Conflict Resolution Among Peaceful Societies: The Culture of Peacefulness

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The literature about 24 peaceful peoples was examined to determine if their ways of conflict resolution differ from the approaches to conflict found in other, more violent, societies. While the strategies for managing conflicts employed by these peoples are comparable to those used in many other small-scale societies, their world-views of peacefulness and the structures they use to reinforce those world-views do distinguish them from other societies. Several common notions about conflict and conflict resolution that are asserted by Western scholars can be questioned in light of the success of these societies in peacefully resolving conflicts: namely, that violent conflict is inevitable in all societies; that punishment and armed force prevent internal and external violence; that political structures are necessary to prevent conflicts; and that conflict should be viewed as positive and necessary. The contrary evidence is that over half of the peaceful societies have no recorded violence; they rarely punish other adults (except for the threat of ostracism); they handle conflicts with outside societies in the same peaceful ways that they approach internal conflicts; they do not look to outside governments when they have internal disputes; and they have a highly negative view of conflict.

1. Introduction

And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
From 'The Lord's Prayer'[1]

Nyam, the articulate son of a former headman, had been accused of planting durian trees on lands that traditionally belonged to others. In recent years the Semai, peaceful aboriginal people who live in the rugged mountains of the Malay Peninsula, have been harvesting durian fruit and packing it out to the road which comes up from the lowlands, so they can sell it and buy the consumer goods that have become essential to them – tobacco, machetes, radios, and so forth. Planting trees on other properties threatened and angered Nyam's neighbors, some of whom belonged to different families. Tensions were mounting.

Tidn, the headman of the village affected by Nyam's actions, recognized the potential for conflict so he convened a *becharaa'*, a proceeding which the villagers use to try to resolve disputes. Nyam and his relatives were invited to attend to discuss and settle the matter. Since his land also had been invaded by Nyam, Tidn was a party to the dispute; he invited Entoy, headman from a nearby valley, to preside over the *becharaa'*. Nyam arrived near dusk at the Semai village.

Conversation was casual, as everyone was well acquainted and was generally familiar with the nature of the conflict. Nyam, a picture of studied indifference, talked animatedly with various people. After a while, the villagers gathered in a circle and the formal discussions began with preliminary speeches about the importance of settling the dispute before it got out of hand. Each of the parties to the conflict gave his version of events, justifying his actions in an unemotional manner. Nyam denied some of his trespasses and sought to rationalize others. Speakers advanced their points of view, but no one acted as witnesses except for the principals in the case; there was no direct confrontation or cross-examination. The speeches went on and on, with people frequently talking past one another and not answering the comments of others.

When no one had anything more to say – points had been emphasized and re-emphasized until all were exhausted from the proceedings – the *becharaa'* was ready to be concluded. It was obvious to everyone that Nyam's actions were wrong, but the consensus was that he could keep and use the trees that he had already planted, though he must plant no more. Entoy could have levied a small fine on Nyam but everyone felt it was more important for the group to keep its harmony than to treat the guilty party too roughly. Entoy lectured the assembled people on the importance of their tradition of unity,

peacefulness, sharing food, and not fighting. He made it clear to all that the matter had been completely settled and that no one was allowed to bring it up again (Robarchek, 1977, 1979, 1989).

Contrast that scene reported in the anthropology literature with a comparable one from the legal proceedings of Pennsylvania. For two years Charles Peterman leased 115 acres of farm land in Columbia County, Pennsylvania, but a crop of winter wheat which he planted the second fall could not be harvested before the lease expired the following April. Late the next spring, Peterman tried to harvest his grain anyway, despite being warned away by the agent of the owner; when he continued to enter the land, the agent had him arrested. The matter soon reached the Court of Quarter Sessions in the county seat of Bloomsburg, where Peterman was found guilty of criminal trespass. He appealed his conviction to the Superior Court of Pennsylvania, which reversed the ruling of the lower court (Commonwealth v. Peterman, 1938).

The ways that conflicts are handled in Pennsylvania courthouses differ significantly from the approaches the Semai take with their *becharaas'*, though the latter may have a superficial resemblance to American trials: The Semai are most concerned with resolving conflicts peacefully, while Americans are primarily focused on fulfilling justice. Everyone in the Semai village knows the parties to a conflict and are already familiar with the facts; if a case in Pennsylvania goes to a formal jury trial, the jurors must have no previous knowledge of the parties or the case. The parties to a conflict in the US usually hire attorneys to present their arguments aggressively; the Semai present their own positions without confrontation or aggressiveness. Near the conclusion of the proceedings, the Pennsylvania judge explains the legal issues to the jury and tells them that their role is to decide the truth of what happened; the Semai headman lectures the whole village on the overriding importance of the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Punishment is the normal conclusion of the US trial; it is relatively unimportant to the Semai. And finally, at the end of the *becharaa'*, the Semai headman prohibits any further consideration of the case, since it has been thoroughly resolved; the Pennsylvania cit-

izen is free to appeal his conviction, as Peterman did.[2] The important point in the US courtroom is winning; the major issue for the Semai is resolving the conflict, removing the emotions from the parties to the dispute, and reaffirming correct, peaceful behavior. The lives of their children and grandchildren depend on it, they believe (Robarchek, 1977, 1979, 1989).

While these brief, simplified sketches represent only a couple of the many ways that societies resolve disputes, they do illustrate fundamental differences in perceptions of conflicts, resolution of disputes, and tolerance for violence.[3] The Semai are among more than 40 societies that have evolved highly peaceful lifestyles, that rarely if ever resort to violence; US citizens are among the thousands of societies that do use violence, if need be, to settle their differences. The processes of settling disputes in the USA, such as the jury trial, are based on assumptions about conflict that differ from those of the peaceful societies. The goal of this article is to explore those differences. The basic issue is to gain an understanding of why dozens of peaceful peoples are able to resolve conflicts nonviolently virtually all the time, while the rest of the world is not so successful. As the examination of conflict resolution in these small-scale societies proceeds, one fundamental fact emerges: the peacefulness of their conflict resolution is based, primarily, on their world-views of peacefulness – a complete rejection of violence. That argument may appear to be circular, but a careful look at conflict resolution in those societies seems to support it.

In contrast, the Western world-view boils down to an acceptance of the inevitability of conflict and violence. Peace and conflict studies, for Western scholars, is frequently a process of understanding the reasons for conflict, and the study of conflict resolution often focuses on strategies for preventing and resolving disputes.[4] Some of the major facets of Western beliefs that will form a framework for this essay include the following concepts: (1) All societies have violent conflict and warfare (Boulding, 1962; Deutsch, 1991; Knauft, 1987); (2) punishment deters internal conflicts and violence (Greenawalt, 1983); (3) the threat of armed force helps prevent external conflicts and violence (Brown, 1987; Ceadel, 1987); (4) conflict is best managed through reliance on political

structures such as governments (Boulding, 1962, p. 324); and (5) conflict has many positive functions, and as long as it is managed properly it should be viewed as normal, reasonable, beneficial and helpful (Augsburger, 1992; Deutsch, 1973), or at least neither desirable nor undesirable (Nader, 1991; Ross, 1993b).

