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## **CHAPTER 4**

# **NATIONALISM AND WAR: A SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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The study of nationalism is a social-psychological phenomenon to the extent that individuals express sentiments or emotions towards and have attitudes about their own and other nations. Focusing their attention primarily on individuals and small interacting groups, social psychologists have sought basic knowledge about the ways that people relate to groups and nations. Central to this focus are the conditions that arouse or reduce feelings of attachment toward ingroups as well as feelings of enmity toward outgroups.

Nationalistic sentiments must be part of any explanatory framework of intergroup or international relations. The etiology and manifestation of these sentiments are important research issues, addressed by studies reviewed in this chapter. More perplexing, however, is the way that they influence collective behavior at the level of ethnic groups, states, or nations. It is this connection between micro (small groups) and macro (nations) level processes that poses the greatest challenge to students of nationalism. Only a few attempts have been made to develop the connections

and few social psychologists have developed the implications of their experimental and survey findings for actions taken by nations. Plausible mechanisms for connecting sentiments to national actions were discussed in earlier articles (Druckman, 1994, 1995). In this chapter, my goal is to situate social-psychological variables in a larger framework of factors that lead toward or away from war.

## **NEEDS, TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT, AND ORIENTATIONS**

The bases for group and national attachments are widely assumed to be lodged in human needs: “Groups in general are organized to meet human needs; their structures and processes are in part molded by these needs” (Guetzkow, 1957, p. 47). At the level of the nation, the group fulfills economic, sociocultural, and political needs, the last including security, group loyalty, and prestige. While these needs are regarded as universal, their strength varies in different nations and in different individuals. The needs are not limited to national identifications but are regarded as being the basis for group identification in general: “The ways by which an individual relates to his nation have aspects in common with the ways in which an individual relates to any group of which he is a member...” (Terhune, 1964, p. 258). Basic underlying needs for attachment and the nation as a (type of) group are central themes in the social-psychological approach to nationalism.

A variety of types of needs have been proposed by researchers investigating the social-psychological aspects of nationalism. Most taxonomies distinguish between the *affective* and *instrumental functions* served by nations. For Terhune (1964), the nation achieves relevance for the individual in terms of affective (sentimental attachment to the homeland), goal (motivation to help one’s country), and ego involvement (sense of identity and self-esteem derived from na-

tional identification). DeLamater et al. (1969) proposed a triad of needs for national involvement which they refer to as symbolic, functional, and normative where sanctions and role expectations are emphasized. Parallel concepts are found in the literatures on individual motivation and small groups: for example, need for achievement (goal involvement), need for affiliation (affective involvement), and need for power (ego involvement); member attraction (affective involvement), task orientation (goal involvement), and status attraction (ego involvement). Stagner's (1967) answer to the question why citizens often respond so enthusiastically to appeals by national leaders consists of the following "universal" desires: autonomy, power, prestige, altruism, morality, and the will to survive. Many of these desires can be subsumed under Kelman's (1988) dichotomy of a need for self-protection and a need for self-transcendence.

The questionnaire surveys conducted by Terhune (1964) and by DeLamater et al. (1969) suggest that any of the types of involvement can bind the individual to the nation, but for many national groups there may be a preferred type of involvement. Terhune, for example, found differences between the foreign and American samples used in his study: goal involvement correlated most strongly with a nationalism measure for the foreign students, while affective involvement correlated more strongly with nationalism for the American students. Nationalism was strongest overall for students from underdeveloped countries.

Orientations toward conflict resolution have also been thought about in terms of development. Gladstone's (1962) distinction between *egoistic* and *integrative orientations* emphasizes the difference between being strongly motivated to win (viewed as an earlier stage of development) and recognizing the importance of collaboration for mutual benefit (viewed as a later stage). They are similar to the progression from decreasing egocentricity to increasing sociocen-

tricity as discussed by Piaget (1965). As children progress along this dimension they are increasingly able to take the points of view of people from other nations and decreasingly ready to depict other nations in terms of simplified enemy images (Silverstein & Holt, 1989). Such a progression may also have implications for the current recognition of a need for mutual or collective security: Increased concern for the welfare of other nations is essential to the realization that no nation is secure until all nations are secure (Hicks & Walch, 1990). Whether applied to the development of individuals or to decision-making elites, these concepts contribute the dimension of growth through time. Individuals may develop more sophisticated ways of relating to their nations as they progress from egocentric to sociocentric orientations. More direct implications for a nation's foreign policy derive from the inference that national decision-makers also progress along this growth dimension.

The developmental trend from self to other orientation should be seen in increased *prosocial behavior*, which includes helping others, sympathy for them, empathy toward them and, even altruism on some occasions (Wispe, 1972). Such positive forms of social behavior may have adaptive advantages. It has been argued, from the perspective of evolutionary psychology, that cooperative behavior promotes individual survival (Caporeal et al., 1989), and that cooperative groups are more effective than less cooperative groups (Brewer & Kramer, 1985). It also contributes to a person's sense of identity by distinguishing between others who are like them and those who are not, between friends and foes (Volkan, 1988). The cooperative behavior displayed between members of one's own group, strengthened by pressures of conformity to group norms, are rarely seen in relations between members of different groups. It is in this sense, as Ross notes, that "sociality promotes ethnocentric conflict, furnishing the critical building block for in-

group amity and outgroup hostility” (1991, p. 177).

