

War Experiences and Self-determination of the Daasanach in the Conflict-ridden Area of Northeastern Africa

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The Daasanach have fought with four neighboring pastoral groups, viewed as “enemies” (*kiz*), for more than a half-century. The Daasanach claim that their primary motive for going to war is the demonstration of masculinity, allowing men to be recognized as “brave” by community members. Various cultural apparatuses praise the “brave man” who kills a member of a *kiz* group and who raids their livestock. Nevertheless, men do not homogeneously mobilize for war. In this paper, I examine (1) the ideology that motivates men to go to war, (2) individual experiences of the battlefield and how reflection on those experiences affect an individual’s choice of action when the next war arises, and (3) how people accept others’ decisions to go to or abstain from a war.

Key words: violence, subject, individuality, masculinity, East African pastoral society

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Anthropological Study of War

The purposes of this paper are to elucidate the battlefield experiences of the Daasanach, a people who inhabit an area in which inter-ethnic warfare occurs frequently, and to illuminate the effect of these experiences on their choices when subsequent wars occur.

Anthropological research on the theme of war has accumulated, but the greater part of this research has understood war in terms of environmental and historical factors and the group norms that exist outside of the individual (e.g., Fukui & Turton 1979; Ferguson 1984; Ferguson & Whitehead 1992). Research rarely seeks to apprehend war from the perspective of the individual.

This tendency is underscored in the argument advanced by Harrison (1993). According to Harrison, war is not something that is set in motion against an unacquainted other; rather, the two involved parties share a history of daily contact and friendly relations. However, the identity of each group as an independent political entity cannot be formed as long as this chain of relations exists. Thus, war is “a mechanism for creating discrete groups through the attempted negation of their pre-existing interrelations” (Harrison 1993: 18).

This argument has been validated by many anthropologists. For example, discussing the Mursi and the neighboring agro-pastoral peoples of southwest Ethiopia, Turton noted that “the activity of warfare ... can be seen as a common ritual language, a system of shared meanings by which groups make themselves significant to each other and to themselves, as independent political entities” (Turton 1994: 26).

The background of these arguments sometimes contains hints of the teleological premise that the

initiation of warfare creates and clarifies boundaries between friends and foes by mobilizing members of each group in a homogenous manner in the service of warfare. Under the “exceptional circumstances” of initiating warfare, the daily lives of individuals are superseded by cultural apparatuses such as the “men’s cult” (Harrison 1993) or “a system of shared meanings” (Turton 1994) as a population is mobilized for war to assert a political identity as an “us” different from a “them.”

This perspective on war, however, suffers from two problems. One problem is its view of individuals as beings that simply act subserviently in response to external norms when war is initiated. To a certain extent, this view is appropriate when analyzing the warfare that occurred between nation-states from the 19th century onward. The vast majority of individuals, assimilated into the state ideological apparatuses, were willingly mobilized for war in the name of the “defense of the homeland,” and the few individuals who refused to be mobilized were ostracized through physical violence perpetrated by police organizations. Thus, a homogenous “nation” appeared during times of war. However, the appropriateness of using this framework to analyze warfare in times and areas dominated by different political regimes should be considered.

In my opinion, anthropological research on warfare “must deny [war] special status” (Richards 2005: 3) from the outset. Research on warfare as a “human aporia” has tended to treat war as an entity independent of other social phenomena in its over-dedication to investigation of the “ultimate” cause of war. However, warfare itself is a phenomenon that arises in societies with a variety of agents, and it is inappropriate to reduce its cause to one single factor. That is, warfare is not “so exceptional [a phenomenon] as to require ‘special’ explanatory effort” (Richards 2005: 3), but should be understood as something that is set in motion or avoided as the result of the accumulation of the choices made by each individual as he or she is influenced by a variety of factors.

Additional, simply analyzing the causes and functions of warfare includes insufficient consideration of the violence that is actually expressed on the battlefield. If the framework for mobilization differs for wars that occur in different times and areas, then what criteria should we use for placing any particular phenomenon in a category called “war”? One of the most important indicators may be that, despite differences in extent, war involves overt physical violence in which bodily injury is caused in a series of interactions.

Even if a specific function were attached to warfare in a particular society, the violence exercised in the battlefield tends to run out of control over and above the purpose for which it was originally intended, as many scholars (e.g., Arendt 1970; Riches 1986) have noted. Focusing on the causes and functions of warfare and simply analyzing it as “a meaningful cultural act” may serve to conceal the actual violence exercised on battlefields (Tanaka 1998). Research that views warfare from the perspective of individuals asks about the kinds of violence exercised in warfare, what that violence means to the individuals who exercise or are the objects of that violence, and what effect these events have on individual psychology (cf. Kurimoto 2005).

1.2. The Perspective of This Paper

The Daasanach have intermittently but repeatedly fought with their four adjacent populations. Daasanach males are characterized as individuals who should “naturally” go off to war as they reach adulthood. However, they are not homogeneously mobilized when warfare is initiated. This paper analyzes the factors at work when Daasanach males make a choice whether to go to war or not.

The author conducted interviews concerning the past war experiences of 174 adult Daasanach males. This methodology was chosen in consideration of the methodological problems that affect research on inter-group relations. In contrast to intra-group relations, which can be observed every day within a settlement, daily observation of interactions between groups presents difficulties. Consequently, general statements such as “an antagonistic relationship exists between group A and group B” tend to emerge in the absence of considering the diversity within groups. That is, the argument that “the setting in motion of warfare creates and reinforces the ‘we’ consciousness” may result from the researcher’s conducting his or her analysis at the level of the group rather than at the individual level, at which the realities of the phenomenon are accessible.

In contrast, this paper, by quantitatively comparing the number of times each individual has participated in war and describing the battlefields as expressed in the narratives of the respondents, is able to clarify aspects that have been overlooked in previous research. The data used in this paper were obtained through fieldwork conducted between February and September 2006.

It should be noted that the historical influence of the outside world on this area is not mentioned in this paper due to space limitations. This area is located at the outermost periphery of the state structure, and even today, the influence of the center is relatively tenuous. However, since the military conquest by the Ethiopian Empire at the end of the 19th century, relations between the Daasanach and the adjacent peoples have been changed due to interventions by the state, and the influx of firearms has increased the severity of the violence in the area. As of 2006, 48% ($n = 163$) of Daasanach adult men possessed guns.

