICT

1

Personal Motivation and Institutionalized Conflict

Walter Goldschmidt

If anthropology is to contribute to the understanding of warfare, it must adopt a more dynamic approach. In particular, it must take cognizance of personal motivation and examine the interplay between individual interests and the social order (see also Huyghe, this volume). We have by now become well enough aware that individuals are shaped by their culture and live their lives in the context of a social system, but in learning this lesson, we have failed to examine the way tradition and structure are themselves shaped by human interests. To the social anthropologist, the individual is lost in structure, emerging, where he must, merely as a social role; to the cultural anthropologist the individual is baked in a "cake of custom," following the dictates of established and sacred tradition; to the psychological anthropologist he or she is stamped in the mold of traditional upbringing. Such treatment of the individual runs counter to our common sense notions about human behavior, to our perception of ourselves as actors in the human scene and, I think, to ethnographic realities as well.

In this essay I propose the concept of the human career as the focal element in the dynamic relationship between individual and community. By career I mean the trajectory of the individual life as it operates in pursuit of satisfaction. In order to understand what this means, it will be necessary to give the briefest possible summary of a theoretical treatise I am currently working on, a manuscript that I have been calling *Dynamic Anthropology* or, alternately, *Purpose and Progress in Social Life* (Goldschmidt, 1982). In it I argue that human motivation for self-gratification is the prime mover in the formulation of social structure. This self-gratification is not hedonism, however, for it is concerned not only with physical needs and desires or with what are often identified as social needs, but more importantly with the gratification of what I call the symbolic self.

The character of the human career, as with virtually all things human beings do, is set by the cultural definition of the situation, and basic career

activities relate to the needs for social maintenance. We must, however, emphasize the *symbolic* aspect of career activities. The transition into humanity was accomplished by the formulation of a symbolic world, a superimposed system of understandings, of meanings and of sentiments that were shared by a population by virtue of systematic communication. Ever since, humans have lived in a symbolic as well as a real world. Language structures the cognitive elements of the symbolic world; ritual the emotional ones. There are three things that must be said about this symbolic world: first, it is a *structured* system that defines the whole relevant universe, second, each individual is a part of that systematic universe (and to him or herself, the most important part), and third, this symbolic world does not replace the world of physical reality, which remains with all its force and effect on human life, even though that physical world is interpreted and understood in terms of the symbolic world.

It is also necessary to appreciate the role of values, for everything in this world of understanding is given emotional valence. The world is not merely a cognitive system, it is also a system of sentiments. It is for the communication and coordination of sentiment that ritual and the arts were created, just as language communicates cognitive structure. (There has been debate over whether Neanderthal people had the power of speech, but there is no doubt that they had ritual.) When we stop to realize that the understandings and sentiments that constitute the symbolic world are acquired by each individual in the process of maturation, with all the attendant pains and pleasures, satisfactions and disappointments that such learning engenders, we should have no difficulty understanding the universality of values.

The most important thing each person learns in this process is what he himself or she herself is. This symbolic self, like everything else in the symbolic world derives from consensus. But far more than with other things, it is excruciatingly important. It is, of course, also emotionally laden. The process of self definition is never completed; it is in a lifelong process of reinterpretation.

I use the word "career" because I think its connotation most accurately reflects my meaning. In particular, I consider as central to the pursuit of career the kinds of work in which individuals engage. In tribal societies these tend to be standardized for each sex, though often with variants or secondary elements. But career is not the work itself, but rather performance, and it is not limited to the work activity, but involves all the other activities that go into the formation of what we may call reputation, including such matters as sexual prowess, fecundity, style, and the like. There is another attribute implicit in the concept: namely, that career performance varies; it is an element in social differentiation, and it is this potential for variance that makes it so important to the individual.

Social Gratification and Careers

It need not be said to a community of anthropologists that symbolic worlds differ from one place to another, and that it follows from this that what gives self-gratification and a positive valence to the self will also vary. A society that is successfully coping with its environment transforms the work necessary to daily life into ego-gratifying behavior. In shorthand terms, career performance is ecologically relevant. Let me make this point by brief reference to some of the anthropological classics.