The purpose of this investigation is therefore to examine conflict and conflict resolution among the peaceful societies and to compare them with the corresponding Western beliefs. Since much of the literature of conflict resolution is based on the experiences of the thousands of relatively violent societies, a balance is needed from the perspective of peaceful peoples. In this paper I attempt to show that conflict resolution in peaceful societies is founded on overarching world-views that conflicts are the exception, not the norm, and that they are neither reasonable nor desirable. Conflicts, to these peoples, must be avoided as much as possible, resolved as quickly as possible, and harmony restored as soon as possible in order for people to live peacefully with one another and with outsiders. In order to achieve nonviolent conflict resolution in practice, individuals and groups of people should rely on themselves to settle disputes within their groups as well as conflicts with other peoples; furthermore, they should use resolution strategies that dissipate tensions as well as settle the issues. This resolution should be achieved as much as possible without the threat of punishment (other than ostracism).

Before getting to the information about peaceful societies and the reasons they provide a challenge to Western thinking about conflict resolution, it is necessary to pause a moment, define terms, and introduce some basic understandings.

2. Background and Definitions

Peacefulness is a condition of human society characterized by a relatively high degree of interpersonal harmony; little if any physical violence among adults, between children and adults, and between the sexes; workable strategies for resolving conflicts and averting violence; a commitment to avoiding violence (such as warfare) with other peoples; and strategies for raising children to adopt and continue these nonviolent ways.[5]

A people or a society (those terms are used interchangeably, for variety) is a group of human beings who share a common ancestry for the most part, who share common beliefs and cultural value systems, and who primarily live in the same area.

The peoples: Evidence demonstrates that a modest number of societies have developed highly, and in some cases totally, nonviolent social systems. Several writers have provided different, but overlapping, lists of these peaceful, peaceable, nonviolent, or low-conflict societies (e.g. Bonta, 1993; Fabbro, 1978; Howell & Willis, 1989a; Montagu, 1978; Ross, 1993a; Sponsel & Gregor, 1994). The 24 peoples included in this paper are based on the 47 peaceful societies included in Bonta (1993); these 24 were selected because there is at least some information about their styles of conflict resolution in the literature. Most of the societies discussed here are far from being utopias: many of them are plagued by the same jealousies, gossip, resentments, and backbiting as the rest of humanity (see Robarchek, 1994, p. 195). Some have social and cultural practices that would repel outsiders; they vary greatly from one to the next. The common denominator among all of them is that they are able to resolve their conflicts peacefully, and that they fit the definition of peacefulness as given above. Some are[6] primarily hunting and gathering peoples; others rely mostly on shifting cultivation (swidden agriculture); others are settled farmers and are very much a part of the modern, world-wide trading society. These 24 societies are listed in the appendix, with a brief paragraph describing each one.

Conflict is variously defined by scholars. Some think of it in economic terms, such as 'a phenomenon that necessarily implies scarcity' (Padilla, 1992, p. 256), or as an 'incompatibility between the preferences or goals of two or more parties' (Schmidt, 1993, p. 16), or as the existence of incompatible activities (Deutsch, 1973, p. 10). These definitions do not go far enough, so conflict is defined here as: the incompatible needs, differing demands, contradictory wishes, opposing beliefs, or diverging interests which produce interpersonal antagonism and, at times, hostile encounters. Conflict situations thus range from antagonist behavior to verbal abuse to physical violence to, ultimately, killing.

Conflict resolution among peaceful peoples is the settlement or avoidance of disputes between individuals or groups of people through solutions that refrain from violence and that attempt to reunify and re-harmonize the people involved in internal conflicts, or that attempt to preserve amicable relations with external societies.

Basic understandings: A few basic understandings must be introduced before proceeding any farther. First of all, while the peaceful societies are quite different from one another, they can be grouped together for this analysis because they do share at least one major characteristic: they rarely, if ever, have violent conflicts. Also, comparing conflict management in widely differing cultures is risky, though Ross (1993a) is confident that the shared features of conflict resolution in different cultures can be analyzed successfully. And while conflict resolution is commonly practiced by almost all societies (Sponsel, 1994), the unifying feature of nonviolence among the small group of peaceful peoples makes the study of their strategies and attitudes toward peace particularly worthwhile. Another caveat: this work is not based on statistical research about cross-cultural peacefulness. Social scientists doing research on conflict (e.g., Ember & Ember, 1994; Ross, 1993b) often use statistically valid samples of cultures, such as from the Human Relations Area Files, but this essay does not follow that approach. It is based, instead, on a careful examination of the literature about all 24 of these societies: a sampling would not have served the purposes of the investigation.

3. *Strategies of Conflict Resolution*

The 24 peaceful societies use a variety of strategies to try to prevent, control, manage, and resolve the conflicts that do come up, such as the Semai *becharaa'* that was mentioned at the opening of this paper. An examination of these various strategies provides an overview of the common processes used by these peoples to resolve conflicts, and helps set the stage for the discussion that follows. Unfortunately, there is no standard listing of conflict-resolution strategies, which have been described in many ways (e.g., Takie Sugiyama Lebra, as described by Augsburger, 1992, pp. 109–111; Boulding,

1962; Lederach, 1991; Le Vine, 1980; Ross, 1993a and Scimecca, 1991). Since a commonly-agreed upon list of strategies is not available, it seemed best to look directly at the literature on the peaceful peoples and see what common strategies are suggested there. The following six are suggested by the literature.

3.1 *Self-restraint*

The literature explicitly describes the ways that the Ifaluk (Lutz, 1988), Tahitians (Levy, 1973), Paliyan (Gardner, 1966, 1969, 1972), and Toraja (Hollan, 1992) use variations of self-restraint as a means of moving away from conflict situations once they arise. (Their approach is doubtless followed by other peaceful societies, such as the Amish, Mennonites, and Hutterites, though the literature about those peoples is not as explicit on the subject.) These peoples feel that heightened emotional states lead quickly to further trouble, so they actively try to dissipate their emotions whenever a conflict seems possible. A first-stage approach for a Toraja individual experiencing heated emotion is to remind himself or herself that any open expression of the feeling might be dangerous: the expression of such feelings would be ridiculed, might lead to hostile supernatural actions, and would open oneself to serious illness (Hollan, 1992).