However, "a peaceful local society without war" did not exist in this area prior to contact with the state power. What is indirectly asked by this paper is, while the antagonism of inter-ethnic relations was exacerbated by external influences, what practices by people prevented the totalization of war and enabled the establishment of some sort of "order" in inter-ethnic relations.⁽¹⁾

2. THE DAASANACH

The Daasanach, an agro-pastoral people, inhabit an area from southwest Ethiopia to northwest Kenya. According to the 2007 Census (Population Census Commission 2008: 84), about 48,000 Daasanach lived in Ethiopia in during the period studied. This figure does not include the thousands of Daasanach living in northwestern Kenya.

Five other peoples inhabit the areas surrounding the Daasanach (Fig. 1). All of these groups partly or strongly rely on pastoralism for their livelihoods. Of these, the Kara, who inhabit the northern area, have maintained friendly relations with the Daasanach and are classified as "our people" (*gaal kunno*).⁽²⁾ In contrast, the Turkana to the southwest, the Nyangatom to the northwest, the Hamar to the northeast, and the Gabra to the southeast are considered enemies (*kiz*). The Daasanach have intermittently fought with these groups for more than a half-century.

The Daasanach consist of eight groups, called *en*, which are the units that co-host many rituals. Because the *en* share dwelling and herding areas to some extent, they can be referred to as territorial groups (Fig. 1). Three to 14 patrilineal clans (*tuur*) are included in each territorial group. The clans rarely function as cooperative units in daily life, but are an important reference unit when rituals occur.

All Daasanach males belong to a generation set (*baari*). Each territorial group contains generation sets, which hold independent initiation rites. The initiation rites, in which members of the same age set (*shad*) participate, are held about once every 6 or 8 years. Each generation set consists of approximately eight age sets.

Individuals engage in an initiation rite when they are about 15–20 years of age, at which time the males pass from the status of boy (*nyigeny*) to that of youth (*kabana*). Those who go to war do so primarily during their status as youths. Following this, passing through the marriage and circumcision, once the rite known as *dimi* is carried out, they are socially perceived as elders (*karsich*). Within the context of the Daasanach social structure, an individual's social status is not determined by the generation set or age set to which he belongs. Several adjacent pastoral societies construe rites of passage such as marriage as opportunities for moving to higher age grades, and the status of all members of the same age set proceeds from boy to youth and from youth to elder. Within the Daasanach, by contrast, the timing of the rites of passage following the initiation rite differs greatly, even for individuals in the same age set.

For example, once the appropriate initiation rite has been completed, individuals are free to marry but, due to differences in the number of livestock owned, the ability to transfer bridewealth, and the ability to negotiate with the family of the prospective bride, some males marry in their late-teens,



Fig. 1. The Daasanach and their Neighboring Groups

DAASANACH: ethnic group, RANDAL: territorial group, Omorate: town name, -----: national border

while some remain single in their mid-20s. Additionally, the *dimi* rite is held once each year for each territorial group, but only those individuals who are fathers whose eldest daughter has attained about 10 years of age are qualified to participate. Differences in the timing of marriage and childbirth lead to differences in the timing of the *dimi* rite for members of the same age set.

The timing of the changes in the social status of Daasanach males is strongly influenced by various factors pertaining to the individual. It has been suggested that this phenomenon also influences the "individualistic" tendency of the Daasanach referred to in Chapter 6.

3. AN OUTLINE OF WARFARE

3.1. Definition of Warfare

War is generally defined as an organized armed conflict carried out between differing political entities. In the Daasanach language, the two words meaning armed conflict with the enemy are *sulla* and *osu*. Both words refer to the main purpose of killing the enemy and raiding their livestock, but differ in the scale of the violence and the degree of organization.

Sulla refers to a situation in which several or several 10s of males in their teens and 20s who had gathered for an event such as a dance at night spontaneously set off for the enemy's lands after con-

sulting with one another. In many cases, no clear strategy exists, and fighting involves a small number of the enemy who are encountered by coincidence. Even when the enemy is encountered, the group may retreat if outnumbered; at times, the group may return home without encountering the enemy at all.

On the other hand, *osu* involves the participation of several hundred people in the hostilities and the existence of a strategy that is developed at a meeting of the settlement before battle. Furthermore, the exchange of fire and livestock raiding during *osu* often result in the death or wounding of participants. Given this difference, this paper refers to warfare as *osu*.

3.2. Processes Leading to Warfare

Three processes can lead to warfare. One is "follow the feet" (*gas veer*), which occurs after the enemy has attacked a Daasanach settlement and raided livestock and other items. In such cases, the males from that settlement and adjacent settlements follow the enemy's footprints and attack the settlement to which the enemy has returned.

The second is "think with his own head" (*meen le tawk*), in which young men organized into units according to age sets and other classifications gather, for example, in the bush some distance from the settlement to plan and then implement a battle plan.

The third process is known as "spread the cattle hide" (*rokode gor*). In these cases, the young men kill an ox and present the meat to elder males. The elders then use the entrails of the bull to divine such information as the enemy's whereabouts. After eating the meat, an elder with strong magical powers (*nyierim*) spreads the hide of the slaughtered ox on the ground. All males who intend to participate in the battle walk over the hide while the elder blesses them by saying, "Go with god." After receiving this blessing, the men set off for the enemy's lands.

3.3. Form of the Battlefield and the Combat

During warfare, a man known as "person of the fire-lighting sticks" (*maa bierich*) accompanies the fighting force. Members of only two clans, the Tuurnyierim and Fargaar, which have strong magical powers, can be appointed to these posts, which involve two roles. One is to bless the men by lighting fires with the sticks, and the other is to use a knife to lesion the ears of the enemy's livestock on the battlefield. It is said that this action causes the enemy's livestock to fall under the spell of the magician and to run *en masse* to the Daasanach settlement.

Three kinds of places can serve as battlefields: the inside of a settlement, the outside of a settlement, or a livestock watering place. Attacks inside a settlement occur at around dawn. At the time of the attack, the central force (*hirdore*) begins the assault from the front of the settlement, while several side forces (*nyokodonte*) almost simultaneously attack from the sides. A livestock plunder brigade called "the spear-holders" (*naane gaie*) assumes a position behind the central force. Their role is to lead the enemy's livestock to the Daasanach settlement while the other forces are engaged in combat.