- The immolation of the self into the clan and community of the Pueblo Indians, best caught in the Hopi phrase, "The Hopi way," and its relevance to enforced close collaboration that this environment demands (Thompson and Joseph, 1944).
- Trobriand garden magic (and hence personal power) evidenced by the public display of yam piles as an inspiration to horticultural production (Malinowski, 1935).
- Hunting ability, with its combination of physical skill, energy, and knowledge, among the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1965), the Andamanese (Radcliffe-Brown, 1933), and indeed I suspect everywhere hunting peoples are found.
- The close collaboration established among herdsmen in East Africa through their initiation into age sets so that they can collectively protect the herds against raids and successfully rob the kraals of others (e.g. Peristiany, 1939).

Here I must pause, for I have failed to make another point. The prosecution of career involves, in varying degrees and in diverse ways, collaboration with others. In one sense, ego gratification may be viewed as a lonely pursuit, for few others besides the self care about that self, but in another and more important way it involves structured relations with others—units of essential social collaboration. Indeed, it is this need for collaboration that, in my view, produces social structure.

- The inculcation of the young male Sioux into aggressive exploits and personal independence (Erikson, 1963), which are later reinforced by the initiatory experience in the vision quest, with its acquisition of power through personal deprivation and physical hardship, which together shape the buffalo hunter *cum* warrior necessary to the fluid territoriality of the American Plains.

The Military Career in Tribal Societies

Finally, we come to the consideration of militarism in relation to career. From the standpoint of the individual, career relates to the activities that give personal satisfaction, but from the standpoint of society, career performance is the engagement in tasks necessary for the maintenance of the community. One such task may be the service of protection against the outside or the exploitation of neighboring peoples through military aggression (or, perhaps more usually, both). In small-scale societies, the military role is often a universal aspect of male careers; in complex societies it may be regarded as a special cadre. Between these extremes are situations as described for the Iroquois, where warfare was a kind of freebooting activity engaged in by self-selected men interested in its rewards, yet nevertheless also in the service of the League's interest (Morgan, 1954:68).

The career aspects of military activity are exemplified by the following classic cases. Robert Lowie (1935:215) sums it up for the Crow in a paragraph:

> Social standing and chieftainship, we have seen, were dependent on military prowess; and that was the only road to distinction. Value was set on other qualities, such as liberality, aptness at story-telling, success as a doctor. But the property a man distributed was largely the booty he had gained in raids, and any accomplishments, prized as they might be, were merely decorative frills, not substitutes for the substance of a reputation, a man's record as a warrior. I know of at least one Crow of the old school whose intelligence would have made him a shining light wherever store was set by sheer capacity of the legal type, but who enjoyed no prestige whatsoever among his people [because] he had gained no honors in war and had tried to doctor this deficiency when publicly reciting his achievements. War was not the concern of a class nor even of the male sex, but all of the whole population, from cradle to grave.

And Grinnell (1923:7) for the Cheyenne does the same:

> From their earliest days boys were taught to long for the approbation of their elders, and this approbation was most readily to be earned by success in war. The applause of their public was the highest reward they knew.

Among East African pastoralists, the military career is closely associated with the economics of cattle production. For example P. T. W. Baxter (1977:77–78), writing of the Boran, says:

> To be a stock herder and to be a warrior then are not separable occupations, because being the former involves being the latter. A herder must not only

> guide the stock in his charge to good and safe pastures but he must also protect them from predators and raiders . . .
>
> A herder's life is on the job training to be a warrior; in its daily course it provides many of the features that modern armies go to great expense to simulate for infantry or cavalry training. For a man whose life follows an ordinary course, to be a warrior is simply a routine feature of late youth and early manhood, it is not a specialized occupation simply because it is one which every male follows for the specially marked period of his life when he is an active herder. During warriorhood, features of the male role, such as valour and aggressive virility, are accentuated and others, such as oratorical skills, wisdom, and gentleness are subdued because they are appropriate to elderhood. The rigorous life that herders are forced to lead, particularly in the distant camps with the dry stock, is the ideal training ground for war in that it develops stamina, self-reliance, self-knowledge, and bush skills such as an eye for ground and for cover. The shared tasks, hardships and dangers of camp life generate intense spirits of mutual obligation, loyalty and trust. Herders in the camps share windbreaks, sleeping-hides and rations. They herd together and mess together; the milk and blood is shared equally among camp members on the basis of equal work deserving equal shares.