3.2 *Negotiation*

Negotiation is often considered in a positive light by Western writers (Rubin, 1994), particularly when it is broadly defined as the interaction between parties to a dispute who work toward an agreement without the intervention of third parties who might make compulsory decisions (Gulliver, 1979, p. 79). But the literature on the peaceful societies, other than the Montagnais-Naskapi (Lips, 1947), Semai (Robarchek, 1977) and Amish (Cong, 1992), has little to say about direct negotiations by disputants. People in many of these societies do not want to confront one another directly, and they prefer indirection rather than assertion, inference rather than confrontation. The parties to a conflict are encouraged to settle their problems on an internal level, through self-restraint, but not necessarily through the confrontational tactics of direct negotiation. Other techniques are more effective.

3.3 *Separation*

At least ten of the peaceful societies separate in order to avoid conflicts (which is equivalent to resolving them). Clearly, walking away from a dispute is one of the most favored ways of resolving conflicts among these peoples. Among the Malapandaram (Morris, 1982, 1992), Paliyan (Gardner, 1966, 1969, 1972), Birhor (Sinha, 1972), Buid (Gibson, 1985, 1986, 1988), and !Kung (Draper, 1973; Lee, 1974), individuals, including spouses, separate when a quarrel cannot be easily resolved, and whole communities will split apart to avoid conflicts. The literature about these peoples is filled with examples of individuals or whole communities moving away from an area, in some cases quite abruptly, because they faced conflicts. Among the Toraga (Hollan, 1992) and Balinese (Howe, 1989), separations to avoid conflicts appear from the literature to be somewhat less permanent than among the other five peoples mentioned above. The historical literature about some of the Western peaceful peoples – the Amish, Hutterites, and Mennonites – makes it clear that they moved away from domination and conflict by stronger societies numerous times. While they would doubtless not abandon their communities and flee on a moment's notice because of a minor conflict, there is no question that they might well move again if faced with an unresolvable conflict with the larger society.

3.4 *Intervention*

Western writers on conflict resolution concentrate heavily on the importance of third-party intervention in disputes (Keashly et al., 1993; Augsburger, 1992; Fisher & Keashly, 1990). Among peaceful peoples, intervention by others is an effective technique for resolving conflicts. In several of these societies, such as the Ifaluk (Lutz, 1988), !Kung (Lee, 1979), Malapandaram (Morris, 1982, 1992), Nubians (Fernea, 1966, 1973), Toraja (Hollan, 1992), Zapotec (Paddock, 1976), Montagnais-Naskapi (Lips, 1947), Paliyan (Gardner, 1966), and Yanadi (Raghaviah, 1962) the ethic of avoiding conflicts is so strong that it is incumbent on bystanders to become involved in virtually any circumstances where controversies threaten to become serious or where a conflict situation seems to be developing. Among some peoples, certain individuals are noted as being particularly skilled at helping defuse conflicts, but in others the literature indicates that any bystander will step in to mediate. The common thread of these mediators is their desire to get a dialogue going – and keep the potential contestants talking until the tensions are defused.

3.5 *Meetings*

Humor and meetings, such as the Semai *becharaa'* mentioned earlier, are specific techniques used by third parties, but they deserve to be mentioned separately because they are frequently used by several peaceful societies. As with the other strategies, the purpose of the meeting is to lessen tensions more than it is to confront or decide, though those elements may also be present. These meetings provide forums for the airing of hostilities: frequently the simple discussion of grievances is enough to defuse problems. The meetings also serve to contain conflicts before they can disrupt society, either by minimizing issues as private rather than public concerns, or by restricting involvement in order to allow informal mechanisms of social control to operate. Meetings are used heavily, as a major part of the strategy for resolving conflicts, by the Birhor (Sinha, 1972), Buid (Gibson, 1985, 1986), Ladakhis (Norberg-Hodge, 1991), Zapotec (O'Nell, 1981, and Nubians (Fernea, 1973; Callender, 1966).

3.6 *Humor*

Humor is undoubtedly a useful strategy for reducing tensions and resolving conflicts in many societies, but it has been mentioned only a few times in the literature of peaceful peoples. The !Kung (Marshall, 1976) try hard to maintain a joking atmosphere in their camps, frequently pointing out one another's faults in a facetious manner to resolve their tensions. When a leader in a Paliyan community becomes involved in helping to resolve a conflict, he will often use joking or soothing to defuse the situation (Gardner, 1972). If a Tristan Islander ever lost his temper in a quarrel he would have that scar on his reputation for life; people who defuse tense situations with jokes gain general respect (Munch, 1945). The Inuit joke to avoid and defuse conflicts; joking also allows them to confront problems with enough ambiguity that

grievances can be aired without fear of provoking others (Briggs, 1994). In the past, the Inuit had song duels to resolve conflicts in a humorous fashion before they became serious enough to provoke violence, and to laugh off animosities and return to friendship, or at least restraint (Eckert & Newmark, 1980).

These strategies seem to dissipate tensions and resolve issues effectively when conflicts do arise in the peaceful societies. In some societies authority figures make judgments while in others the people decide by consensus, but the overall effect is the same – healing, continuation of the community, or separation. Furthermore, the traditional forms that those strategies take among these peoples appear to be important factors in their success. That is, peoples are conscious of their own traditional ways of handling problems and seem able to keep the peace in part through the force of their traditions. For these peoples, the ways they resolve disputes are logical and effective – and they seem to work. When the traditional ways are not used, conflicts can result. For instance, the failure of a group of Buid to follow their traditional meeting-style of conflict resolution (called a *tultulan*) on one occasion resulted in tragedy (Gibson, 1986).

4. *Conflict Is a Normal Aspect of All Societies*

Some scholars have maintained that conflict and violence is the normal condition of small-scale societies, which typically rely on a superior state authority to prevent warfare (Ferguson, 1984, pp. 19–20). Others argue that all societies have to contend with violence (Knauft, 1987, 1994). The literature on the peaceful peoples flatly contradicts these assertions. While violence exists in very modest amounts in some of these societies, in others it appears to be rare or completely absent.

There are a few basic differences in strategies for resolving conflicts among these 24 societies. Some of the ones that experience occasional violence use moderately aggressive techniques for resolving disputes, such as stylized rhetorical speaking referred to as 'talking' by some anthropologists. When the !Kung are discussing a contentious issue and their emotions begin to rise, they may pour out their thoughts at a very rapid rate – a sudden, spontaneous discussion by

the various people involved with the issue (Marshall, 1976; Lee, 1979). When the G/wi have a conflict that is threatening to escalate, one party to the problem will talk out the difficulty to a third person within the hearing of the whole band, and the other party may answer to a fourth, again so everyone will hear (Silberbauer, 1972). When the Temair become too angry for mediation to work, instead of a face-to-face confrontation the angry people may conduct night time harangues so everyone in the longhouse can hear without specifically naming individuals (Roseman, 1990). These practices allow everyone to be a party to the dispute, to get feelings about an issue into the open without provoking direct confrontations, and to settle the contentious issues. They also save face for all participants, a universal need according to some (Augsberger, 1992).