Of particular interest are the *conditions* that influence why a person identifies with his or her group. Findings from numerous studies, (e.g., Druckman, 1995) suggest that neither “personality” nor group loyalty is a sufficient explanatory construct. It appears that *group representatives* respond to broad aspects of the situation, aspects that can be manipulated by groups or their leaders to produce the “desired” behavior. They can also be manipulated by third parties who are asked to mediate conflicts between groups.

Research shows that representatives who make a spirited defense of their group to gain resources in negotiations will develop feelings of increased commitment to the group and its perspectives. The perceptions or feelings are aroused by the situation, such as a competitive confrontation (or a joint problem-solving task) between the groups, and lead to such actions as intransigence in negotiation (Zechmeister & Druckman, 1973).

Of particular concern, however, is the relevance of these laboratory findings for the behavior of citizens in their role as national representatives (Perry, 1957). More generally, to what extent do laboratory findings apply to non-laboratory settings? One approach to this issue is to assume that the more similar two situations are, the more likely will findings obtained in one apply to the other. In more technical terms this involves the *ecological validity* of the findings. Similarity between settings can be judged in terms such as culture, group structure, immediate situation (e.g., crisis vs. non-crisis), and the types of conflict among the parties. Another approach is to ask whether sentiments developed for (or behaviors shaped by) groups transfer to the larger context of intergroup and international relations. This is a matter of linkage where relevance is shown by recurring patterns of identification with groups whether they are defined at a micro or macro

level of analysis.

At issue is the way that sentiments are developed in relation to different units of identification. From one perspective, the expression of sentiments is similar whether the group consists of interacting individuals or abstract entities: Sentiments expressed toward small groups need not precede those expressed toward such larger entities as nations and may, in fact, be contradictory. Much social-psychological experimentation is guided by the assumption of similar processes that can be invoked simultaneously; that is, national loyalties do not depend on the prior development of communal loyalties. A competing perspective on this issue assumes that loyalties transfer from smaller to larger entities: Sentiments expressed toward small groups or communities form the basis for those expressed toward nations.

## **PATRIOTISM AND NATIONALISM**

Findings reviewed in the section above make evident the ease with which ingroup attachments are developed and competitive behavior is aroused in intergroup situations. They do, however, raise questions about the relationship between positive ingroup and negative outgroup sentiments or attitudes. Whether attitudes of enmity toward other (out) groups are a direct result of positive emotional attachments to one's own group or are aroused by competitive features of tasks or situations remains an issue: Can enmity (or competitiveness) be aroused in representatives who do not have strong attachments to their group? Can group representatives whose attachments are strong have favorable attitudes toward and engage in cooperative behavior with outgroups? These questions are addressed by the research reviewed in this section.

Implications for the link between ingroup amity and outgroup enmity are developed in the

factor analysis studies reported by Feshbach (1990). He found that it is possible to distinguish among different kinds of ingroup orientations and identifications. Analyses of responses to items in a questionnaire about attitudes toward one's own and other countries revealed two relatively independent factors. One factor concerns attachment to one's country: Strong loadings were obtained on such items as "I am proud to be an American." This factor was labeled *patriotism*. A second factor concerns feelings of national superiority and a need for national power and dominance: Strong loadings were obtained on such items as "In view of America's moral and material superiority, it is only right that we should have the biggest say in deciding U.N. policy." This factor was called *nationalism*. Correlations between these factors and such variables as early familial attachments, attitudes toward nuclear arms, and readiness to go to war suggest distinct patterns. "Nationalists" indicated stronger support for nuclear-armament policies and were more ready to go to war but less willing to risk their lives than "patriots." "Patriots" showed a stronger early attachment to their father than did "nationalists."

Feshbach's research also suggests that attitudes toward own and other groups or nations develop early in life. Studies of children's acquisition of attitudes, reviewed by Sears (1969), indicate that nationalism, at least in the United States, develops first as highly favorable affect without supporting cognitive content. The content may be a rationalization for the feelings which may linger after the cognitive component of attitudes have changed: Since the feelings develop earlier than the content, they are likely to be more resistant to extinction. It is those feelings, reflected in the distinction between patriotism and nationalism, that render debates between hawks and doves so vociferous and difficult to resolve. Attempts to mediate the differences are made difficult by the deep-rooted needs served by the attitudes: Policy consensus is more likely to re-

sult from compromises in positions than changes in the underlying feelings. Less clear, however, is the source for nationalistic attitudes: Do they emerge, as Feshbach's data suggest, from weak parental attachments? Or, do they emerge as a transfer of sentiments developed in a strong nuclear family unit?

According to Feshbach, patriotism is less likely to create public pressure for war than nationalism and is, thus, a more desirable orientation for citizens. Given that the tendency for ingroup attachments is probably universal (e.g., Tajfel, 1982), he suggests taking advantage of the positive elements of such attachments (namely, patriotism) and deemphasizing the negative elements (namely, nationalism). It should be possible to have pride in one's nation, recognize shortcomings, and be willing to cooperate with other nations, an orientation referred to by Feshbach as a "patriotic internationalist."