The rewards of warriorhood in terms of social gratification are equally explicit. Baxter (1977:82–83), again:

> During warriorhood a man should acquire at least one trophy and, in the past, a man who did not do so was not welcomed as a son- in-law. A man who did kill was given gifts of stock, *sarma*, lavished with sexual favors by the wives of elders (whose attitude to him was therefore ambiguous), and allowed to wear ear rings, special necklaces and heavy iron armlets *arbora* and, crucially, a successful warrior was allowed to grow a male hair tuft, *guutu diira*, from the top of his head. This tuft was quite explicitly associated symbolically with an erect penis. . . . Successful warriors were acclaimed wherever they went and their exploits everywhere praised. A young man who had earned the right to "make his head" by erecting a *guutu* was everyone's darling. . . . Men who had killed were honored at the ceremonies which marked the entry of their generation-set into political adulthood, at their retirement into ritual elderhood, and at their mortuary ceremonies. At each, their exploits were loudly proclaimed and honored. Military glory was never extinguished.

Gregory Bateson (1958:138–41) has similar comments regarding the Iatmul, though it is by no means clear that head-hunting has the same economic rationale.

> In the business of head-hunting, the masculine ethos no doubt reached its most complex expression; and though at the present time the ethos of head-hunting cannot be satisfactorily observed, there is enough left of the old system to give the investigator some impression of what that system implied.

> Two main motives informed this system, the personal pride of the individual and his pride and satisfaction in the prosperity and strength of his community. These two motives were closely tangled together. On the purely personal side, the successful homicide was entitled to special ornaments and paints and to the wearing of a flying fox skin as a pubic apron; while the apron of stripped *Dracaena* leaves was the reproach of the man who had never killed. The homicide was the hero of the most elaborate *naven* and the proud giver of feasts. . . . Lastly, he was admired by the women; and even today the women occasionally make scornful remarks about the calico loincloths worn by the young men who should strictly still be wearing *Dracaena* aprons like those which were given them when they were little boys being initiated.
>
> Running through this plexus of cultural details we can clearly see the general position of head-hunting as the main source of the pride of the village, while associated with the pride is prosperity, fertility and the male sexual act; while on the opposite side of the picture but still a part of the same ethos, we can see the association of shame, mourning, and *ngglambe.*
>
> Closely linked with these emphases upon pride and shame is the development of the spectacular side of head-hunting. Every victory was celebrated by great dances and ceremonial which involved the whole village. The killer was the hero of these and he was at the same time the host at the feasts which accompany them. Even the vanquished assented to the beauty of the dances. . . .

Militarism and Motivation

But you will say, we have known all this. Yet militarism is not a universal cultural element. You will not find it among the Mbuti or the San. You will not find it in the peasant villages of Taitou nor indeed, in peasant villages generally, for central governments that are strong enough to do so, stamp out any incipient military career unless they can be coopted to the purposes of nationalism.

We are not concerned, however, with why some tribal peoples engage in militaristic pursuits and others do not. That important issue is far too complex and the factors too variant to be dealt with here. What we are interested in, however, is the relationship between the institution of war and the motivations of the citizenry. The essential point is that this constitutes a feedback loop, the old term for which is *vicious cycle.* If a society is to have the advantages of having military personnel, the motivations for warriorhood must be established. It is a matter of great significance that these must be *created.* Man is not naturally aggressive (pace Lorenz) any more than he is naturally given to mutuality (pace Prince Kropotkin). Humanity has the capacity for aggressive behavior that can be institutionalized through social supports. Once this motivation for warriorhood

is institutionalized, however, it takes on a life of its own. The image of Frankenstein's monster comes to mind.