On the other hand, many of the societies that almost never experience any violence tend to be meek and to have world-views that advocate meekness. For instance, the highly peaceful Chewong, Ifaluk, Paliyan, and Semai generally describe themselves as fearful people; the Batek, Chewong, Paliyan, and Semai flee from violence; and the Amish, Hutterites, Chewong, Semai, Tristan Islanders, and Yanadi are notable for their belief in nonresistance (not resisting aggression by the state or other individuals). But, while the most highly peaceful peoples are strongly characterized by a general fearfulness, passiveness, meekness, flight from conflict, and a belief in nonresistance, the societies which appear to take a more active role in promoting peacefulness do have patterns of occasional violence. There are elements of aggressiveness in these peoples – perhaps it could be described as an aggressive pursuit of nonviolence in resolving conflicts.

5. *Punishment Deters Conflict and Violence*

Western peoples believe that punishment is necessary to deter crime and violent conflict. They feel it creates fear in potential offenders that they will suffer as a result of their actions, and it is a just retribution for violations of the normal moral order (Greenawalt, 1983). It seemed reasonable to look for evidence of punishment in the literature about these 24 societies to see if it is part of their conflict resolution

practices. As it turns out, except for the punish-
ment that parents in a few of these societies use
for disciplining their children, these peoples use
very little adult punishment. In fact, the absence
of punishment appears to be one of the defining
characteristics of a peaceful society. These peo-
ples seem to rely on the strength of their other
mechanisms to prevent and resolve conflicts
peacefully and effectively. The threat of punish-
ment is not needed, except for the practice of os-
tracism, a form of punishment. Ostracism is
practiced by a range of societies worldwide to
enforce social standards, according to Gruter &
Masters (1986, p. 149), who define it in general
terms as 'the general process of social rejection
or exclusion'. From the perspective of the
peaceful peoples, ostracism may be defined as
complete banishment from the society or, per-
haps less severely, as rejection by a people of an
individual's participation in some or all of the
group's activities. The societies that use it at all
use it quite infrequently, but the possibility is al-
ways there.

Probably the most dramatic practice of os-
tracism in this body of literature is the Amish
strategy of shunning. If an Amish person has a
problem accepting one of the rules of their
church, and he or she refuses to give in to the
will of the group, the individual will be os-
tracized by all members of the community, in-
cluding the spouse, children, parents, siblings,
and friends. No one may speak to the shunned
person or hand food or other goods to him or her
– food or other articles will be placed on a table
for the shunned person to pick up (Gruter, 1985;
Hostetler, 1980). The person may continue to
live at home and try to carry on a normal life –
though that is, of course, nearly impossible. The
Hutterites have a similar style of excommuni-
cating members without expelling them from
their colonies (Hostetler, 1974).

A comparable example can be found in
Ladakh, where again ostracism does not necess-
arily mean the person is sent away from the
community. If someone refuses to stop provoca-
tive or offensive behavior, the lamas may cease
serving the religious needs of the individual,
which would be highly demoralizing to a
Ladakhi. No one would visit the ostracized per-
son; no one would help the offender or his fam-
ily in any endeavor; no one would offer food to,
or accept food from, the individual; and there

would be no possibilities of marriage alliances
with other families. A harsh punishment such as
that could only be relieved when the offender
sought the pardon from the village civil and re-
ligious leaders (Norberg-Hodge, 1991).

Ostracism in other societies usually means
totally excluding offenders from the group –
e.g., the Nubians (Fernea, 1973) – though in
some cases it is done very gently. When a mem-
ber of a G/wi band does not heed the consensus
judgment of the group about a conflict, and
when he ignores the barbed comments of others
and does not mend his ways, the people may
have to ease the offender out. This is done not
by overt antagonism, but rather by subtly frus-
trating the offender, by misunderstanding his
wishes on purpose, by not hearing him: by, in
effect, rejecting him without causing him to feel
rejected or offended. The process prompts the
offender to feel disgusted with his life in the
band, so that he'll leave of his own accord with-
out feeling a need for revenge. Sometimes the
offender will find another band to be more com-
patible and will settle into acceptable behavior
patterns. Some G/wi, of course, never adapt and
move about from band to band, accepted by all
as individuals who have to be tolerated for a
time (Silberbauer, 1972).

6. Armies Are Necessary To Deter External Conflict

Many Western writers maintain that the exist-
ence of armies and the threat of military force is
the only thing that keeps the peace between
nations. States would invade one another con-
stantly in their egocentric drives to acquire more
territory, goods, trade markets, resources, and
security, according to this argument, if it
weren't for the certainty that the invaded state
would fight back (Brown, 1987; Ceadel, 1987).
This kind of argument is also extended to peace-
ful societies, which, it is argued, exist only in re-
lation to, and through the sufferance of, more
aggressive neighboring societies. These peace-
ful peoples must have relatively peaceful neigh-
bors, live where they are relatively isolated from
attack, live where flight from attack is a reason-
able option, or be much stronger than potential
attackers so that others wouldn't dare try an at-
tack (argument and literature summarized by
Ross, 1993a, pp. 66–67).

Some of the 24 peaceful societies under

consideration here follow this generalization, at least superficially. The problem with the idea is that it views the relationship of the nonviolent society and the aggressive society only from the perspective of the latter: the peaceful society MUST be isolated from the strong society or it can't exist; it MUST be able to flee quickly from an attack by the neighboring violent people or it would quickly be destroyed. The literature on these 24 peoples and their relationships with dominating societies provides insights into this issue of peaceful peoples getting along with aggressive peoples – and it allows the simple generalizations to be challenged. Some of the peaceful societies fit those stereotypes but others do not.

Clearly, a few of the 24 peoples live in very isolated locations, such as the Ifaluk and the Tristan Islanders, who inhabit, respectively, islands in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Other societies, such as the Paliyan (Gardner, 1972, 1985), Semai (Dentan, 1968a), Batek (Endicott, 1988), Malapandaram (Morris, 1992), Buid (Gibson, 1989, 1990), and Chewong (Howell, 1984, 1989) solve problems with outsiders, particularly with more powerful outsiders, by fleeing from danger. At the first sign of conflict, these peoples will abandon their villages and melt back into the forest, where they may stay for weeks or even years. But it is a mistake to assume that their relationships with their more powerful neighbors or the nations that they live in can be characterized only by isolation or flight from danger. They take their nonviolence seriously – as a positive approach to human relationships and as the basis of their lives – and avoiding conflict is only part of their logic. Conflict resolution, such as the Semai *becharaa'*, is more complex and ingenious than the simple term 'separation' would imply. The Semai are highly committed to their peaceful ways, and they try hard to resolve conflicts with their more powerful neighbors, the Malay people, nonviolently. They have been invaded, dominated, and enslaved by the Malays for a long time (Endicott, 1983; Robarchek, 1994, pp. 192–193), but they still agonize over the dilemma of how to continue to maintain their own ethic of peacefulness in the face of this domination (Robarchek, 1989, pp. 916–917); they do not easily accept the ethic of the aggressor (Dentan, 1988).