Battles outside a settlement occur after the morning milking, when the livestock herd has left the village to graze in the pasture. In contrast to an attack on the interior of a settlement, attacks on the outside of a settlement involve no clear division of roles, and the fighters are deployed widely so that they surround the livestock herd.

A battle at a watering place is an ambush. No grouping of forces occurs and everyone hides in the long grass around the watering place. When the enemy herdsmen approach the watering place with the livestock, they are met with a fusillade.

In many cases, the combat ends in a few hours or half a day. In large-scale battles, the force may spend the night on the battlefield and resume fighting the following morning.

4. THE CULTURAL APPARATUS FOR WAR MOBILIZATION

What induces people to go to war? The Daasanach cite three reasons: jealousy (*inaf*), debt (*eu*), and an uplifting of the body (*guof*). Each of these is related to the desire to attain prestige with respect to masculinity. We will review each of these in turn.

4.1. Jealousy and Masculinity

Two kinds of jealousy are associated with warfare. One of these is jealousy toward the enemy. During times of peace, the Daasanach often live together and herd their livestock with members of the surrounding peoples (Sagawa 2009). When neighbors are seen as possessing larger or fatter herds of livestock, individuals may “feel jealousy creeping in.”

The other kind of jealousy occurs between members of the Daasanach themselves. A male who has achieved great success in past wars may speak proudly of his bravery on the battlefield, and those around him will voice their admiration for him. As a response, young men who have not yet engaged in warfare or males who have not achieved noteworthy successes in past wars may “feel jealousy creeping in.”

When they “feel jealousy creeping in,” these males wish to engage in wars to achieve success. This jealousy occurs in the context of a cultural apparatus that acclaims a male who raids the enemy’s livestock or kills its members as “a brave man” (*maa nyare*).

A specific Daasanach word, *barare*, means “to distribute livestock raided from the enemy” and refers to the process by which the raider distributes livestock after returning to the settlement. Of the 174 adult males interviewed by the author, 67% had an experience of raiding of the enemy’s livestock in *sulla* and *osu* (Table 1). According to my research, the raider keeps approximately 25% of the livestock (cattle, sheep and goats, donkeys, camels) for himself or his wife and children and distributes the remaining 75% primarily to close relatives ($n = 2,075$). This distribution should ensure that the bravery and generosity of the distributor would long be a topic of conversation and would contribute to an increase in his social prestige.

With respect to killing the enemy, 18% of the adult males acknowledged such experiences (Table 1). A male who has killed an enemy is greeted by women singing a song extolling “a brave man” when he returns to the settlement. To prove that he has actually killed an enemy, the killer must bring home ornaments worn by the deceased and, similar to the practice with regard to livestock, distribute these items to close relatives and friends. Following this and several rituals, he will be awarded an honorific name (*yier miti*) related to the place in which the enemy was killed or some special feature of the deceased; 1.5-cm long incisions (*chede*) are also made all over his chest as a sign of his bravery.

Table 1. Experience of Livestock Raiding and Killing of the Enemy

Age	Number of Informants*	Males with experience of raiding livestock (%)	Males with experience of killing the enemy (%)
10s	26 (13)	30.8	3.8
20s	31 (3)	71	9.7
30s	35 (7)	57.1	20
40s	29	75.9	24.1
50s	25	80	16
60s	13	92.3	46.2
70s~	15	86.7	26.7
Total	174 (23)	67.2	18.4

* Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of informants who have not participated in warfare.

Beginning in infancy, Daasanach males are surrounded by a cultural apparatus that extols the exercise of violence against enemies. As adults, they become jealous of one another based on this socialized desire to gain recognition from others as “a brave man” and, as a consequence, they go to war.

4.2. *The Memory of Debts*

The second motivation concern the debts left by past wars. Wars are also accompanied by the plunder of one’s own livestock and the deaths of one’s own companions. The Daasanach refer to losses incurred in wars as “debts.” This word is also applied to the lending and borrowing of livestock and money. For example, if one’s mother were killed by a Turkana, one would express this by saying, “The Turkana owe me a debt of my mother.” The debt leaves that person with “a bad stomach” that is, it gives him an unpleasant feeling and arouses emotions of anger (*izu*). People explain that this emotion leads to “taking back what is owed;” in other words, it induces people to go to war with the aim of taking revenge on the enemy. By achieving success in war, “the debt will come out of the stomach,” that is, the person will be freed of his anger.

Debts apply not only to battles that have occurred in recent years. Indeed, the Daasanach often speak of past battles in their everyday conversations. At these times, conversations include references to who killed an enemy, who was killed, and whose livestock was raided by the enemy in a particular battle. When minor issues cause deterioration in relations with an enemy, conversations containing statements referring to past debts, such as “The Turkanas never know peace and are always looking for a fight,” are heard everywhere. Before an actual war is set in motion, hatred of the enemy is amplified by eliciting memories of debts and emphasizing “our” solidarity.

4.3. *Guof*

The jealousy and anger of an individual do not immediately lead to war. War is a collective act, and it is important to conquer fear. When the emotions of several individuals transform themselves into the collective act of war, this is known as an uplifting of the body. The term used to refer to “an uplifting of the body” is *guof*, which is very difficult to translate. When people become *guof*, they fall into a trance-like state, their breathing becomes harsh, their voice vibrates in a low tone, and their body shakes violently with rapid jumping movements.

Guof is not limited to the times before war. According to interview data and the author’s observations, the state of *guof* is characterized by the following: (1) participation by sexually mature men and women; (2) occurrence prior to an important juncture in life, such as marriage, circumcision, or war; and (3) exchanges of insults based on comparisons with some other person, possibly leading the object of the insult into a state of *guof*; and (4) group singing and dancing just before or during the state of *guof*.

In the case of warfare, companions in an age set may gather and trade such abuse as “You’ve never once raided any livestock, and you call yourself a man?” If a war song (*quo dib*) is sung *en masse* in that context, that young man will become *guof*. That is, a young man who has not yet shown his own masculinity by successes in war will become *guof* when others imply this in public. This uplifting of the body will reduce the fear that was present, and the young man will go off to war with his companions to prove himself to be “a brave man.”