Feshbach's findings and recommendations suggest that ingroup amity is not always linked with outgroup enmity. Certain kinds of ingroup orientations are associated with a tendency to denigrate outgroups, while others are not (Berry, 1984). This distinction is made also in the well-known work of Adorno et al. (1950) on the authoritarian personality: They distinguished between a healthy patriotic love of one's own country not associated with prejudice against outgroups, and an ethnocentric patriotism (like Feshbach's nationalism), which would be. Much more recently, Duckitt (1989) suggested that insecure group identifications would be associated with prejudice and secure group identifications would not (see also Tajfel, 1981). This work calls into question an overall relationship between ingroup and outgroup attitudes—that attitudes toward the ingroup explain attitudes toward outgroups. The relationship may vary with a number of aspects of the situation as discussed in the next section.

The labeling of factors, such as patriotism or nationalism, reflects an assumption that these are relatively stable attitudinal-dispositions which are difficult to change. Conceivably, the orientations are not stable across situations but are aroused (or ameliorated) under certain well-defined conditions. For example, patriotic orientations may occur frequently in non-competitive situations while nationalistic attitudes are expressed more strongly in competitive situations. An experimental approach is better suited to identifying the conditions that arouse attitudes and behavior. A large number of experimental studies have been designed to explore these issues.

### **INGROUP BIAS<sup>1</sup>**

Results obtained from many experiments leave little doubt that the mere classification of people into different groups evokes biases in favor of one's own group; for example, "my group is better, friendlier, more competent, and stronger than other groups" (Brewer, 1979; Messick & Mackie, 1989). Further, the bias is obtained even under conditions of cooperative interdependence between groups (Brewer & Silver, 1978). These results challenge the theory that ingroup bias is caused by intergroup competition or conflicts of interest as suggested by the early experiments conducted by the Sherifs (1965) and Druckman (1968a), among others. More recent stud-

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<sup>1</sup> The experimental work reviewed in this section refers to laboratory groups. Relevance of these findings to nationalism is based on the assumptions that group identification subsumes national, cultural, and other identifications and that the experimental methodologies provide insights about some influences on such identifications. Further, the problem of relevance may not depend on methodology. A more complex rendering of the concept of nationalism can also be explored in laboratory settings. The laboratory does not restrict an investigator's focus to face-to-face groups. It is possible to explore the sentiments aroused by identifications with abstract constituencies and "imagined communities" as well. Whether it is possible to reproduce the *scale*, *intensity*, and *salience* of national identifications is an empirical issue that can also be evaluated systematically.

ies suggest that competition is *not* a necessary condition for ingroup bias, although it can result from competition and is probably stronger in competitive situations.

The most prominent explanation for ingroup bias is Tajfel's (1982) social identity theory (SIT). This theory claims that people's self-evaluations are shaped in part by their group memberships so that viewing their group in positive terms enhances their self-esteem, which is further enhanced by making a favorable comparison between their own and another group: An analogous concept is Feshbach's *nationalism* discussed above; also analogous at the group level is the concept of *ethnocentrism*, which refers to the concomitance of ingroup amity and outgroup enmity (LeVine & Campbell, 1972). If this theory is correct, it should be demonstrated that intergroup discrimination increases a member's self-esteem. Studies by Oakes and Turner (1980) and by Lemyre and Smith (1985) support this hypothesized relationship. However, many other studies designed to test key implications of SIT provide mixed evidence for the theory. Such experimental variations as degree of ingroup identification, saliency of group membership, security of group identity, and group status failed to produce consistent results from one study to the next. (Messick & Mackie, 1989). Taken together, the studies indicate that such single-factor explanatory concepts as self-esteem do not seem sufficient to explain ingroup bias.

A broader theory proposed initially by Turner (1987) is referred to as self-categorization theory (SCT). SCT places greater emphasis than SIT on the way people categorize others into groups. The theory suggests that people evaluate their own group as superior only when they clearly see differences between members of their own and other groups. Without the categorizations of similarities and dissimilarities, real or distorted, the evaluative biases would not occur. However, the research has not illuminated the relative importance of perceived differences and

self-esteem as sources of intergroup discrimination. A more complex explanation would include the combined or interactive effects of both elements.

The focus of most of the studies reviewed above is on *attitudes* toward members of ingroups and outgroups. A related body of work has examined how people *behave* in terms of their group memberships. Many studies, conducted within the framework of matrix games (notably the Prisoner's Dilemma Game), show that groups play more competitively than individuals, and show that group representatives are more competitive bargainers than nonrepresentatives. At issue in all of these studies is whether the competitiveness is a function of group identification per se. Insko et al. (1988) offer a different explanation. They showed that the increased competitiveness of groups was attributed to an intragroup consensus about the group's strategy: When groups acted in lockstep, enhanced competition occurred. A similar finding was obtained by Druckman (1968b). The most competitive groups in that study were those that agreed in prenegotiation sessions on the relative importance of the issues under discussion. It may be that a consensual strategy, rather than group identification per se, produces the observed increased competition. Whether it also produces ingroup biases in noncompetitive or minimal groups remains to be determined. Conceivably, intragroup consensus contributes to the perceptual discrimination that seems to precede evaluative biases.