A number of the peaceful peoples do have frequent contacts with outsiders and have been able to maintain their peacefulness despite it. The literature on these peoples suggests that they are able to get along with larger and more aggressive societies. Not all conflicts with people and government officials from outside their societies can be avoided, of course, yet they handle conflicts with outsiders in a similar fashion to their handling of internal conflicts – i.e., peacefully.

For instance, the anarchistic Tristan Islanders historically disliked the idea of any outside institutional authority in their midst, but they have always had a knack for resolving conflicts with outsiders in a highly deferential, but still quite effective, fashion. In the late 1930s an English minister on the Island tried to run the lives of the people in an imperious, dictatorial manner, which the Islanders didn't care for. He established a storehouse over which he exerted absolute control, in an attempt to bend the islanders to accepting his will. The Tristan Islanders never got to the point of openly confronting the minister, however, since they could not endure the strain of confrontation with him; they would buckle under to his will with a meek 'yes, Father', out of respect for his power and high office. They accepted his orders if they couldn't avoid them, to placate him and ignored everything else that they could get away with. They felt that his antics in trying to run their lives were simply part of the fun he enjoyed being among them. Besides, they realized that in a few years he would be replaced by another minister who would have different ideas (Munch, 1971).

In the early 1960s the entire population of Tristan da Cunha was brought to Great Britain by the British government when a volcano on the island threatened to destroy the settlement. However, when the government decided to make the evacuation permanent, the Islanders united for the first time in their history to express their feelings. They affirmed their belief that people should not control the lives of others; they agreed on a dislike for the aggression and self-assertion that they witnessed in Britain; and they recognized that the violence in British society was too different from their own nonviolent culture for them to tolerate. They decided to return to their island on their

own. Faced with this determination, and with a lot of criticism in the media, the Colonial Office backed down and agreed to return them to Tristan da Cunha (Munch, 1964). The Tristan Islanders succeeded in resolving the conflict with the government by confronting it in the most unobtrusive and peaceful manner they could figure out – by trying to find a way to get themselves back without the assistance of the government.

The peaceful Anabaptist peoples that live in North America – the Mennonites, Hutterites, and Amish – have been persecuted for centuries but, like the Tristan Islanders, they have tried to settle conflicts with the larger societies in the same spirit of nonviolence that characterizes their internal relationships. For instance, during World War I draftees from these groups were punished, beaten, and tortured in US military prisons (Unruh, 1969; Juhnke, 1990), and civilians who refused to contribute money to the war effort through the purchase of war bonds were named in local newspapers, harassed, and physically abused by the local citizens (Juhnke, 1977). As a result of these experiences, the controversial Civilian Public Service program (CPS) of World War II (Bush, 1990), and a range of other factors (Toews, 1992), the basic beliefs of most Mennonites in nonresistance have been slowly changing. From the 1960s through the 1980s Mennonite commitment to 'nonresistance' (taken from Matthew 5.39, 'Do not resist one who is evil'), has changed into a belief in 'peacemaking', the feeling that they have a responsibility to engage the broader American and Canadian societies and work actively for peace, rather than avoid outsiders as nonresistance had previously implied (Driedger & Kraybill, 1994; Bush, 1990; Nisly, 1989).

The two other Anabaptist peoples, the Hutterites and the Amish, have not developed a spirit of engaging the larger societies of the USA and Canada as the Mennonites have done; but they still have conflicts or the threats of conflicts with outsiders to deal with. The Hutterite colonies try to prevent conflicts from arising by fostering frequent contacts with their farming neighbors and by generous exchanges of farm produce (Bennett, 1967). The Amish have problems resolving individual conflict situations with outsiders since they cannot file lawsuits against others – that would violate their belief in nonresistance. Business competitors, buyers, and suppliers, knowing of that prohibition, take advantage of them by cheating and exploiting them (Kraybill, 1989).

Much as they say they do not deal with the outside society, in fact the Amish have developed a pattern of adjustments to external conflicts. Non-Amish leaders and supporters of the Amish help them informally to resolve their conflicts with outsiders in positions of power and influence, sometimes through helpful advocacy, sometimes through finding creative solutions to their problems. If an Amishman were taken into court, he would never contest charges and hire an attorney because of his belief in nonresistance, but an attorney friend might go along, just to sit there and make sure the courts acted fairly. The lawyer would not be paid, but the Amish would give him some garden vegetables or freshly baked bread. When the Pennsylvania government passed a new state requirement that all teachers had to be certified and had to meet minimum educational requirements, which the Amish teachers in their one-room schoolhouses couldn't do, the Amish got around the regulation by declaring that all their teachers were substitutes, and thus exempt from the regulation. The rural Amish people have little concern or interest in these pressures, counterpressures, and maneuverings – they believe in nonresistance and, if necessary, migration to avoid problems. Even their leaders do not frame their advocacy in the terms of the outsiders: rather, they see their activity as 'working things out', being helpful in resolving issues, and liberating officials from their constant need to obey rules (Kidder & Hostetler, 1990). While their strategies are not precisely the same as those of the Tristan Islanders, the similarities are striking.

Conflicts with outsiders are thus resolved by peaceful peoples in a variety of ways, but the conclusion from these examples is that armies, killing, or other forms of violence are never part of their thinking, as they are to the rest of the world. The non-western peaceful peoples likewise, such as the Yanadi (Raghaviah, 1962), try to resolve their conflicts with outsiders in fashions that are consistent with their overall commitments to peacefulness. The cumulative story is thus of peaceful peoples resolving con-

flicts with larger, more aggressive societies through meekness, active involvement, and attempts to resolve difficulties peacefully – in complete accord with their world-views.

7. Conflict Is Best Managed through Political Structures

Boulding sees conflict management as extending from the family to the tribe, to the nation, to the superpower, to the evolving world government. 'Conflict control is government', he writes, 'and though government has broader functions than this, conflict control is perhaps its most important single task' (Boulding, 1962, p. 324). The literature about the peaceful peoples suggests that avoiding governments may also provide a viable model for peacefully resolving conflicts.

In many traditional societies, people avoid calling in outside authorities and try to settle their internal conflicts themselves (Just, 1991; Nader, 1991). Outside police are to be avoided if at all possible. The peaceful societies likewise try to keep their conflicts to themselves. The idea that an outside government or political structure is an essential part of solving their conflicts, or would even be helpful in such situations, would be alien to these peoples. They see government agencies as highly threatening and they avoid such outsiders as much as possible during conflicts, though there are some exceptions (Hollan & Wellenkamp, 1994).