Warfare, even on the tribal level, is not a pretty thing to see. It is not merely that people are maimed and die that makes it an ugly affair, but that it excites the human capacity for viciousness. We anthropologists have for good intellectual and moral reasons looked away from this aspect of tribal life, as anyone dealing with the comparative ethnography of warfare will testify (e.g., Otterbein, 1970:11). We have been aided and abetted in this by the fact that most of us have arrived a generation or more after these activities have been stamped out of native life. Even those who have dealt with warfare have disregarded its structural, political, and social importance, as when Grinnell (1924:1) makes it appear largely a product of indirect Western influence or when Heider (1970) stresses the game and a ceremonial aspect of Dani warfare. Go back to the firsthand accounts of tribal fighting, and you will be reminded that it is not a pretty business; read the account of Asmat head-hunting by Father Zegwaard (1959) for an examination of what the inspiration to killing does to human behavior. We are reminded of Mai Lai.

And this is a major point: it is not that people are naturally aggressive, and most particularly it is not that *primitive* people are naturally aggressive. It is that the military career draws upon those qualities of which we are all capable, ennobles them, and therefore reinforces them.

Tribal peoples are themselves not totally unaware of the effects of military careers on their own stability. The Iatmul, according to Gregory Bateson (1958:224–27), recognized two kinds of careers: those for men of action and those for men of knowledge—jocks and eggheads, if you will. Each kin group needed both sets of talents if it were to survive the constant feuding. The Boran were aware that their militarism constituted an inherent danger; that those aggressive and virile warriors that their culture inspired were a threat to what they called the Peace of Boran (Baxter 1977:83–84).

> Boran need that Peace not only between themselves but also at large, to be able to graze their flocks and herds. . . . Warriorhood and aggressive virility . . . are restricted to prescribed stages of a man's life after which they become increasingly inappropriate. . . . The opposition of youth and age is clearly signified in a number of ways. . . . When a generation set becomes responsible for the nation, each of its members puts up a phallic *Kalaacha*, which is a symbol of firm but responsible manliness, but when they retire each removes his and puts it to rest dangling in a milk pot. An elder . . . should be cool and not even speak or look in anger, let alone strike out in the heat of passion. One sign of the cool passivity of such elders is that they should not carry spears.

Breaking the Cycle

Human beings are neither genetic nor sociological robots, but complexly motivated and highly dynamic personages whose generalized aims are channeled by their sociocultural environment into particular forms, and who in turn, help to channel the aims of others in their community. If the community is to continue, individual aims must be channeled to the performance of essential tasks, of which protection against outside threats may be one, in which case militaristic values have their place. Institutions involving human careers show great inertia; the values and motives laid down in childhood not only persist as individual motives, but as presuppositions for the values and incentives that in turn are transferred to the next generation. Individuals may escape this cycle, but unless they do so collectively, the social ambiance is not thereby altered.

It is in this context that Homer Barnett's story of the destruction of bobotism in the Ajimaroe District of New Guinea is so fascinating (Barnett, 1959). Here an institution of elaborate indebtednesses involving cloths called *kain timor* had grown so burdensome, even for those who were advantaged by it, that, at the sudden outburst of a District Officer, the whole system suddenly collapsed by agreement of those who were profiting from it.

Let us see how Barnett (1016-17) describes the event:

> Repeatedly the District Officer inveighed against the nuisance and tried to get the people to turn their attention to economic production, to more food and cash crops, to health standards and to education. Finally, one day in March of 1954 at an open meeting called to investigate a row of kain timor debts, he lost his patience and exclaimed, "Why don't you get rid of the useless things!" He expected no answer, but he got one immediately. A man in the group—a bobot—apparently sensing that the moment had arrived, spoke up and said, "All right, we will." There was no opposition. On the contrary, the crowd murmured its approval. . . . Realizing that he might have evoked expression of a widespread sentiment he paid visits to other hamlets, related what had happened at the first, and made a plea for the general abandonment of kain timor. The suggestion was so well received that he called a meeting of all the important men in the area, along with the Indonesian schoolteachers and pastors and a priest. Because it was crucial to everything else, his specific question was: What is to be done about the marriage payment? The first person to speak was the richest and most powerful man in the district, who argued for the abolition of kain timor. The District Officer suggested that cotton yardage and guilders in limited amounts be substituted. There was no dissent and everyone agreed to have all kain timor out of circulation in six months.