4.4. *Male Menstruation*

From the perspective of an outsider, it would seem that the jealousy and anger fueling war could be resolved by means other than war. According to the Daasanach, however, the participation in war by a male with these emotions is viewed as a “man’s menstruation” (*ir mayab*). That is, just as a female coming to sexual maturity will inevitably shed blood as her menstruation begins, so a male will become *guof* when maturing and set off to the battlefield to shed blood. Going to war is something that is represented as a “natural” thing to be rightly carried out in the process of a man’s growth.

5. WHO GOES AND DOES NOT GO TO WAR

When one considers the hatred derived from instilling the ideology of past debts and extolling male menstruation, one receives the impression that the Daasanach male is programmed to fight (cf. Strecker 1994).

In reality, however, how often do the men go to war? Table 2 shows the number of times 174 adult males participated in warfare.⁽³⁾ If people were homogenously mobilized for war, the number of such engagements should be identical for all men, but the data show a large variation. This variation is investigated in this chapter.

5.1. Historical Changes in Inter-ethnic Relations

First, the variation in numbers of war experiences relate to significant differences according to age. It is obvious that teenage males are less likely than their elders to have participated in warfare. The number of engagements in warfare increases later in life and then levels off because elder males are less likely to go to war.

Another factor contributing to this difference concerns historical changes in inter-ethnic relations. The Daasanach and their enemies have repeatedly alternated between times of frequent warfare and times of relative peace. For instance, relations with the Nyangatom were primarily peaceful from the 1940s to the 1960s. However, the killing of more than 100 Nyangatom by the Daasanach in the 1972 Nyibilyaga War precipitated the repetition of large-scale wars, which reached a tentative conclusion in the Lobe War of 1991 (Sagawa 2010). Males now in their 40s and 50s played central roles in the fighting of these wars.

The number of times an individual goes to war is influenced by the frequency with which large-scale wars occur or whether peaceful relations dominate during the time the male is of the age in which participation in war is expected. Table 2 shows that males in their 40s to 70s participated on approximately five occasions, but these results represent a mere coincidence.

5.2. Differences in the Enemies of Different Territorial Groups

Table 2 also shows a large variation in the number of war experiences of males in the same age range. This variation is partially attributable to differences in the territorial group to which each male belongs. Figure 2 shows the proportions of opponent ethnic groups that males from each of the territorial groups went off to war against. Groups in different territories tend to fight with different groups.

The Inkoria territorial group, who inhabit the northeastern shore of Lake Turkana, have almost always fought with the neighboring Gabra or Hamar. The Ngaritch, who inhabit the northeastern

Table 2. Number of Times Adult Men have Participated in Warfare

Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 or more	Total number of people	Average number of participations
10s	13	7	5	1								26	1.3
20s	3	5	8	6	6	1		2				31	2.6
30s	7	7	9	3	5	1	2	1				35	2.2
40s		2	3	4	4	5	7	1	1	1	1	29	4.8
50s		2	1	3	7	4	2		4	1	1	25	5
60s		1	1	1	3		4	3				13	4.8
70s~			1	2	3	3	3	1	2			15	5.1
Total	23	24	28	20	28	14	18	8	7	2	2	174	3.4

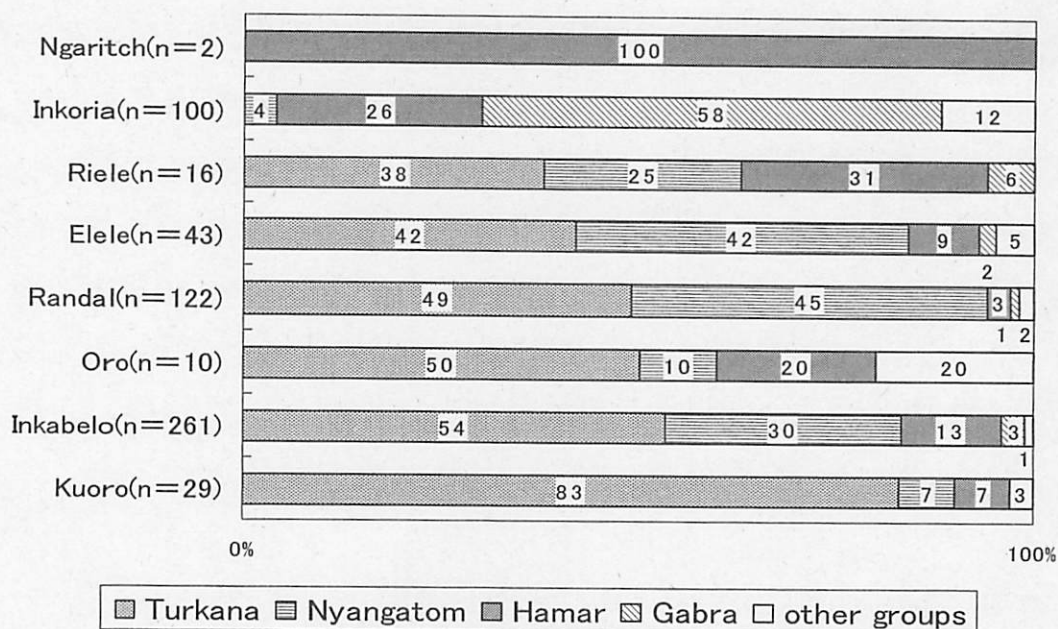


Fig. 2. Warfare Opponents for each Territorial Group*

* The territorial groups to which the interview survey informants belonged are as follows: Inkabelo, 83; Inkoria, 32; Randal, 30; Elele, 9; Kuoro, 8; Riele, 6; Oro, 5; Ngaritch, 1

part of Daasanachland, have fought only with the adjacent Hamar. These two territorial groups have rarely fought with the Turkana and Nyangatom living to the west of the Omo River. On the other hand, the Elele, Randal, and Kuoro, who inhabit the north and northwestern part of Daasanachland, have fought primarily with the Turkana and Nyangatom, but rarely with the Gabra and Hamar. The Inkabelo, who have the largest population and are the most widely distributed geographically, and the Oro and Riele, whose populations are small and who often live with the Inkabelo, have fought with the Turkana, Nyangatom, and the Hamar, but seldom with the Gabra, who are more distant.