For instance, a peaceful Zapotec town voids having government officials involved in the affairs of their community since people feel that they would be treated much as any other Mexican town – and they are convinced that their town is different from the rest in its opposition to violence (Paddock, 1976). Likewise, Nubian communities don't reveal serious problems to outsiders, particularly to authorities such as the Egyptian police; they feel that the best chance for their villages to survive is to be ignored by authorities (Fernea, 1973). The Amish also settle their conflicts within; an instance where an Amish man sued his own church officials in court because he was ostracized (Gruter, 1985) was exceedingly unusual. In fact, none of the peaceful peoples included in the group of 24, to judge by the available literature, appear to rely on intervention by outside

agencies of any kind, with the possible exception of the Mennonites, many of whom today no longer feel the strict need to remain absolutely separate from all government functions, particularly in Canada (Driedger & Kraybill, 1994).

In the peaceful societies, conflicts are handled by the individual parties to the conflict and by the group – rarely by outsiders. Individuals are expected to deal with conflict situations by walking away from them, by laughing them off, by displacing their feelings of anger in various ways, by smiling and being pleasant to everyone, by actively socializing with people with whom they may have unpleasant inner feelings, and so on. Individuals should try to solve their problems internally if they can.

When that doesn't work, the parties to a conflict should resolve the issues between themselves, or, more frequently, bring them to larger groups of people or authority figures within the society for discussion and resolution. But even group resolutions of conflicts, such as the Semai *becharaa'*, rely on the group to foster the dissipation of tensions so that individual, personal controls may keep the peace. None of these societies rely on the power of people as a political body to enforce the peace, with the sole exception of the threat of ostracism. But if the ultimate approach to resolving difficult conflicts for Western peoples is outward, to the next larger political or governmental body, as Boulding asserts, the ultimate focus for the peaceful peoples (and many other traditional societies) is inward, towards individuals and the group.

8. World-view of Conflict Resolution

'Conflict is . . . inevitable in human life . . . . Eliminating conflict is clearly impossible, and likely undesirable, because of the close link between conflict and creative, constructive change' (Augsburger, 1992, pp. 5, 21). Two decades earlier, Deutsch (1973) expressed similar ideas, and popular writers often reflect this thinking: 'Conflict is a necessary part of *every* marriage. . . . If there is no conflict . . . it is a sign that something is wrong with the marriage' (Warren, 1995). Other scholars (e.g., Ross, 1993b; Nader, 1991), though not necessarily so enthusiastic about conflict as those writers, consider it simply a cultural behavior, and as such

not to be judged desirable or undesirable. These ideas reflect the predominant world-views of Western societies that proclaim the ideology of love, peace, cooperation, and generosity, but accept conflict, aggression, competition, and violence as inevitable aspects of human nature and human societies.[7] Conflict resolution, in this view, is just a process – a strategy or series of strategies for settling disputes.

Such attitudes toward conflict would not be shared by peaceful peoples. While many of them would recognize that conflict is a problem at times in their societies, none would see it as beneficial. The purpose of this section is to look at the (mostly) positive ways these peaceful societies view their lack of conflict – their world-views of peacefulness – and to compare those views with the thinking of Western writers.

To start with some Western thinking, scholars using cross-cultural data have sought to explain the phenomenon of conflict and conflict resolution based on either the structural factors in societies or on psychological/cultural elements (Ross 1993a, b). The social structural analysis concentrates on economic, political and social organization as the source of conflict; the psychocultural approach focuses on deep-seated 'we–they' conceptions of human opposition. The former argues that stronger ties, such as kinship, will reduce conflicts, while the latter sees ambiguity in social actions, and thus tries to explain why some disputes are far more intense than others. Based on his own extensive cross-cultural analysis, Ross feels that both have validity: psychocultural factors may determine the intensity of a conflict, while structural factors may point out the targets of hostile actions and the ways conflicts are organized. He argues that low-conflict societies are characterized by both a psychocultural atmosphere of warmth and affection and cross-cutting social structures (Ross, 1993a).

These arguments, and the impressive amount of cross-cultural data assembled, make a lot of sense but are not completely supported by the literature on peaceful societies. Ross's description (1993a, pp. 37–38) of the strong sense of interpersonal trust that exists in low-conflict societies, with a corresponding lack of fear of isolation and abandonment, is contradicted by Briggs's (1978, 1979a, 1987, 1991) writings on peaceful Inuit groups, Lutz's (1985, 1988)

descriptions of the Ifaluk, Wikan's (1990) work on the Balinese, and other writings about non-violent peoples. These societies try to eliminate expressions of anger and aggression by developing fears, anxieties, and uncertainties in children about other people. If others are not to be depended on to love them, if affection and support can never be taken for granted, the children internalize a constant need to live up to the society's peaceful values.

Aside from that, Ross's theory of the culture of conflict is impressive, but his bias is similar to other Western thinkers – that conflict is inevitable, though it can be managed better. His choice of terminology reflects his thinking: he frequently refers to 'the culture of conflict', the title of one of his works (1993b); yet nowhere in either volume does he use the phrase, 'the culture of low conflict'. Conversely, he refers to a group of five peaceful societies as 'low-conflict societies', but he does not refer to other, more violent, peoples as 'high conflict' or even 'normal conflict' societies. Conflict is normative, in this view, while the lack of conflict is the exception. Of course, the literature on a wide range of peoples, such as Ross has studied, does show that conflict is normative, and 'low-conflict' societies are the exception. But – and this is the critical point – viewed from within the literature of the peaceful societies, from the perspective of those peoples, the 'high conflict' societies are the ones that vary from their norm. Perhaps this alternative norm should be called 'the culture of peacefulness', or as UNESCO has designated one of its new programs, the Culture of Peace (Mayor, 1995).

Conflict resolution among the 24 peaceful societies, their culture of peacefulness, is based on more than psychocultural and social structures: just as significant are their world-views of peacefulness. Gregor (1994) touches on this when he points out that the ideologies and symbolic values that societies hold to are also critical elements in providing the basis of a peaceful (or a violent) society. Deutsch (1994) makes the same point in his so-called 'crude law of social relations', namely that 'the characteristic processes and effects elicited by a given type of social relationship (e.g., cooperative or competitive) also tend to elicit that type of social relationship'. In other words, cooperation breeds cooperation, competition breeds compe-

tition. Likewise, Howell and Willis (1989b, p. 25), introducing the peaceful societies included in their anthology, conclude that these peoples all place an emphasis 'on peaceful interaction among the members of the society, and this emphasis is cosmologically constructed and morally embedded in a cosmological universe of meaning'. The literature on the 24 societies considered for this essay shows that their peaceful conflict resolution practices are fostered by their beliefs in peacefulness, which are in turn bolstered by the successful practices. To a Western analyst, 'the goal of conflict resolution is to shape new political and social arrangements . . . ' (Kelman, 1993, p. xi). To the members of these peaceful societies, the goal of conflict resolution is to maintain social harmony through traditional means of prompting individuals to remember and act on their shared beliefs.