It is clear that better-designed experiments are needed to isolate the factors responsible for the bias (Messick & Mackie, 1989). Particularly important are studies that identify the motivations of group members. Such clarification would bring us full cycle from studies that identify underlying needs for nationalism, reviewed earlier, to situations that arouse bias, reviewed in this section, and back to identifying the motives that are responsible for the biases expressed in atti-

tudes and behavior. There is, however, a difference of perspective and methodology between the two types of studies. The former, intended to identify underlying needs, use questionnaires to assess attitudes that serve needs considered to be universal and relatively unchanging; the latter, intended to identify the conditions, assess attitudes and behavior that may also reflect needs, but the needs (goals or strategies) are aroused by the situation and are complex and changing. These different perspectives also reflect an age-old issue of whether we have a need for enemies or whether enemies are constructed by policy elites to serve political purposes (Volkan, 1988). From either perspective, however, it will be necessary to conduct experiments that begin to unravel the causal path from needs or attitudes (expressions of bias) to behavior (competitive choices, aggression).

The role of competition in arousing ingroup bias has not been clarified. Many of the experiments cited above show that bias can be aroused by mere categorization, while others link bias to a competitive situation. Is the bias stronger in competitive situations? Is it stronger on measures of behavioral choices than in expressions of attitudes? The studies to date have concentrated on assessing the bias in the context of an ingroup and an outgroup. Also interesting is the question whether the bias occurs in the context of multiple groups, where non-membership groups can serve as reference groups.

## **SENTIMENTS TOWARD MULTIPLE GROUPS**

Much of the laboratory research reviewed above, and much of the earlier sociological theories, distinguishes only between ingroups as *membership groups* and outgroups as *non-membership groups*. Largely ignored in this work are *multiple group memberships* and a different array of outgroups for each of these memberships: overlapping and cross-cutting group memberships are

part of the landscape of intergroup relations within or between nations. For nationalism, however, these complex patterns apply primarily to outgroups, not ingroups: most people are citizens of one nation, even if there is wide variation in the strength of identification with that nation.

From the standpoint of a nation's citizens, other nations can be scaled on a dimension from positive to negative orientations as well as the intensity with which these orientations are expressed. Of interest are the characteristics of nations that determine where they are placed on these dimensions.

Evidence for the "scaling hypothesis" is provided by results reported in the 1960s: e.g., Druckman (1968a), Singer et al. (1963), and Brewer (1968). The results suggest that sentiments expressed in favor of one's own group's members or against another group's members are a function of the nature of the comparison. For some outgroups—those that are allies, perceived as being similar and advanced, eligible for membership—the extent of bias is small. For other outgroups—those that are enemies or renegades, perceived as dissimilar and "backward" or distant, not eligible for membership—the bias is likely to be rather large. The evaluative bias is likely to be quite small or even reversed for outgroups that are emulated (Swartz, 1961).

## **Reference Groups**

*Reference group theory*, as developed by Kelley (1952), Sherif and Sherif (1953), Merton (1957), and others, takes into account the often-overlooked cases of positive sentiments expressed toward non-membership groups. Applied to national identification, reference group theory highlights varying orientations that may be taken toward one's own and other nations.

Positive orientations toward non-membership groups are necessary, but not sufficient, condi-

tions for making them reference groups. Liking for another group (or person) does not indicate *identification* with that group (or person). More is required, such as adopting its values or aspiring to membership. An interesting analytical problem is to discover the conditions for moving from positive sentiments *toward* identification *with* a non-membership group. Varying degrees of identification with non-membership groups can be scaled in terms of the way one relates to the group, for example, as follows:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| High Identification | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Motivated toward becoming a member</li> <li>2) Assimilating the group's norms and values</li> <li>3) Using the group's standards for evaluating performance</li> </ol> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) Taking a positive orientation toward the group</li> <li>5) Understanding the group's norms and values</li> </ol> |
| Low Identification  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6) Recognizing the group's existence</li> </ol>   |

The critical threshold that renders a non-membership group a reference group is between steps 4 (positive orientation) and 3 (evaluating performance): The further one goes up the ladder, from steps 6 to 1, the stronger the identification with the group. Reference-group identifications are maintained to the extent that those groups satisfy certain basic needs such as Kelman's (1988) self-transcendence or self-protection or needs related more closely to self-esteem (Tajfel, 1982). To the extent that these needs are not satisfied in membership groups—or satisfied better by non-membership groups—nationalistic or ethnocentric feelings are reduced.

The studies reviewed above provide limited insight into the conditions for group identification. They do, however, suggest some *independent variables* that may be relevant. For example, strength of identification with one's own or a reference group may vary with characteristics that lead to emulation (wealth, political power, military prowess, human rights); extent of visibility or

knowledge of customs or living conditions; the type of contact experiences with members of other groups; extent to which boundaries are open or closed; extent to which needs are satisfied by one's own-group membership; and the extent to which one's own group is isolated. These variables may be hypothesized to influence sentiments toward and identification with both membership and non-membership groups. Their impact remains to be explored.

## **ROLE OF COGNITION IN IMAGES OF OWN AND OTHER NATIONS**

To this point we have concentrated primarily on nationalistic sentiments. In this section, we are concerned with the distinction between descriptive, cognitive content, and the evaluative emotional aspects of images, as well as the extent to which they are *stereotypes*. An image is a stereotype if there is widespread agreement among individuals about its content or evaluations of own and other nations.