Unfortunately there is no super District Officer to make the same outburst regarding the kain timor that burdens the modern world.

Alternatives to Militarism

When we recognize that militarism has a career aspect, and that this career element is a factor in the perpetuation and growth of armed conflict, we can perceive the manner in which these aspirations can be deflected and rechanneled to other pursuits. There is considerable evidence that such rechanneling from military confrontation to economic rivalry has repeatedly taken place in tribal societies. From the standpoint of the individual, this means that the self is increasingly measured by access to property, whether for the purposes of consumption or of display. Helen Codere demonstrated that the Kwakiutl potlatch had the effect of transforming conflict from the arena of warfare to that of economic rivalry, aptly captured in the title of her classic monograph, *Fighting with Property* (Codere, 1950). Harold Driver and I showed that the White Deerskin Dance of the Hupa was a similar transformation, that the origins of the ceremony lay in a preexisting war dance but that it had become a demonstration of economic strength (Goldschmidt and Driver, 1940).

As we all know, head-hunting and very small scale internecine rivalry are endemic in New Guinea and Melanesia generally. But there is evidence for the local transformation of such military activity into the economic rivalry of the Big-Man complex. There is some suggestion that the Ajimaroe reduction of internecine warfare by colonial powers resulted in the rechanneling of careers from militaristic operations to economic rivalry (Barnett, 1959). The same appears to have been the case among the Siuai of Bougainville (Oliver, 1955:411).

Timothy Earle (1982) has made a comparison of Melanesian groups to show that the use of valuables relates to the development of political structure. Comparing the Tsembaga Maring of the highland fringe of New Guinea, the Melpa and Mae Enga, also of the highlands, and the Trobriand Islanders, he shows the expansion in the social use of valuables. From one standpoint, however, we see not only the expansion of areas of internal harmony, but career shifts, with increasing emphasis on economic accumulation and the relative decline of military exploits. Indeed the ritualized exchanges of the Trobriands and their neighbors functioned in a way that enabled these diverse groups to engage in economically useful trade to establish a kind of *pax kula* in the area (Malinowski, 1922). I am not sufficiently versed in the literature of this region to go beyond these spec-

ulative statements, but they suggest the relationship between economic and military rivalry as alternative career patterns.

The Military Career in America

When we turn our attention to the modern world, we naturally find things more complex. What is the military career in modern America? (For some interesting answers see Sarkesian and Randall, this volume.)

First we must examine the general character of careers in the modern world. The task aspects of career relate us to our occupations; we are doctor or lawyer or professor or skilled worker. When we leave work, however, we drive to our houses and families into residential communities made up of diverse occupations into a community undifferentiated on the basis of task, but very much differentiated in terms of the level of success that we have achieved in the workaday aspects of our careers.

Overwhelmingly in modern America, the task aspect of our career operates in the context of large bureaucratic organizations, public or private (just as among the Boran it operates within the *gada* system or among the Kwakiutl within the *numaym*). In any bureaucracy, achievement is measured by rank, and rewards are meted out in the common coin of salary or wages. Success generally involves task competence and bureaucratic entrepreneurship. Bureaucratic entrepreneurship involves the constant build-up of one's own area of activity, and success is most readily achieved with growth, whether on the campus, in financial institutions, or at the Pentagon.

Success in a modern military career does not involve the virtues that characterize those of the Cheyenne or Boran; it involves bureaucratic virtues. As I write these pages, I have before me a sixteen-page special section of the *Los Angeles Times* (1983) devoted to the military-industrial complex first publicly identified by Eisenhower in his valedictory address. The basic theme of its several articles is the public vested interest in the continuation of the military enterprise, not merely by the soldiery of our nation, but by a significant and politically powerful fraction of our society. This is not merely the vested interest of industrial monopolists, but of each and every individual whose career, and therefore whose sense of self, rests on the continuing growth of these activities.