According to Sahlins, although Nuer society contains internal conflicts, it is possible for the Nuer as a whole to unite to fight against other peoples such as the Dinka, because the segmentary lineage system functions as "the thermostatic mechanism for massing against the outside" (Sahlins 1961: 340). In contrast, the Daasanach have no such "thermostatic mechanism" for consolidating and organizing different territorial groups when a war occurs, and thus wars always remain "local" affairs.

5.3. Relationship to Life Courses

Do all the males who have lived together since childhood (i.e., males in the same territorial group, generation set, and age set) participate in warfare a similar number of times? Table 3 shows the wars in which eight such males participated. Contrary to expectations, the data reveal differences in the number of wars in which each of the males participated. For instance, informant No. 65 went to war nine times, whereas informant No. 69 engaged in warfare only once.

How can this difference be explained? One possible explanation relates to the life course of each individual. Research on other pastoral societies notes that going or not going to war is determined by social status. For instance, among the Samburu of central northern Kenya, the more-than-10-year period between initiation into the age set and marriage is the stage of "warriorhood" (Spencer 1965). As mentioned in Chapter 2, the timing of the later rites of passage differs for Daasanach in the same age set.

This explanation is, however, inappropriate. Table 4 shows whether males had experienced the initiation rite, marriage, circumcision, and the *dimi* rite at the time of war. This table shows that men frequently go to war after marriage. Furthermore, pre-initiation-rite boys and post-*dimi*-rite males, the social elders, also participate in war at times, although in proportionally smaller numbers.

Table 3. Participation in Warfare by Members of the Same Age Set, Generation Set, and Territorial Group*

Year	Name of War	Opposing People	1	65	69	72	89	91	96	98	
	Loyam	Turkana		○			?				
	Topos	Toposa					○				
1971?	Mailkona	Gabra							○		
1972	Nyibilyaga	Nyangatom		○					○	○	
1973	Bale	Nyangatom		○	○					○	
	Initiation Rite into Generation Set										
1976?	Buna Aaro	Nyangatom		○		○				○	
	Nakwa	Nyangatom							○		
1980?	El Zat	Nyangatom					○				
	Kanamagur	Turkana					○				
1987	Ai I-Artulkach	Hamar							○		
1988	Naikaya	Hamar		○							
1991	Lobe	Nyangatom		○		○			○		
	Lolubai	Turkana		○							
1995?	Ai I-Lokorchie	Turkana		○						○	
	Galte Batai	Turkana		○							
2000	Ai I-Shuomoi	Turkana				○		○		○	
	Aiet	Turkana		○							
	Kalakwi	Turkana		○							
	Kamana	Turkana		○							
2006	Aiet	Turkana		○							

* All members belong to the Inkabelo, Nigolomogin generation set, Niliabur age set. ○ indicates that the member participated in warfare.

Table 5 presents the argument thus far in concrete terms. This table shows participation rates for 174 adult males in Ai I-Shuomoi's war with the Turkana in 2000. This war was one of the largest in the previous 10 years, but not one person from the Inkoria and Ngaritch, who are not neighbors of the Turkana, participated. Further, while comparatively elder members of the Inkabelo and Randal, who played a central role in the war, participated, many young men in their teens and 20s did not go.

Almagor, who conducted a survey of the Daasanach in the latter half of the 1960s, noted that although conflict between the young men who wished to attack the enemy and the elders who tried to repress them occurred on a daily basis, "[i]n an all-out war, the entire tribe is united in its goal of defeating the enemy" (Almagor 1979: 121). However, since none of the members of the distant territorial groups such as Inkoria and Ngaritch participate even in the largest war, nor did many young men of Inkabelo and Randal who were expected to go off to war, this conclusion is inaccurate. As noted above, it is not possible to adequately explain the variations in the number of times an individual participated in warfare simply on the basis of factors external to the individual, including historical changes in inter-ethnic relations and differences in the social organization of the group to which an individual belongs.

Table 4. Participation in Warfare and Life Stage*

Age	Boyhood	Post-Initiation Rite	Post-Marriage, Pre-Circumcision	Post-Circumcision, Pre-Marriage	Post-Circumcision, Post-Marriage	Post- <i>dimi</i> **	Total
10s	7	8		4	1		20
20s	19	29	22	2	10		82
30s	8	24	14	10	21	1	78
40s	15	25	17	3	65	4	129
50s	16	31	11	9	42	12	121
60s	1	22	10	5	23	2	63
70s~	5	25	13	4	20	5	72
Total	71	164	87	37	182	24	565

* Data covers the 170 informants, who participated in warfare a total of 565 times. The life stages of the 18 times the remaining four informants participated in warfare were not surveyed.

** Since the Randal and Kuoro do not carry out the *dimi* rite, participation in warfare for the males of these two groups is set at post-*dimi* from the time after the average age at which the males of other territorial groups carry out the *dimi* rite, the mid-forties onwards.

Table 5. Males Participating in the Ai I-Shuomoi's War*

Age	Territorial Group								Total
	Inkabelo	Randal	Kuoro	Elele	Riele	Oro	Inkoria	Ngaritch	
10s	5/15	0/6	0/1		0/2	0/1	0/1		5/26
20s	9/16	2/3	3/4	0/1		0/1	0/6		14/31
30s	6/15	2/2		1/2	0/2	1/2	0/12		10/35
40s	6/11	1/5	2/2	0/3	1/1		0/6	0/1	10/29
50s	3/12	0/4	0/1	1/1	0/1		0/6		4/25
60s	0/7	0/5					0/1		0/13
70s~	0/7	0/5		0/2		0/1			0/15
Total	29/83	5/30	5/8	2/9	1/6	1/5	0/32	0/1	43/174

* Figures denote Participating Members/ Total Number of Informants.

5.4. Previous War Experience

Experiences in previous wars constitute an additional important factor examined in this paper. First, the vast majority of adult Daasanach males have had the experience of going to war at least once. Table 2 shows that all males in their 40s and older have had the experience of going to war. Of the 23 subjects who participated in no wars, 13 were in their teens, and it is expected that they will go to war when they grow older. Why have the remaining 10 males in their 20s and 30s not yet gone to war?

According to the interviews, three of these males had not engaged in *osii*, as we have defined war in this paper, but had engaged in *sulla*, and two of these had had the experience of killing an enemy. Four others were Christians and observed church teachings that all killing is a sin. An additional two males decided not to go to war due to knowledge gained through living in urban areas for a long time. Only one male failed to give a clear answer.