### **Content and Evaluational Aspects of Images**

The distinction between content and evaluative aspects of images was made in Lambert and Klineberg's (1967) study of children's views of foreign peoples. Separating content diversity (e.g., reference to the political or economic system or to the nation's demography) from evaluative diversity (e.g., they are kind, naive, talkative), they found that a national group with a friendly orientation toward another group was well-informed about the group and described them with a diversity of *descriptive* terms and a minimum number of *evaluative* terms. In contrast, those groups with an unfriendly orientation toward other groups were relatively uninformed about them—used few terms to describe them—and showed a proliferation of evaluative references. This finding was also obtained by Druckman, Ali, and Bagur (1974) in each of three cul-

tures, India, Argentina, and the United States.

Both aspects of images, the descriptive and evaluative content and the diversity of terms used, were shown to be influenced by one's orientation toward (friendly or unfriendly) and familiarity with the target nations. An implication of this research is that motivational factors underlie the findings on friendliness and evaluative categories—friendly nations were stereotyped more than unfriendly nations on evaluative terms—while cognitive factors underlie the findings on familiarity and descriptive categories—familiar nations were stereotyped less than unfamiliar nations on descriptive terms. The distinction between motivational and cognitive mechanisms is not meant to imply single-factor explanations of stereotypes. Rather, it refers to the relative emphasis placed on the one or the other type of mechanism in specific contexts. Any stereotype or image is the result of an interplay among cognitive and affective factors. Cottam's (1987) theory on the relationship between motives and the content of images proposes that the content can be predicted from three factors: a) perceptions of threat and opportunity, b) power distance, and c) cultural distance. To illustrate how this works, Cottam discusses two examples, referred to as the "barbarian" analogue and the "degenerate" analogue.

The "barbarian" image reflects a perception of a threatening nation, superior (or equal) in terms of military capability but "inferior" in terms of culture. It takes the form of describing the nation in diabolical terms similar to Reagan's view of the Soviet Union as the "evil empire." The content of the stereotype includes: 1) a simple, single-minded, and aggressive enemy; 2) a monolithic decision structure; 3) a conspiratorial decision-making process; 4) a judgment that the enemy's advantage in capability is attributed to one's own inability, for moral reasons, to use one's own capability to optimal advantage in countering the "morally-inferior enemy"; and 5) citizens

in one's own nation who disagree with this portrayal are "dupes at best, traitors at worst." The stereotyped enemy is seen as being dangerous, a view that would temper hasty aggressive action against them.

The "degenerate" image is based on a perception of opportunity coupled with a view that the other nation is comparable in strength but vulnerable. The content of the stereotype includes: 1) an enemy that is uncertain, confused, and inconsistent; 2) a diffuse and uncoordinated decision process; 3) decisions not guided by a strategic framework; 4) a lack of will that prevents them from being effective; and 5) citizens who disagree with this image are "effete and weak," much like those in the enemy nation. Based on this portrayal, the other nation is seen as being "ripe for the picking," a view that would encourage or rationalize aggression against them. The Bush administration's portrayal of Saddam Hussein's Iraq prior to the Gulf War had many of these features.

Cottam takes his analysis further by suggesting strategies that may effectively deal with these sorts of simplistic images. For example, when dealing with an opportunistic aggressor's "degenerate" image, he suggests conveying a tough posture, referred to in the foreign policy literature as *containment*; when dealing with national leaders who perceive threats, he advises a cooperative strategy, referred to as *détente*. These strategies are intended to disconfirm the other's images and, by so doing, create *dissonance*, which the other nation's leaders must resolve.

But, Cottam's theory does not take into account the apparent rapid swings in sentiment that occur under the influence of events and leadership. Notice how rapidly the Chinese became "good guys" after Nixon went to China, how fast Saddam Hussein became "a devil," or how sentiments expressed by Americans toward the U.S. military changed dramatically following the

war in the Persian Gulf. Although generally consistent with a situational approach to nationalism, most social-psychological theories have not explained this phenomenon.

### **Content of Images as Theories of War**

Cottam's typology corresponds in some ways to alternative theories of war as described by Silverstein and Holt (1989). For these authors, enemy images are not isolated phenomena but are best understood as part of a theory of war. They describe the "folk or Rambo theory," the "Realpolitik theory," and the "scientific or systems theory."

The *folk theory* posits a contest between good and evil, a world of dichotomous certainty without ambiguity. The demonic image of the enemy, which includes both Cottam's "barbarian" and "degenerate" images, is a central feature. This theory is closest to the traditional meaning of stereotypes as oversimplified images of one's own and other nations, referred to also as "mirror images" when citizens in both nations hold these views of one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1961). Polarized thinking in both nations prevents debate and impedes conflict resolution on issues related to the opposed ideologies. Of particular interest are the conditions under which such thinking occurs in national representatives and in large segments of a nation's population. With regard to representatives, it has been shown that statements made by negotiators are less varied during periods of stress in an international negotiation (Druckman, 1986). Osgood (1962), Milburn (1972), and others have shown that, under external threat, populations tend to lapse into simplified stereotypes of the enemy.

