

Humans, love, and war

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What's the recipe for a Hollywood blockbuster movie? Love and war. Kill your enemy, but among them find your impossible love. The Iliad, Romeo and Juliet, For Whom the Bell Tolls, every great story contains the duality of love and war, Eros and Thanatos. Love and war are primordial instincts. They also seem to be the reason for the continued existence of Homo Sapiens as other human species faded into extinction.

Once upon a time, 70, 000 years to be precise, Sapiens were not alone, the Neanderthals, the Erectus, and the Denisovans, along with other human species, shared the Earth. As Homo Sapiens successfully spread from East Africa all around the world, other human species began to slowly disappear. By 10, 000 BC we lose track of every human specie except the Homo Sapiens. So what happened to the others? Where did they go? There are two conflicting theories: the Interbreeding Theory and the Replacement Theory. The Interbreeding Theory tells a story of attraction, love, and rape.

As Homo Sapiens ventured into new land they ran into other human species. They bred with those species until the two populations merged. We are the product of that interbreeding. If this theory is correct, then Homo Sapiens merged with every human specie they encountered, meaning Neanderthals, Erectus, and Denisovans did not completely disappear. They mixed into the evolutionary line of Homo Sapiens. The opposing view, the Replacement Theory, tells a story of competition, famine, and violent murder.

Homo Sapiens were proficient hunters and gatherers, due to their superior skills, so when they spread into Neanderthal land they hunted and gathered all the food. The less resourceful Neanderthals found it increasingly harder to

survive. Competition for resources caused famine and prompted murder. In addition, the physical, social, and cognitive differences between Sapiens and Neanderthals could've led to the first major ethnic cleansing. " In modern times, a small difference in skin colour, dialect or religion has been enough to prompt one group of Sapiens to set about exterminating another group" (Harari 17).

Major differences in physical characteristics and social behaviors could've prompted ancient Sapiens to exterminate all other human species. In recent decades the Replacement Theory had become common wisdom as it had more archeological backing. In 2010, thanks to a new technology used in genome mapping we discovered that, " 1-4 percent of the unique human DNA of modern populations in the Middle East and Europe is Neanderthal DNA" (Harari 15). Does this mean the Replacement Theory is incorrect? No, the Replacement Theory is still correct but not the only applicable theory. The Interbreeding Theory is also correct, because Sapiens and Neanderthals did breed, but due to the differences in genetic code and physical traits between Sapiens and other humans such contacts were very rare.

As a result, Neanderthals have contributed only a small portion of DNA to our present-day genome. Homo Sapiens endured as other human species faded away. Sapiens out-performed, outsmarted, murdered, and interbred. 12, 000 years have not changed the human condition in this respect. Our wars today are full of ethnic cleansing, genocide, famine, and mass rape.

" We are still lovers and victims of the will to violence" as Bernard Knox summed it up. The struggles of the primordial Homo Sapiens seem all too

similar to the ones we face today and I suppose there is some comfort in recognizing that some aspects of the human experience of love and war are in some ways timeless. Works Cited Harari, Yuval Noah. Sapiens: A Brief History Of Humankind. [S. I.

]: HarperCollins, 2015. Print.