Thus, almost all males, except those with a clear reason for "not going to war," went to war once and then hesitated or refused to participate in warfare again. As discussed in the previous section, this

change was not governed by life course transitions. Rather, people reflected on their experiences in past wars and “renounced war” (*osu dite*); in other words, they decided to not go to war again.

Two kinds of experiences underpinned decisions to renounce war. One was the physical and mental anguish of the battlefield. Physical anguish refers to experiences of literally wavering on the very brink of life and death in the context of bullets flying back and forth grazing one’s body, of becoming unable to move when transfixed by the enemy’s sorcery (*muor*) and being left behind on the battlefield, or of reaching the limits of hunger and thirst. Mental anguish refers to being surrounded by blood and piles of bodies, telling a friend’s wife and children about the friend’s death and watching them cry for three days, and so on.

One further experience is the conflict that arises between the Daasanach themselves on the battlefield. Irrespective of age, members who renounced war reported that the Daasanach do not cooperate when fighting, but rather seek war booty and the like, are jealous of each other, and deceive and place curses on one another. This phenomenon can manifest in the following ways:

- (1) Members deceiving other participants in the battle to place them at a disadvantage to gain war booty:

Statement 1 (April 5, 2006, male in his 20s)

(At the time of Ai I-Shuomoi’s War) we split into two squads according to generation set, the Nigabite and Nigolomogin. Then the Nigabite deceived us. It was still before dawn, so we could not see very far. The Nigabite pointed to a tree and said, “There is a village there. Go that way. We will go to a different village. Let us all kill the Turkana.” When the first cock crowed, the Turkana noticed the Daasanach first, and the war began with three bullets. We went off in the direction indicated to us by the Nigabite. But there was no village there. The Nigabite deceived us because they wanted to raid livestock and kill the enemy just by themselves. We didn’t get anything; we were caught under the sorcery (*muor*) of the Turkana and just felt bad.

- (2) Participants leaving members needing help on the battlefield.

Statement 2 (April 9, 2006, male in his 50s)

(In Ai I-Shuomoi’s War) I didn’t have a gun. I went to war as a “spear-holder” ... when we were leaving the battle, I fell under the Turkana’s sorcery. My legs became weak and I could not walk. I said to the young people (the speaker at that time was in his late 40s) passing by, “I don’t have a gun. I’ll be killed by the Turkana.” But everyone just ran off. As they left, they said, “We don’t have a gun for you.”

- (3) Members of the Daasanach violently stealing raided livestock from one another.

Statement 3 (March 9, 2006, male in his 30s)

Here’s another thing that happened. I went to war as a “spear-holder” and raided some livestock. But on the way home, the people who had gone to the war with guns pointed the guns at me and said, “Hand them over.” I couldn’t refuse. All the livestock were taken from me.

- (4) Members of the Daasanach putting curses on one another as the result of jealousy over war booty.

Statement 4 (March 9, 2006, male in his 30s)

(At the time of the Kanamagur War) we raided four herds of small livestock. However, when we raided the livestock, it was not the person with the fire-lighting sticks that made the incisions in the enemy’s livestock. Another man who was engrossed in the livestock raiding made the incisions. The person with the fire-lighting sticks was not able to carry out his role and did not

receive even one head of livestock. For that reason, he hated the other Daasanach, and on the way back to the settlement put a curse (*dor*) on them. The four herds of small livestock died on reaching the settlement. The two animals I raided also died.

These statements indicate that people experienced a process of “spilling each other” (*holol okodimia*) (i.e., loss of the unity among members of the Daasanach) while marching to war, engaging in actual combat, and returning to the settlement.

Statement 5 (February 28, 2006, male in his 50s)

When my children were small (in my 20s to 30s), I stopped going to war. Up until that time, I had been going. Daasanach do not help each other when they fight. Those who raided livestock were the first to leave the battlefield. The people who were left behind were killed by the Turkana. People spill each other in war. In that case, it's better to sit in front of the house.

Greater violence is associated with a greater likelihood that people will “spill each other.” Table 6 shows the number of times that the 43 males, participants in the aforementioned Ai I-Shuomoi's War, returned to war before 2006. Since 2000, wars with the Turkana have occurred frequently, but with the exception of one man, none of the males in their 40s and 50s returned to war during that period. Furthermore, although some males in their teens and 20s had participated in several wars, some males did not go at all, and many were hesitant, going off to war on only a very few occasions. These males have spoken of their sense of repulsion at seeing with their own eyes the ferocious violence of Ai I-Shuomoi's War and the conflict among members of the Daasanach themselves.⁽⁴⁾

Those who renounced war reported that they had a “young head” (*me lorich*) and were “foolish” (*dees*) before they themselves went to war. They emphasized that they renounced war after “growing” (*guanab*) and becoming “one who has knowledge” (*maa inyasich*) as a result of carefully considering their experiences on the battlefield following their return to the settlement. That these statements concerning “growing from a young head” do not refer to biological ageing or to a transition in social status from youth to social elder is evidenced by a youth in his 20s who renounced war using these expressions after going to war only once.

It should be noted that many of these men stated, “I became a coward” (*maa sier*). For Daasanach males, evaluation as a coward constitutes an insult and represents the exact opposite of evaluation as “a brave man.” Referring to someone as a “coward” is done to provoke an opponent into a fight or to abuse someone to make him *guof*, as mentioned in Chapter 4. These men, however, state that they do not become *guof* even when called “a coward” by their age mates.

The exceptional nature of these statements becomes clear when compared they are with utterances about circumcision. Daasanach males experience circumcision between their teens and 30s. The circumcision rite is an important event in which, like war, males must show their masculinity. The person undergoing circumcision places his extended fingers on his knees and continues to gaze fixedly

Table 6. Number of Times of Warfare Participation following the Ai I-Shuomoi's War

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
10s	3	1	1			5
20s	2	6	3	1	2	14
30s	6	3		1		10
40s	9	1				10
50s	4					4
Total	24	11	4	2	2	43

on his foreskin as it is cut off with a knife. If he moves his body during the circumcision, he is branded as a coward who could not tolerate the pain, and he is considered an embarrassment to his entire clan. Indeed, many males known to the author emphasized their courage during their circumcision. However, these same men, relating their experiences in war, stated that they renounced war because they have become cowards. Let us proceed to a more detailed examination of this point.