The basic reason for peacefulness in these societies is that the people are strongly opposed to actual physical violence and firmly in favor of nonviolence, in contrast to neighboring, and sometimes very similar, communities that may only pay lip service to the ideals of peace and are, in actual practice, far more violent. The peaceful peoples not only believe fervently in their world-views of nonviolence: in general, they have internalized those beliefs and adhere to them very strictly, using primarily internal controls to prevent and resolve conflicts, as has been discussed earlier. In other societies that claim they have nonviolent values, but have not really internalized them, people rely primarily on external controls for preventing and resolving conflicts.

For instance, several scholars have written about a Zapotec town in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico (dubbed 'La Paz'), which is much more peaceful, and experiences a lot less violence, than other nearby towns.[8] In La Paz, violence is never acceptable: people avoid problems with others, deny that they have interpersonal difficulties, and refuse to fight. By way of contrast, in a nearby, more violent community, even though the people talk about themselves as having a peaceful town, they rationalize that sometimes humans get violent and sometimes fighting is understandable, particularly if provoked by alcohol or sexual jealousies (Fry, 1994). The Semai, as indicated at the beginning

of this essay, emphasize and re-emphasize their shared value of peacefulness (Robarchek, 1977). Other peoples are highly conscious of, or take active pride in, their peacefulness as the defining characteristic of their societies, e.g., the Paliyan (Gardner, 1966), Nubians (Fernea, 1973), Toraja (Hollan, 1992), Mennonites (Driedger & Kraybill, 1994), Malapandaram (Morris, 1992), Tristan Islanders (Loudon, 1970), and so on. Even in those peaceful societies in which people fear their violent nature (as they conceive it), such as the Inuit (Briggs, 1979b), strongly held values promote their nonviolence.

In addition, the point made at the beginning of this essay can't be emphasized too strongly, that the peacefulness of these societies is not based on utopian thinking. People such as the Semai do not conceive of nonviolence as an ideal they should strive for; rather, they think of themselves as nonviolent. According to Dentan (1968b, p. 55) the Semai would not describe anger as bad in the abstract; instead they would say, 'We do not get angry'. The practice of nonviolence of these peoples combines their world-views of peace with a very realistic, pragmatic understanding of the results of violence (Thomas, 1994). For instance, the Anabaptist societies and the Tristan Islanders see a constant, practical benefit to themselves in maintaining their meek, non-confrontational, peaceful relationships with each other and with outsiders. The literature on the peoples who live on the fringes of Indian society – the Ladakhis, Paliyan, Malapandaram, Birhor, and Yanadi – emphasizes the practical ways their economic and social structures are integrated with their peacefulness.

To sum up this section, the peaceful peoples are intolerant of internal strife; they do not rationalize conflict and would not accept the possibility that violence is excusable in some circumstances. Few individuals in these societies would admit that, while they know they *should* be peaceful, sometimes they just have to use violence – that's the way humanity is.[9] To them, other peoples are obviously violent, aggressive, and filled with conflicts and warfare; but they themselves are peaceful and highly conscious of it. Peacefulness is an absolute commitment for them. Most of their social, religious, mythical, cultural, psychological, and

educational beliefs are derived from this world-view of their own peacefulness.

9. Conclusion

Attitudes about conflict and approaches to conflict resolution among 24 of the earth's peaceful peoples differ from those of the other societies on earth. Personal development and social life in the peaceful societies is based on striving for – and achieving – an absence of conflicts and violence. People in most of these societies do not view conflict as normal and productive, as Westerners often do; they view it as harmful and destructive. They avoid all types of conflicts if they possibly can, and if they can't they almost always resolve them quickly and nonviolently.

While these peoples resolve conflicts by using techniques that other societies also use, they emphasize certain strategies in unique ways. For instance, direct negotiation between the parties to a dispute, an important approach in Western societies, is not used too often by the peaceful peoples. Instead of negotiating, most of them rely on self-restraint to prevent conflicts and to help people settle the disputes that do arise. People in many of the peaceful societies prefer to avoid controversy, to walk away from conflicts, to separate families or communities in order to circumvent hostilities. One-on-one negotiation is too confrontational for many of these peoples. Also, bystanders in several of the peaceful societies will intervene enthusiastically to help resolve conflicts – a contrast to modern urban areas where strangers often fear getting involved in confrontations.

A number of the peaceful societies depend on community meetings as a technique to help settle disputes, while Western societies settle conflicts by relying on formal court trials to determine guilt or innocence, right from wrong. The peaceful community meetings exemplify the importance of preventing and resolving conflicts, while the Western belief in trials is founded on abstract conceptions of justice. Also, angry individuals in several peaceful societies may talk out problems without specifically addressing other people – a rhetorical discussion of grievances with the community at large which does not directly confront the other parties to the problems. To repeat, in these societies avoiding conflict is more important than

confronting it, and resolving disputes by whatever nonviolent means possible is the highest goal of society.

However, conflict resolution in the peaceful societies relies on more than just strategies and techniques. It is based on assumptions about human relations and social patterns that are quite different from those of modern societies. For instance, people in the peaceful societies strongly believe they should avoid, and if they can't avoid then they should quickly resolve, all conflicts. They view nonviolence as absolutely essential to the proper functioning of their societies. In contrast, Western social scientists and popular writers believe that conflict is an inevitable, and to some extent productive, aspect of human societies which we must learn to manage effectively. The peaceful peoples settle conflicts with outsiders by using nonviolent strategies which are quite comparable to the techniques they use for resolving internal disputes. Western societies, in general, view force and violence as a necessary, and at times justifiable, aspect of external relations.

Other ways that the peaceful societies contrast with the rest of the world are that they do not punish those who violate social norms, except for the occasional use of ostracism; and they place very little reliance on political structures larger than their own communities for achieving peace. The most peaceful of them have ideologies that encourage meekness and nonresisting behavior. Most important of all, the peacefulness in these societies – and their success in resolving conflicts – is founded on world-views which include nonviolence as one of the defining characteristics of humanity. Their world-views are not just ideology: they include, and integrate, psychological, social, religious, and ethical structures that constantly reinforce their shared beliefs in living peacefully. The natures of these structures, of course, vary widely among all the peaceful societies.

How do the conflict-resolution strategies and beliefs of the peaceful peoples relate to the complex societies of today's world? On a practical level, professionals in the dispute resolution field might find some of the techniques used by these societies to be applicable at times, such as relying more on humor to defuse tensions, or placing more emphasis on building up individual restraints on hostility in conflict situations.