L'Envoi

In this essay there can be no conclusions. Its purpose has been to give some thoughts to the dynamics of warfare in terms of human motivation, based on a different way of looking at anthropological data. We see that

military prowess can become a central element in individual careers through the establishment of rewards for such exploits, and that even with unsophisticated weaponry it can pose a threat to social order. The glory and the sex (to borrow from the thinking of both Freud and the Boran) have been eliminated from the military career in the modern world. But the pursuit of military aims has been written into the career of millions of people who work for the military establishment and for the massive industrial establishment that supplies its arsenal.

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2

The Uses of Fear: *Porro* Gangs in Mexico

Larissa Lomnitz

Delinquent youth gangs have become a standard problem of modern cities. In this paper I discuss a peculiar urban phenomenon of modern Mexico, the *porros*. Originating in the cheering sections at University football games in the 1950s, these groups eventually became fighting gangs for hire. Their use in politics is illuminating in several important ways: it affords an unexpected insight into some other urban phenomena (student movements, agents provocateurs, and political demonstrations), and it illustrates class relations and the use and misuse of symbols for political control (Karmen, 1975, Marx, 1974:403).

I am also interested in another aspect of the *porro* phenomenon, namely the fact that *porros* belong to the informal sector. In an earlier paper (Lomnitz, 1982) I proposed a model of the social structure of urban Mexico based on three variables: types of resources (capital, power, work, etc.), direction of the exchange (horizontal or vertical), and form of articulation (formal vs. informal). This leads to the emergence of four sectors at the macro level: the Public Sector, the Private Sector, the Formal Labor Sector, and the Informal Sector. In this model, the *porros* occupy the position of an informal police force: they use coercion as a means of social control, but they carry no badges and they have no formal connection with the Public Sector, as do the police. In this paper the *porros* are discussed as an example of informal articulation, and I show how this affects the character, permanence and security of the groups, or of their members. *Porros* are in the business of fearmongering (O'Donnell, 1977). They consider themselves patriotic Mexicans and they willingly side with the regime. Some of them have similar functions to those of a formal police, yet their informal articulation within the social structure means that their activities cannot be publicly acknowledged or legitimated.

Porros as a University Phenomenon

In an earlier paper (Lomnitz, 1977) I proposed a model of the National University of Mexico as made up of four superposed universities, each of

which offers a different type of education leading to a distinctive life career. Thus one finds four major types of students: the academics, the professionals, the politicos and the *porros.* In each case, regardless of the formal curricular content, the student follows a track which eventually leads to a functional specialization within the system, and more particularly within the state apparatus.

Thus, the *academics* tend to join the university faculty while the *professionals* become members of the Private Sector or of the Public Sector in a technical capacity. The National University of Mexico increasingly provides the technical staff of the public administration. The *politicos* tend to become activists and leaders in the official party or in opposition groups. The university has become a laboratory or training school for politicians, where the elements of conflict management, ideological infighting, and compromise are taught on a practical level. Lastly, the *porros* represent in some ways a dead-end track but a most significant one, since it expresses the need to control the ideology of the emerging bureaucratic class which is based on the state universities (Graciarena, 1971:99–104). This new class tends to dominate society precisely on the strength of its ability to handle specialized knowedge and symbols (Konrad and Szelenyi, 1979; Gouldner, 1979; Weber, 1979; Gramsci, 1980).

In this model of the university as composed of four distinctive tracks, the *porros* specialize in fearmongering as a means of social control, or alternatively they use confusion of symbols to prevent the rise of strong opposition movements among the student body. This role is consequential because of the key political role of the student body in Mexico (Basañez, 1981).[1]

Historical Background

In the postwar years, and particularly after 1950, American cultural influences became pervasive among Mexican urban youth. This showed in their artistic or musical tastes, their manner of dress and their preferences. American football suddenly became popular among high school and college students. The big game between the National University and the Polytechnic attracted large crowds of young people who sided with one or the other of the traditional rivals. Organized cheering sections were a regular feature of these sports events.

A professional cheerleader at the National University, nicknamed Palillo ("Toothpick"), was a registered student at the School of Psychology for many years. He acted as middleman on behalf of students in the cheering sections, for whom he obtained sports jackets with the school colors, study tours, parties and exemptions from certain academic requirements. Pal-

illo's influence became notorious and soon he achieved recognition by the university administration as a mediator in disputes involving certain student groups (*Revista Caballero*, 1973).