The *Realpolitik worldview* is depicted as an oversimplified theory of war based on the game

of power politics. While seen as being less simple than the folk-theory view, this approach is regarded by many psychologists, as being dangerous: It was the prevailing view attributed to American politics and to academic political science during the Cold War era. The game metaphor used by the realist school places a premium on winning a contest that is played without a framework of agreed rules; a focus on the self prevents concern for the possibility of joint gains or fair resolutions. But this characterization of the realist position may also be an oversimplification. (Here we encounter the interesting case of stereotyped thinking by psychologists who lament the dangers of stereotyped views of other nations.) Although some realist thinkers do indeed present a simplistic, albeit cynical, view of international relations, many other realists present a complex theoretical framework built on the assumptions of power politics in an anarchic international system. Nowhere is this complex rendition more evident than in the work of the most influential realist, Hans J. Morgenthau. A careful reading of Morgenthau reveals considerable complexity in the way that power is defined, assessed, and used (Morgenthau & Thompson, 1985). While power is the centerpiece of his framework, it is not a unidimensional concept. The issue then is not the complexity of realist approaches but their assumptions.

Other complex approaches to foreign policy focus more on cognitive processes than on power politics, and may be subsumed under the heading of *systems perspectives*: for example, the complex imagery described by cognitive mapping approaches (Bonham & Shapiro, 1986) or the ranked hierarchy of values approach to debate described by Rokeach (1979). The key point made here is that there is value in complex imagery, whether that imagery is based on realist or liberal assumptions. By reducing the temptation to stereotype other nations, it prevents pitting own nations against others in ways similar to Cottam's (1987) depicted views of the world. Since

complex cognitive structures are assumed to underlie attitudes, values, and images, it should be possible to create the conditions for eliciting them.

Less clear in these treatments are the effects of sentiments on the content and structure of argumentation or values. The earlier discussion suggested that strong nationalist sentiments or intense group identification may produce simplified images of ingroups and outgroups. It was also shown, however, that a positive orientation toward one's own nation may not, by itself, result in stereotyped (oversimplified) images of an enemy nation. It should be possible to create the conditions for complex imagery without reducing one's attachment to a nation. Although difficult to sustain in all circumstances, especially during periods of high stress, complex imagery of the sort described by Silverstein and Holt's (1989) systems theory of war, by Bonham and Shapiro's (1986) cognitive mapping approach, or by Rokeach's (1979) values analysis can be taught, though the precise mechanisms underlying the learning process need extensive research.

## **NATIONALISM AND WAR**

Psychological research has concentrated primarily on the *conditions* that arouse nationalist sentiments or stereotyped images of other nations. Less attention has been paid to the *connection* between those sentiments or cognitions and actions taken by nations. In this section, I attempt to spell out these connections, beginning by conceiving them in sequence, as stages toward or away from warfare.

The first stage consists of pressures brought by citizens on decision makers. A few studies show that national policies concerning defense spending are influenced by public images of adversaries (e.g., Burn & Oskamp, 1989) which are, in turn, influenced by changed relations (e.g.,

Trost et al., 1989). A second stage consists of the decision-making process engaged in by policy makers. From a psychological perspective, structural factors are not simply viewed as direct causes of collective action, as in the link between power and actions, but are the factors to be weighed by decision makers as they *consider* alternative courses of action. Included in the decision-making process is the propensity for misperception. A number of studies have shown that exaggerated national self-images can lead to miscalculations of likely outcomes from collective actions (e.g., Lebow, 1981).

The third stage consists of the actions that follow from the decision to commit resources, to mobilize, and to act. Actions, once taken, are likely to be influenced by such group characteristics as cohesion. Group loyalty is usually regarded as a defining aspect of cohesion (Zander, 1979) and is emphasized in the literature on the motivation of soldiers (Moskos, 1970; Lynn, 1984). Less clear is the distinction between loyalty as cause or consequence of cohesion, and the role of cohesion in sustaining troop motivation over time (Druckman, 1995).

By making these connections, we can situate social-psychological factors in a framework of the causes and consequences of war. These factors are construed largely at the micro level of individuals (decision-makers) and small groups (decision-making and combat units) and, thus, provide only a partial explanation for collective action. A more comprehensive framework would also include macro (societal) level factors. In addition to identifying the factors at micro and macro levels, the framework would arrange them in time-ordered sequence which specifies the paths taken toward or away from war. Building on recent literature, the discussion to follow takes a step toward developing a framework that connects nationalism to war.

The distinction between a human, liberal-prone nationalism and a virulent, aggressive form,

made by Gellner (1995), is relevant. Most treatments of nationalism focus on the former: the political, social, psychological, and economic development processes that influence the formation of national identities (Posen, 1993). Considerably less scholarship has been devoted to the more aggressive aspects and, thus, to the connection between nationalism and war (except the edited books by Kupchan, 1995, and Comaroff & Stern, 1995). This may be due to two dilemmas about the relationship. One concerns the confusion between causes and consequences: leaders use nationalism to mobilize public support for military preparation; nationalism is aroused by the conflict and intensified by victory. Another dilemma concerns whether to focus analytical attention on citizens or decision-making elites: Are elites influenced by citizen pressure to act or are citizens' views and sentiments manipulated by elite machinations?

Regardless of the causal sequence, however, it is clear that intense nationalism can be aroused, in elites and citizens, easily and quickly. It plays an important, although not sufficient, role at each stage in the decision-mobilization processes leading to and sustaining violent intra- and international conflicts. Rather than resolving the directionality dilemmas, I place nationalistic sentiments in a framework that elucidates the conditions and processes leading toward or away from war.