But the peaceful societies exemplify a more basic lesson about resolving conflicts without violence. They demonstrate that peaceful conflict resolution, in order to be an integral part of modern social life, must be based on a fervent commitment to nonviolence. If the examples of the peaceful peoples have any validity, nonviolence has to be accepted as one of the highest ideals, one of the most strongly accepted beliefs, of today's societies. We can gain glimpses of a world which resolves conflicts nonviolently through the vision provided by the peaceful peoples: a vision of individuals who always prefer peaceful behavior over aggression, and who always avoid confrontation and conflict; a vision of societies which look to their widely varying ethical, religious, and social traditions to support world-views of peace; and a vision of humanity successfully building and reinforcing peaceful beliefs into nonviolent social lives. UNESCO has launched a comparable vision, a new Culture of Peace program, which seeks ways of building nonviolent world-views among nations (Mayor, 1995): the 24 peaceful societies discussed here should provide inspiration and support for UNESCO's work.

The example of the peaceful societies cannot be extended too far – they do not provide clear answers to many of the complex issues of conflict in today's world. The peaceful peoples do, however, provide a basis for understanding successful conflict resolution and they do inspire a vision of a potentially peaceful world. Arguments about the complexity of modern societies (compared to the small-scale peaceful peoples) may try to justify conflict as inevitable, but these are rationalizations which fade under the vision of peacefulness provided by these peoples: that human societies CAN be peaceful, that people CAN build virtually fail-safe structures for avoiding and resolving conflict, that punishments and armed conflicts are NOT essential for keeping the peace. The answer is for us to build, in our societies, world-views of peacefulness that are as strong as those of the peaceful peoples. This is the first step.

NOTES

1. Variation of the standard text of Matthew 6.12, used in some Protestant churches such as the Episcopal, Methodist, Congregational, and others.

2. I have served twice on criminal court juries, and I base this description of a Pennsylvania trial on those experiences.
3. It would be ideal to include in the rest of this essay more descriptions of ethno-concepts such as the Semai *becharaa*'; the analysis to be presented would be considerably enriched by looking at peacefulness primarily through the languages of the peoples themselves. Unfortunately, that is not possible: there is not enough space to add the additional discussions, and many of the works about these societies are not enriched by that level of detail.
4. This is not meant to demean the work of researchers within the Western tradition on war, conflict, and conflict resolution – much of it is immensely valuable. My point is to argue for a peaceful basis of understanding conflict.
5. The definitions of 'peacefulness' and 'people' or 'society' are taken from Bonta (1993) with some updating and modifications.
6. The present tense is used throughout this article for peoples discussed in the anthropological literature, even though the information may or may not be current; the past tense is used for references that are from the historical literature.
7. I would define 'world-view' as a system of thoughts and emotions about individual, social, and spiritual life which includes the human actions guided by those thoughts and emotions, while 'ideology' is a system of beliefs which may or may not influence individual acts.
8. See Bonta (1993) for a listing of the literature.
9. In some of these societies, on rare instances murderers or dangerously insane individuals have been killed by other members of their groups. The people evidently felt they had no other ways to handle these dangerous situations.

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APPENDIX. TWENTY-FOUR PEACEFUL SOCIETIES

The following list provides a brief description of where and how each of the 24 societies mentioned in this article lives. For a full bibliography of works describing the peacefulness of these societies, as well as the works of detractors who discuss their violence, please consult Bonta (1993).

Amish. Over 100,000 Amish live in Canada and the United States, mostly on traditional family farms in the eastern states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, though many are now engaging in small business enterprises.

Balinese. Over two million people, most of whom practice Hindu beliefs, live on the Indonesian island of Bali and work as either farmers or business people.

Batek. Peoples of the mountainous Malay Peninsula who gather forest products for trade as well as hunt and gather their food.

Birhor. A gathering and hunting people who also trade with other peoples in southern Bihar State, east central India.

Buid. Shifting agricultural peoples of the forested highlands of Mindoro Island in the Philippines.

Chewong. A hunting and gathering people of the mountainous interior, Peninsular Malaysia, who also undertake some swidden agriculture.

G/wi. A San people of central Botswana, southern Africa, who used to live as hunting and gathering nomads in the Kalahari Desert, but who now mostly work as hired laborers on ranches.

Hutterites. An Anabaptist people who live in colonies scattered across the plains of rural north central United States and central Canada.

Ifaluk. A fishing and agricultural people who live on a Pacific atoll in the Federated States of Micronesia, near the large island of Yap.

Inuit. The anthropologist Jean Briggs has written many articles and monographs about the strategies that two different Inuit groups, one in the central Canadian Arctic and the other on Baffin Island, use to control anger and prevent violence from occurring. These peoples traditionally survived on fishing and hunting, though they now are part of the cash economy.

!Kung. One of the most studied of traditional societies, the !Kung, a so-called San people, live in the boundary area of Botswana and Namibia, in southern Africa. Traditionally they were nomadic gatherers and hunters.

Ladakhis. Buddhist agricultural and pastoral people who live south of the Karakoram Range in the northwest corner of India, the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Malapandaram. The Malapandaram, or Hill Pandaram, live in the hills at the southern end of the Western Ghats in India.

Mennonites. Nearly 400,000 Mennonites live today in Canada and the United States, some as traditional farmers who live without much technology, much as the Amish do, and others in quite contemporary businesses, trades, and professional positions.

Montagnais-Naskapi. An Indian society of the Labrador Peninsula, eastern Canada, the Montagnais-Naskapi live on trapping, trading, hunting, gathering and seasonal employment.

Nubians. Before the completion of the Aswan High Dam in Upper Egypt in the 1960s, the Nubian people lived in traditional farming villages along the Nile River, though many of the men had to leave for periods of time to work in cities to the north.

Paliyan. A gathering people who live in a range of hills at the southern end of the Western Ghats of India.

Semai. The Semai, people of the mountainous Malay Peninsula, live (or formerly lived) primarily on their hunting, fishing, gathering, and swidden agriculture.

Tahitians. Residents of the Society Islands, part of French Polynesia in the central Pacific, live off their gardening, fishing, trade and business pursuits.

Temiar. The Temiar, primarily agricultural peoples who do some hunting and gathering, live in permanent villages in longhouses built, in the past, for defense from the Malay slave raiding.

Toraja. Several hundred thousand Toraja, most of whom have converted to Christianity, live primarily by farming in the mountains of South Sulawesi, in Indonesia.

Tristan Islanders. A small population of mixed European and either African or South East Asian ancestry who have lived on the isolated island of Tristan da Cunha, a British dependency in the South Atlantic, since the early nineteenth century. These people have traditionally engaged in fishing, gathering, and agriculture, though in recent decades they have also had cash income from a fishing factory and tourists.

Yanadi. Several hundred thousand Yanadi live mostly in the eastern coastal areas of India, where they engage in gathering, work for wages, and subsistence hunting.

Zapotec. While the Zapotec, an indigenous agricultural people of Oaxaca State, southern Mexico, may not be exceptionally peaceful, a few highly nonviolent communities not too far from the city of Oaxaca have been studied by a succession of social scientists.

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