Typically the members of these groups were of lower-class origins and affected distinctive forms of dress and speech. Membership was all-male and accepted forms of behavior included wild celebrations, fights among members of rival cheering sections, and other shows of school spirit. At a later stage these sporting toughs were conveniently cast in the role of mediators by the university administration in their dealings with disaffected student groups (Guitian-Bernicer, 1975).

Eventually some groups of *porros* evolved into organized fighting gangs whose connection with sports events become increasingly tenacious. Whenever students attempted to organize politically the *porros* appeared as provocateurs, disrupting meetings and attempting to keep student participation as low as possible. Intimidation and open violence were used against the predominantly middle-class student body. Members of the college football teams and wrestling teams were participating in these actions during the 1960s.

The National University of Mexico system includes a chain of ten high schools scattered over the urban area. Similarly, the National Polytechnical Institute (the other major college, at the opposite end of town) has a system of technical high schools. Each has more than two hundred thousand students. The *porros* were mostly high school students from lower-income groups, often based on neighborhood street gangs.

During the 1960s the post of principal at some of the high schools became an embattled position. Contenders for the post began to use *porros* in order to create trouble for the incumbent principal. In Mexico, the one cardinal sin of politics is to lose control; an accepted form of discrediting an office holder is to create conflict and turmoil, thus showing that he or she is incapable of maintaining stability. Quite often, leaders of opposition groups within the university who had ambition for a particular position in the administration would fan student unrest for personal gain, and the university administration would counter these threats by using *porros* of their own. It should be recalled that the university campus is out of bounds to police, and that the university administration has no campus police or other formal means of coercion (*Revista Caballero*, 1973; Rivera, 1977:12–15).

At this time the *porro* groups underwent an important qualitative change, as their leaders put up their services for sale or for hire. Mexico is a country which produces a lot of rumors. Persistent rumor had it that the president of the university, Dr.Ignacio Chávez, was overthrown in 1966 by *porros* hired by an important government official. The fact remains that

around 1966 there was increasing evidence of an attempt on the part of the state apparatus to control the university on an ideological level (Segovia, 1970). There was an upsurge of critical, Marxist, student movements at the time; these groups were vocally opposing the model of economic development the administration was holding up to the country. Coincidentally, organized *porros* began to disrupt the meetings and to attempt to terrorize the student body.

The peak of *porro* activity was reached during the 1968 student movement, which cannot be discussed extensively here. It appears that the movement was heavily attacked and later infiltrated by *porros,* and that their confusing presence became a major factor which determined the eventual breakdown of the movement (Guitian-Bernicer, 1975:40)). Finally, in 1971, there was a public confrontation between the remnants of the movement and *porros* organized as a paramilitary force (*halcones*); this last street battle caused a number of casualties among the students (Ortiz, 1971).

During the 1970s there was an active campaign to get the *porros* out of the university. At present, very little *porro* activity remains on the main campus. But other forms of *porrismo* have appeared, as *porros* have learned to blend in with the new activism. They use ultraleftist tactics in order to generate confusion among the student body. Groups whose membership includes many former *porros* are adept at leftist symbolism (e.g., Che Guevara hats), attitudes and slogans. Verbal violence, wild denunciations and threats proffered during student meetings have replaced earlier methods of physical aggression. The repetitious and monotonous leftist oratory has produced boredom and political passivity among the student body.

Organization

In the incipient stage, a *porra* is merely a group of boys who get along and who are tough street fighters. Then a charismatic leader appears and the structure of the group changes. The leader issues orders and commands obedience; eventually he acts as a broker, receiving money and directions from someone and sharing the proceeds with his followers.

Under the leader one finds several levels of command, according to personal closeness. The gang leader usually has two or three lieutenants who are very close to him, almost like brothers. Then there are two or three *golpeadores* ("hit-men"), who stick close to the leader and remain at his personal command. Then there is a group of boys called *borregos* ("sheep"), who may number ten or more. A fully grown *porra* may have twenty to thirty full-time members, not including groupies (girls) and

hangers-on. The leader acts like a charismatic father of all, and at the same time he is the negotiator on their behalf.