5.5. Why Did They Renounce War?

As noted in the Introduction, overt physical violence is collectively exercised during war. Rey (2001: 257), citing Levinas, described the unique experiences of war as follows: "War 'destroys the sameness of identity.' Is this because war divides opposing peoples into two camps? On a deeper level, it destroys my identity, and at the same time eliminates all of each identity, everything I depend on, and everything that makes each identity 'real.'"

Although the context of the above differs from that in which the argument advanced herein is presented, it is nonetheless consistent with the battlefield experiences related by the Daasanach who have renounced war. Their statements do not refer to a distinction between two camps, friend and foe, but to the power of violence that demolishes "our" unity and thrusts death upon "me."

When conducting a general interview survey on war, people sometimes state the "rules of war," such as, "Even in times of war, the elders should be respected and companions should help each other" and "Even if they are the enemy, women and children should not be killed." However, what is revealed when they relate how the battlefield appeared in their own experiences is that these rules are irrelevant in real battles, when combatants are surrounded by bodies, bullets, and the danger of death. At such times, companions who should be dependable do not care about "me" because they are protecting their own lives and gathering their own war booty. The "we" unity that was emphasized before war is torn asunder by people "spilling each other" in the midst of the violence that occurs on the battlefield.

If we base our understanding on these statements, then war is not an arena in which individuals, as members of a specific political entity, behave according to certain rules, as suggested by the expression "a common ritual language ... by which groups make themselves significant to each other and to themselves, as independent political entities" (Turton 1994: 26). Rather, war is experienced by people as an arena in which people are exposed to overt violence in a state in which these rules are invalidated and "each identity" is deprived of "everything I depend on."

In this context, the aforementioned report that one has "grown from a young head" may be understood in terms of the following considerations. Daasanach males are raised from childhood surrounded by discourses and cultural apparatuses that extol the exercise of violence against an enemy; as they age, they accept this as their own norm and then actually go off to war. However, seeing with their own eyes the deaths of their companions while facing the loss of their own lives imbues them with the knowledge that the war successes that define "a brave man" are the results of abandoning one's companions to death and of conflicts among members of the Daasanach themselves.

Through a series of life-threatening battlefield interactions, they come to know that the discourses and cultural apparatuses that extol the exercise of violence against the enemy circulate in a context that is quite removed from the realities of their own experiences on the battlefield. It is in this sense that they have gained a critical perspective, and it is in this context that they say they "grow" and have "renounced war" as "one who has knowledge."

As noted in the previous section, both circumcision and war are arenas in which masculinity is demonstrated. However, these two events have contrasting effects on individuals. In the circumcision, individuals who engage in mutual competition concerning masculinity are uniformly reproduced through the exercise of "ritualized violence" according to a previously agreed procedure. In contrast, the arena of warfare, where unconcealed physical violence is expressed, produces individuals who are skeptical of the prestige-gaining game concerning masculinity that mobilized them for war.

These individuals do not become "free" of this notion of masculinity. As evidenced by references to their status as "cowards" when discussing their masculinity, they remain inside of the framework into

which they had been indoctrinated. At the same time, however, self-identification as “a coward,” the most devalued status in their community, suggests that they decided to remove themselves from the prestige-gaining game based on their experiences on the battlefield.

Thus, the existence of males who have renounced war through consideration of their past experiences with warfare has become an important factor in the variation that characterizes the number of times males have participated in warfare.

6. THE SUBJECT WHO EXPERIENCES TOGETHER

Two questions emerge from the above argument. One concerns how an individual's decision to renounce war is accepted by other members within a group dominated by an ethos valuing physical violence against the enemy. The second question concerns why, despite the existence of individuals critical of warfare, wars have continued over such a long period of time. I argue that both questions are related to the Daasanach attitude towards others of respecting each individual's self-determination.

A strong tendency toward “individualism” has been observed among the pastoral peoples of east Africa, including the Daasanach. Almagor noted that the Daasanach dislike individuals who use their superior position to pressure others to perform certain acts, and being evaluated as someone who forces people to do things results in a significant lowering of social status (Almagor 1978a: 77–79, 1978b: 141–145). He discusses this in relation to norms such as egalitarianism between age mates, but I believe that disapproval of forcing others to do things and respect for the self-determination of others are part of a general attitude adopted by the Daasanach toward others; this attitude is summarized by their use of the word “stomach.”

When referring to stomach, belly, womb, and interior (Tosco 2001), the Daasanach very frequently used the word *geer* to denote not only bodily organs, but also phenomena such as personality, emotions, intentions, and life. For instance, a “person with a white stomach” is an honest person, “a person with a decayed stomach” is a stingy person, and “the stomach becomes cool” means that one is satisfied. It is sometimes said that the character of the “stomach” resembles of the name givers, but basically each person has a different “stomach,” a different personality and a different emotional proclivity. Thus, “stomach” expresses the Daasanach individuality (cf. James 1988).

When the Daasanach explain or justify why they make different claims or take different actions from others, they say, “My stomach is different from other people's stomachs,” and that they will do “only what my stomach decides.” In contrast, when engaged in cooperative actions, they appeal to others by saying, “My stomach and your stomach are the same.” Analysis of the use of the expression that one's “stomach is the same/different” (*geer tikidi/taka*) in Daasanach daily conversations reveals the following connotations.

Even among the Daasanach, no two people have the same “stomach.” However, living together and sharing a variety of experiences enable establishment of a relationship about which one can say “My stomach and your stomach are the same.” This kind of relationship is used as grounds for demanding something from the other person or involving that person in some joint activity. However, people understand, to some extent, that shared experiences may be interpreted in different ways by each person. Indeed, people may jointly engage in an activity even in the presence of differences; at such times, those involved discuss the relevant issues. If discussion leads the two to think that their “stomachs are the same,” they will probably engage in the activity together. However, if it is not possible to persuade the other person through discussion, one will not try to force his or her will upon the other and will ultimately accept the decision of the other. As Almagor suggests, the Daasanach harbor a strong dislike for any kind of coercion.