### **Conditions, Background Factors, and Processes: A Framework**

The literature on nationalism and war calls attention to variables that can be organized in such categories as conditions, background factors, processes, and outcomes. Included in the category of *background factors* are a nation's political structure as authoritarian or democratic (Kupchan, 1995), relations with minorities who live within the state (Van Evera, 1995), balance of power between ruling elites and ethnic minorities (Druckman & Green, 1986), and availability of alter-

natives to conflict or war. The link between these factors and nationalism is regime legitimacy, summarized in the form of an hypothesis: The less legitimate a government, the greater the incentive to provoke nationalistic sentiments that support conflict.

The process of provoking nationalist sentiments by decision-making elites involves constructing myths about the state in relation to foreigners. Van Evera notes that “myths flourish when elites need them most, when opposition to myths is weakest, and when publics are most myth-receptive” (1995, p. 151). Elites need them most when their legitimacy is in question and when they are faced with external or internal threats. Opposition to myths is weak when the society lacks independent evaluative institutions such as the media and universities. The citizenry is most receptive to myths in periods of transition and when they are faced with external threats. Ready acceptance of myths constructed by ruling regimes facilitates mobilization for collective action. Mobilization is also easier when national identification is relatively fluid. Bienen (1995) emphasizes the advantages (to elites) of dealing with a malleable citizenry. However, just as a fluid nationalism can be stirred up in the service of conquest or defense, its intensity can also be lessened through the experiences accompanying participation in combat. For this reason, a more durable nationalism may sustain combat even if it is more difficult to manipulate to serve the hegemonic goals of ruling elites.

The discussion above on reference groups emphasizes multiple group identities. Some of these identities are stronger or more durable than others. More durable identities are harder to manipulate, but provide a source of stable support for military mobilization. More fluid identities are easier to manipulate to serve the short-term goals of hegemonic leaders. Whether durable or fluid, identities are based on illusions of the distinction between “us” and “them.” Connor (1994)

discusses the myths of hemispheric, continental, regional, and state unity. For example, regions of Southeast Asia, the Far East, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa are noted more for their distinctive than common characteristics, and the myth of intrastate unity has been exposed in the divisions between Croats and Slavs, Czechs and Slovaks, Québécois and Canadians, and Flemish and Walloons. For leaders intent on sustaining unity at any of these levels, the challenge is to perpetuate the image of a common historical culture among different language communities. For leaders intent on exploiting divisions between communities within a region or state, the tactical challenge is to engender and sustain the image of distinctive ancestral roots and cultures among the different language communities. For scholars, according to Connor, the challenge is to resist the misperceptions of homogeneity that have influenced analysis and public policy.

But, plausible as these warnings and tactics seem, some scholars have contended that widespread nationalism is not an important precondition or influence on decisions to fight or sustain combat. In his analysis of the war in Serbia and Bosnia, Mueller (1998) claims that it was carried out largely by small bands of “thugs” or criminals. Leaders did not rely on mobilizing citizens to prosecute the war. He argues further that nationalism was either not widespread in these countries or that it did not provide sufficient incentives to fight. In fact, his analysis portrays citizens as victims rather than benefactors of elites’ ambitions. Although limited to the case contexts studied, such analyses raise questions about the connection between nationalism and war. Nationalism is widely seen as a motivating factor for decisions to fight. It may not, however, be either necessary or sufficient to initiate or sustain combat.

Rather than to impute a causal role to nationalism, even in its aggressive or virulent form, I prefer to place these sentiments or variables in a larger framework of conditions that may lead to

decisions to initiate or avoid war (including both civil and international conflicts). The framework shown in Figure 4.1 distinguishes among antecedent, concurrent, and consequent variables and includes the factors discussed in this section. Mythmaking and mobilization, processes that support conflict, are understood against the background of goals, structures, relations with minorities, and legitimacy as well as a variety of internal and external conditions. Nationalism is construed in this framework in terms of fluid or durable identities (a background factor) and responsiveness to myths created usually by decision-making elites (a process): New myths are easier to create among citizens with fluid identities; older myths are more likely to be sustained when citizens have relatively durable identities that coincide with the images. These factors converge on an outcome, which can be regarded as a decision to fight or to sustain combat, with implications for changes in legitimacy, power, and relations (referred to in the framework as the “aftermath”). The feedback loop—from consequents to antecedent factors—indicates that the adjusted evaluations (following conflict) of legitimacy, power, and relations lead to another cycle of decisions about continuing the conflict. For example, combat victories may increase citizens’ aggressive nationalism as well as reinforce leaders’ hegemonic goals, both of which fuel further violent conflict.

At the heart of the framework is elite manipulation of nationalistic sentiments and identities. Citizens are vulnerable in times of economic and political transition leading to social disintegration (Kupchan, 1995; Mueller, 1998). But, disintegration is not a sufficient condition for conflict. Citizens must also be mobilized for action. This is easier to accomplish in nondemocratic societies with a small middle class. It is also more likely when there is an external threat (imagined or real) and when members of the same ethnic background are subject to discrimination in other

lands, such as Turks living in Cyprus or Germany (Van Evera, 1995). When thought about in this way, the conditions and processes take the form of a rough time-ordered pathway starting with the society's political structure and culminating in the aftermath of the conflict and nation rebuilding as follows:

1) Political structure → 2) size of middle class → 3) extent of economic and political transitions → 4) extent of social disintegration → 5) extent of external threat → 6) manipulation of nationalistic sentiments → 7) fluidity of national or ethnic identification → 8) mobilization of citizens → 9) intra- or interstate conflict or violence → 10) outcomes of conflict → 11) post-conflict changes → 12) nation rebuilding.