Middle-class students who make up the majority in the high schools and the university tend to be ambivalent about *porros.* They are scared of them yet they admire their courage and their panache. I notice that people go to see movies such as *The Godfather* with the same kind of ambivalent feelings: most of us would never dream of killing anyone, yet we watch a gangster kill a dozen people and we cheer. At some level, middle-class boys easily identify with gang violence. The *porros* stand for the ultimate masculinity.[2]

Male symbolism of the *porro* does not exclude other cultural values. The *porro* is a rebel of the low-income urban neighborhoods; while the middle-class kids merely dream of girls, cars and success, he flaunts all these things in their faces. But he is also a Mexican nationalist and he believes in the Virgin of Guadalupe. He reveres his mother, and he lays down his life for his friends.

Male friendship among *porros* is of a violent, exacerbated kind. There is much talk of *porros* being homosexuals; however that may be, there is certainly a homosexual component in their emotional attitude to male friendship, particularly during adolescence. (For a discussion of the relationship between homosexuality and manliness, see Huyghe, this volume.) The cultural complex known in Mexico as *machismo* includes the ideal of male friendship as a dominant value that takes precedence over any attachment to girls.

Violence against women is part of standard *porro* behavior. In the group there is much bragging about sexual exploits and about rape. In high schools one hears that *porros* will occasionally gang-rape a girl. I have found no actual evidence of this, but certainly the idea of sexual aggression and of flaunting the use of women is a part of *machismo.* The emotional ambivalence between homosexuality and heterosexuality is resolved through aggressive displays.

Power is respected, admired and sought. The *porro* submits to power by accepting money and orders from powerful individuals. Thus he himself obtains the power to cause the downfall of important officials, to humble his teachers and to be admired and envied by his middle-class peers. The use of alcohol and drugs complements power as a stimulant in the life of the youthful rebel.

There are ten *escuelas preparatorias* (high schools of the university system), and in each of them at least one *porro* may be active; altogether around one thousand *porros,* which is not many in terms of the total size of the student body. Yet these *porros* can mobilize much larger numbers when it comes to carrying out an action, because gang members live in neigh-

borhoods where they can enlist brothers, cousins and whole street gangs which are normally removed from university affairs. Some *porro* leaders can move armies of toughs overnight from one end of the city to the other. This seems to be what happened on June 10, 1971 at the final confrontation between radical students and *halcones*. The *halcones* seemed to have been kids belonging to neighborhood social networks; they were easy to mobilize, whether to organize massive street demonstrations or to disrupt them.

In order to describe gang behavior, I distinguish between times of peace and times of war. In peace times the *porros* are tolerated; their members are registered students, and until recently they could remain registered indefinitely without attending lectures. They were called *fósiles* ("fossils") for this reason. Some were students for twenty years; finally an ordinance was issued which now prevents students from registering more than 50 percent beyond the normal length of a course leading to a degree. But in the 1960s there were some high school students in their twenties. Eventually they could transfer as a group into the university proper, taking advantage of the automatic pass which allows high school graduates belonging to the university system to register in college.

Peacetime Behavior

In peacetime the *porros* are petty delinquents. They hang round the high schools without bothering to attend classes. In twos or threes they stop students and relieve them of their money and watches; if there is resistance, they beat them up. They sell protection to the small businesses that cater to students in the neighborhood of the school: *taquerias* and coffee shops or candy stores. The protection is against themselves and other *porros*. They can walk into a protected shop, order what they want and walk out without paying. They also steal university property, but not all the time.

In high schools, the *porros* make themselves popular with the students because they are very good at organizing parties. They go to the principal and they tell him, "Look, we know that the students deserve a nice party and we need some money to hire a band and, you know, this is good for the school spirit," and so on. Alcohol and sex were very much a part of the *porro* scene in the 1960s; then drugs also came in.

Members of *porro* groups also managed to recruit sympathetic peers from the student body, by organizing parties, trips to Acapulco, and intervening whenever some kid was in trouble. They would go to a student and say, "Hey look, you are having a problem with this teacher, let us fix it." Then they would approach the teacher and say, "Listen, I hear that you are being very hard on my buddy, why don't you give him a break?"