This attitude of respect for the self-determination of others' “stomachs” is applied without an exception for decisions concerning warfare. The Daasanach people share the perception that each individual should make his own judgments about going or not going to war based on his own stan-

dards. Although people will offer various kinds of advice, no one can coerce the person concerned. Almost all the males who have renounced war state, "Whether I go to war or not, my stomach alone will decide, and my companions who hear this just say to me, 'Stick to the village.'"

Nevertheless, it should be noted that not going to war is a decision resulting from the experience of having been to war. The following statement illustrates this point:

Statement 6 (February 23, 2006, male in his 30s)

I went to *sulla*. I saw and I knew what it was. Enough. I do not wish to kill people any more. When I went to *sulla*, I went together with two men older than me. They said "We're going to war," and I went, and I killed one Hamar. I knew war. Now I have grown, and my own stomach decides. If the enemy attacks, I will fight. But I will not go myself. Even if someone says to me, "let's go," I just say, "I've had enough." That's the end of it.

To clarify the process by which the self-determination of the "stomach" is accepted, let us compare this with the subjectification process included in Althusser's theory of ideology. According to Althusser (1971), by turning toward an interpellation from the Subject (with a capital S), such as God or the State Power, a subject (with a small s) becomes willing to belong to the Subject, while at the same time being guaranteed a certain amount of freedom as a subject. This image of the subject is most applicable to people when a nation-state prepares for or initiates war, as mentioned in Chapter 1. The subject who can freely decide his actions during ordinary times is mobilized for war as a patriotic homogenous subject during times of war. What is in operation there is the mechanism of state ideology apparatus that narrows the breadth of individual choices of action in the process of socialization.

At first glance, the process by which the self-determination of the "stomach" is accepted appears to be homologous to this notion. Youths who have not yet been to war have no logic with which to refute the "We're going to war" interpellation of older males. Instead, they willingly go off to fight to be recognized as "brave men."

However, the important point comes after that. On the basis of the experience of war they went off to as a response to the interpellation, they have gained the right to refuse the interpellations of others following thereafter. An individual with the experience of "going, seeing, and knowing what war is" becomes someone who can exercise the right of self-determination of the "stomach." In contrast to Althusser, whose analysis claims that the very act of turning towards the interpellation creates the subservient subject, the Daasanach experience of responding to the interpellation creates a subject who is skeptical of the ideology by which he himself was mobilized for warfare (cf. Tanaka 2005).

What should be emphasized here is that members who became skeptical and renounced war were not treated as "cowards" and excluded by other members of the community. The people did not impeach the member who had withdrawn from the prestige-gaining game based on the norms concerning masculinity; they simply accepted his decision that has been made based on the reason that he has "had enough of war." In that sense, we should think of the subject that has called on the youth not as (the agent of) the Subject who inevitably creates a subject who is subservient to himself, but as a subject who "experiences together," who himself moves his body to go to war, and who shares with the youth the opportunity to gain the knowledge necessary to judge whether to go to war.

The attitude of acceptance for the decision of the member who has renounced war also contributes to recurrences of war because the right to decide also applies to the male referred to as the "man who likes war" (*maa osu gier*). The man who likes war, in contrast to the member who has renounced war, is the kind of person who appears to like the idea of going to war and who attempts to attack the enemy even when calm inter-ethnic relationships prevail. For instance, informant number 65 in Table 3 is a man who likes war and who, even now, at the age of about 50, sets off on *sulla* and *osu*. Elders who have been appointed to official positions in the generation set occasionally rebuke the man who likes war for causing deteriorations in inter-ethnic relations. However, these elders themselves say that "they have different stomachs," and they do not have recourse to coercive means for preventing them

from fighting.

The men who like war gain war successes, and the existing cultural apparatus is thereby reproduced through the carrying out of the procedures that accompany this. Thus, new debts arise, and large-scale warfare may be provoked. When the enemy attacks the Daasanach to “take back the debts,” the males who had once renounced war may again be involved in fighting. As indicated in statement 6, if this man’s own village were attacked by the enemy, he would have no choice but to fight back, and if his livestock were raided as a result of that attack, he would himself go to war to try to raid the enemy’s livestock to rebuild his livestock herds. At that time, he would not be seeking recognition as “a brave man,” as when he went to war for the first time, but would be travelling to the enemy’s lands as an unavoidable response that enables him to continue his own livelihood.

7. CONCLUSION

Much previous research on warfare has analyzed the causes and functions of war by understanding warfare in terms of environmental factors or group norms external to the individual. However, even though those factors may exist, they do not automatically determine that people will go to war.

The Daasanach also engage in a great deal of talk and have multiple cultural apparatuses that extol the justification of the exercise of violence against the enemy. However, many of the males who ostensibly should be going to war do not go because of their endorsement of a perspective that is critical of these discourses and the ideology promoted by the cultural apparatuses. This critical perspective derives from past experiences on the battlefield, and other members respect choices based on experiences on the battlefield.

The Daasanach have no institutionalized “thermostatic mechanism” for the homogenous mobilization of people for war, dislike coercion at the level of the individual, and share a respectful attitude toward the self-determination of the “stomachs” of others. They maintain a loose cohesiveness not by uniformly participating in collective actions based on norms and propositions external to the individual, but by sharing an attitude for the maximum mutual acceptance of the occasional decisions based on the previous experiences of others through the logic of “differences in stomach”.

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NOTES

- (1) It should be also noted that there are many trans-ethnic amicable relations between the members of the Daasanach and neighboring peoples (Sagawa 2009), although I do not analyze them in this paper due to space limitations.
- (2) The Daasanach also classify the Hor, Toposa, Rendille, Samburu, Pokot and Somali as *gaal kunno*. They were excluded from the subsequent description because they do not live adjacent to the Daasanach.
- (3) The interview began by asking, “What was the first war you went to?” and continued by asking interviewees to name the wars in which they had participated during their life courses. The data in the Table 2 include attacks on enemy settlements and instances of defending Daasanach’s settlements against enemy attacks. In the latter cases, people pursued the enemy after they had withdrawn, and members of nearby settlements reinforced the attacked settlement. For this reason, instances of both attack and defense are included in the expression “go to war.”

- (4) There is a general tendency that the bigger a war's scale becomes, the more likely its participants abstain from a war after it. However, some men who have participated in a small *sulla* abstained from a subsequent war. Whether a man "becomes a coward" as a result of his experiences in war (see below) is not determined solely by the scale of the conflict.

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