

Hatred and War:

Some thoughts and implication for hatred and war

“To be born, to change, to love, to win at games, is to be born to live in a time of peace. But war teaches us to lose everything and become what we are not. It all becomes a question of style.” Albert Camus.



M1 Abrams Tank

Homo sapiens is the only know species on this earth to deliberately organize themselves to hate its own kind and to systematically kill each other, i.e., war among itself.

Given the differences in human cultures, from Tribal Traditional to Euro-America, is there any relationship or correlation with any of the particular ways of relating to each other (via religion, ecology, family and kinship) and the manner of our hating one another and warring amongst ourselves? Specifically, is the deliberate hating and killing of another people somehow a function of a healthy culture, an unhealthy culture, or a particular type of culture and world view? Consider the following theories:

A. Hatred and warfare are an expression of a healthy social organization, e.g., a way to channeling psychological tension or developing competitive skills, or helping solidify the social order, and is thus innate, endemic and fundamental to the human condition? Consider some theories on aggression and prejudice:



Last Jew in the Ukraine, 1941

1. **Instinctive.** Bio-psychological basis. Society tames the beast, but not too tame, for a little for the beast is healthy. Theories of Sigmund Freud – *Thanatos* and the “hydraulic theory.” And Konard Lorenz and Robert Ardery – “Survival of the Fittest” and the case for competition.

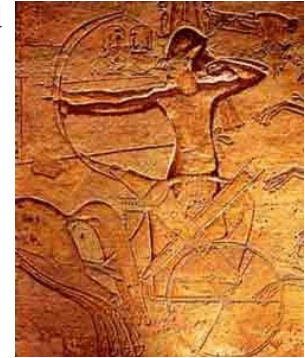
2. **Cathartic.** Eliminate aggression by expressing it – “blowing off steam” Society channels the beast, displacing tension. The act of some aggression reduces the need for further, more explosive forms of aggression, a form of catharsis. Channel in socially acceptable ways, such as in sports, and channel in direct aggression, such as war.

3. **Cognitive Dissonance.** A psychological basis in theory of Leon Festinger. Society escalates the beast. One act of aggression legitimizes further acts of aggression and increases negative attitudes toward the targets of the aggression.

4. **Social Solidarity.** Conflict with an external society is a means to solidify social group coherence, as well as decision making and power base. Internal tensions and conflicts within a society are subsided in order to focus on “fighting” the “enemy.” Consider

theory of Lewis Coser. A variation on this theme revolves around maintaining a society's ecological balance. Given population growth, and/or natural resources to fuel economic growth, war is a means to reduce population and/or expand a society's natural resource base. Theories of Andrew Vaydia and Marvin Harris.

B. Hatred and warfare are the results of the failure of social relations and thus not an inevitable state of being human, e.g., a way of diverting and displacing dysfunctional aspects internal to a society externally onto an "enemy" and if it were a properly tuned social order, would there be war?



Ramses II, 1250 BCE

5. Frustration and Relative Deprivation. When a normally well-functioning social system (its institutions of religion, family, government, economy, etc.) breaks down and the aspirations of the members of a society can no longer meet, relative deprivation results in increased frustration that can lead toward hatred of others and war. Scapegoating can result. The breakdown can be the result of demographic pressures, resource scarcity and competition, antiquated and non-adaptive institutions, corruption and abuse of power, etc.

6. Socialization. A culture can perpetuate aggressive and prejudicial attitudes towards others given socialization practices, personality styles such as "authoritarian personalities," and the power of charismatic personalities and the dynamics of group conformity.

C. Hatred and warfare are more characteristic of a particular type of social organization and world view – a specific way of relating to other humans and life-forms all together? i.e., correlated with "exclusivity" (introduce or reiterate from ecological lectures). Implications of exclusivity on "hatred" and "war," and on the "ecological crisis."



Klu Klux Klan, 1923

7. Exclusivity. A culture that embraces the values of objectification (reality is made up of objects, separate from myself) and gradation (I am superior and dominate over others) is one that tends to, a. become alienated and estranged from the world and other humans, and b. is more assertive over and manipulative of other humans, and, as a result, views other humans as "less than" human (or some related expression), and consequently tends to have a predisposition for hatred of others, and for conflict and war.

Consider the truism:

Exclusivity and separation breeds hatred.

Inclusive and oneness spawns compassion.