### **EMPIRICAL GAPS: TOWARD A RESEARCH AGENDA**

While contributing to our understanding of the connection between nationalism and war, the framework also reveals gaps in our knowledge that can be addressed by further research.

- a) Group sentiments may be distributed among many different groups, both membership and non-membership. Of particular interest are the conditions under which citizens identify with a non-membership group or nation, the extent to which such contra-identifications occurs, and its implications for collective action.
- b) To what extent do national sentiments, and the accompanying biasing tendencies, hinder the development or articulation of complex images or explanations of another nation's policies and actions?
- c) It is important to specify further the roles played by perceptual and structural variables in in-

fluencing a nation's decision to act, its attempts to mobilize resources and citizens, and the actions taken.

- d) What is the relationship between social disintegration and external conflict? While disintegration may motivate elites to manipulate enemy images, it may also reduce citizens' nationalism or their receptivity to enemy images.
- e) What is the relationship between the fluidity of national identifications and external conflict? While citizens with a relatively fluid identity may be more vulnerable to elite manipulation, those with more durable identities may be more stable in supporting their nation's military campaigns.
- f) What are the relationships between nationalism, mobilization, and sustained combat? How often (and in which types) are wars fought by mercenaries? Can national combat be sustained with mercenary armies in the absence of widespread citizen support?
- g) When settlement does not result in resolution, conflict continues in the aftermath of war. What conditions influence continued conflict between parties who concluded a war or agreed to a cease fire? What role does heightened nationalism (usually expressed by victorious nations following war) play in fueling further conflict?
- h) What is the relationship between intra- and international conflict? Do intranational divisions interfere with attempts to prosecute international wars? What is the influence of nationalism on cohesion and mobilization for external conflict? Do cohesion and mobilization further strengthen nationalism?

## **PROSPECTS FOR NATIONALISM IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

In considering prospects, I summarize some implications from the social-psychological studies in relation to the macro-level variables in the framework. Many laboratory studies demonstrated the ease with which identities and accompanying ingroup–outgroup images can be established. Identities may be more fluid than durable, changing with changes in the situation such as a reevaluation of incentives and goals, shifting alliances, superordinate goals, the discovery of new reference (non-membership) groups, and third-party interventions. Changing conditions can increase or decrease ingroup attachments just as they can intensify or reduce the negative sentiments expressed toward outgroups. A challenge is to understand the conditions that increase (or decrease) the positive elements of ingroup attachments, referred to earlier as patriotism, while decreasing (or increasing) the negative aspects of outgroup enmity, referred to as nationalism. This challenge has important implications for mobilizing citizens for collective action, including war.

The framework shown in Figure 4.1 identifies some factors that can trigger aggressive nationalism. The processes of image- or mythmaking and mobilization engaged in by some decision-making elites, are understood in relation to certain political and economic conditions. Citizens in nations with authoritarian regimes during periods of economic transition are more vulnerable to elite manipulation of nationalist sentiments than those in prospering democratic societies. Incentives for such manipulation are increased when the regime faces challenges (from state-seeking minorities) to its authority and legitimacy and when it effectively controls the media. Prospects can then be projected from trends in these conditions, notably toward or away from democratization and self-sufficient economies. The variables can be used as a checklist of indicators for monitoring these trends.

Although there is reason to offer optimistic prospects—namely, toward more liberal-prone

nationalisms—based on current international trends, two dilemmas serve to reduce the confidence in any forecast. One is that citizens' nationalism may be less important in authoritarian than in democratic political systems. While authoritarian elites can more easily manipulate popular sentiments, they may have less need to do so. Mueller's (1998) work on mercenary armies in Bosnia and Lynn's (1984) analysis of soldier motivation suggest that nationalism or patriotism may not be important incentives to sustain combat. While democratic regimes have more difficulty in manipulating popular sentiments—in large part because of the role of an independent media—they may have more need to do so, especially in countries with all-volunteer militaries. Thus, the trend toward democratization may not reduce nationalistic sentiments but may make it increasingly difficult to mobilize and sustain those sentiments for war.

The second dilemma consists of an apparently increasing tension between globalization (larger, supra-national identities) and fragmentation (smaller, national and ethnic group identities). In commenting on trends in European nationalism, Periwal (1995) noted that, on the one hand, an increasingly cosmopolitan and integrated Europe is an antidote to the perils of exclusionary nationalism. On the other hand, this consolidation may give rise to reactive sentiments from those who feel excluded. Blocked mobility or assimilation can lead to a sense of humiliation which makes people vulnerable to nationalistic appeals. Within Poland, and perhaps other Eastern European nation-states, a tension exists between a desire to assimilate into a greater Europe and a desire to retain an historic national identity. This may well be an unresolved tension well into the twenty-first century, making us wonder whether the balance will tip in favor of the one—cosmopolitanism—or the other—nationalism.

**Figure 4.1** A framework that highlights factors in the relationship between nationalism and war.

