

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN WAR-MAKING: WHY DO DIFFERENT CULTURES FIGHT WARS DIFFERENTLY?

Summary: The paper gives insight into the subject of culturally different ways of war-making. The objective is to further examine armed conflict in different societies and cultures. By analyzing key parameters and variables of the concept of war and strategy, the paper puts into focus cultural differences between the ways of making war by prominent military organizations. Unlike other publications, which elaborated in detail key features of warfare between various culturally different societies throughout history, this paper puts stress on strategy. Strategic culture is the dominant factor which decides how the society wages war.

Key words: military strategy, culture, East, West, Cold War, warfare, society, nuclear war

Introduction

The paper gives an answer to the question why different societies fight wars differently. The objective is to raise this so-far unanswered issue. Valuable studies have been made on the theory of conflict and causes of war, but none to this day offered a concrete answer to explain the reasons behind the behavioral phenomenon of different cultures of war-making.¹ The author will intentionally ask a question to which science does not yet have an answer, because the paper wants to give a direction for a more elaborate study to be done in this field. Opinions and theories expressed here are not the common attitude of the relevant scientific community, but are those of the author and they are subjected to further discussion.

On war

Every society has defined for itself what war is and how it should be regarded (Keegan, 2012). War is a state of a manifested (in a particular way) conflict of strategies be-

¹ Two groundbreaking studies of war, each in its own segment, have been published by two renowned British military historians Jeremy Black and John Keegan. First, *Why Wars Happen* (1998) by Jeremy Black asks the crucial but until then, still unanswered question of why wars occur. He analyzes the origin of war by examining different case studies from the +15th Century onwards. Second book, *A history of Warfare* (1993) by John Keegan offers a ground breaking study of warfare between different cultures throughout history. These two studies offer an in-depth analysis of war and warfare. However, in this paper, for the first time we ask the question: why do different cultures fight wars differently?

tween military organizations.² It is not necessarily an armed conflict and does not necessarily include physical destruction. Quite often it does, but there are for example some tribal societies which do not know the concept of war as a state of armed conflict between organizations. For this reason, some argue that war is not a natural activity of human kind, but that it occurs under specific circumstances. It is true that in some societies war is not manifested in a conventional understanding, but this does not mean that to those societies the concept of war is unknown. Both war and peace are different manifestations of strategy and as such are subjected to its realm. Strategy is a force which shapes the very nature itself. The world does not exist in a state of peace which is then broken by an occasional state of war. And it is also not true (as some might argue) that mankind is in a constant state of war, which - when not manifested as an armed conflict, can be referred to as peace. Neither of these is accurate enough to describe the situation of constant conflict between diverging strategies. Every organization which has its own armed forces also has its own military strategy. This refers to an art of planning and managing military significant resources for the purpose to achieve pre-set long-term objectives which are of vital interest to a military organization.³ So even in the case of a tribal society for which some could argue that they do not know war, for example San People (Bushmen) in Kalahari, such a statement would not be correct. They too know war, because their organization has a strategy of its own, and its armed forces (proto-military) to carry it out. And even if they did not have its armed forces they would have met the concept of war, as soon as another strategy clashes with theirs. Which happened when the European settlers expelled the San People into the Botswana desert from what is today South Africa. All the societies, primitive and advanced, know war, because all the people and all the matter is of the same nature and all are subjected to the laws of strategy. The San People were technologically significantly inferior to European settlers. Their strategy was easily defeated by the British strategy and those indigenous people were faced with a simple choice: to continue their strategy as it had always been and perish, or to change strategy and accept to go and try to survive in the desert. It is one of the principal laws of strategy that if one wants to survive one must always be flexible. Why did the San People accepted to change and others did not? For example, Maori from New Zealand fought fiercely against the British invaders despite their technological inferiority.

So why do some societies change their minds quicker and others choose to fight to the bitter end? In fact some societies would rather perish than to accept defeat. There are numerous examples of such behavior. It is proven that wars occur throughout human history in both civilized and less civilized societies alike and with the same brutality. Wars are not something which was introduced to people with civilization (L. Keeley, 1997). Quite the opposite, civilization just brought war to a new form. Famous Clausewitz's con-

² Defined by author.

A military organization – a structured armed force which has military leadership, command structure and objectives. More advanced are states, and less advanced are non-state actors as they lack support from a sophisticated state apparatus.

³ Defined by author.

cept of an absolute war became a realistic perspective with the tremendous technologic development of today. If any of the modern powers would wage an armed (manifested) war on each other directly, they would have no other choice but to make it an absolute one. So why none of the powers armed with weapons of mass destruction unleash an absolute war on each other? The answer is: because of their war-making culture.

Specific circumstances develop a war-making culture within a nation.

Some societies in history developed a so-called warrior culture. The most representative of such examples is Classical Sparta. This city-state in Ancient Greece rose as the most prominent of all Greek political entities and maintained this status for at least several centuries. In 480 BC at the Battle of Thermopile a famous episode occurred in which Spartan warriors⁴ made a last stand against an overwhelming enemy. All except one of the Spartans died as a result of this action. And he, Aristodemus was ordered to leave because of an eye infection. And he, later at the battle of Plataea (479 BC), ashamed because he was not allowed to follow the others in death at Thermopile – performed a suicide attack on Persian ranks to redeem his honor. All the Spartans agreed that he honored himself, but his action gave him no special merit, because he wanted to recklessly die in combat, and for Sparta it would have been better if he had fought in the rank with others, defeated the enemy and lived to fight another day (Herodotus, 9:71). Such behavior was within the Spartan way of war-making. So the question is why?

One of the most destructive modern wars to this day was the Paraguayan War (1864-1870). That is when we take into account the proportion of the number of population which perished as a result of the war. Estimates are that 60-70% of all Paraguayans died (B. Farwell, 2001, p. 824). All of the combating nations of Paraguay, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay were young nations in the meaning that they had not existed for a long time. Paraguay was independent from Spain for a little more than half a decade (since 1811). Why did the Paraguayans fought so fiercely against their neighbors? They did not have a strong and long tradition of a warrior culture like Sparta. So how could such a strong national spirit emerge within such a short time period?

To win, some societies are willing to sacrifice much more than others. To understand why we must first know what is a victory and what is a defeat. A victory is a strategic situation in which a military organization has achieved all of its strategic (vital and pre-set) objectives and there is no other outside strategy which could interfere with it. A defeat is a strategic situation in which all of the organization's military significant resources are depleted, and there is no other force available anymore which could achieve and secure its strategic objectives.⁵ Both victory and defeat then can be observed on different levels of strategy.⁶ The greater the power of an actor, the more levels of strategy it can have. A primitive prehistoric society could barely make it up to the operational level. But this does not mean that wars were less destructive. On the contrary, because the tactical and technologic possibilities were limited, the wars between small human societies (groups)

⁴ Also supported by some of their other Greek allies.

⁵ Definitions by author.

⁶ Tactical level, operational level, theater level, grand level, space level and so on.

were fought mostly by means of ambush and limited raids. And in these, the attacked group would often suffer a devastating blow or a complete destruction as there was little or no difference between combatants and non-combatants. It is more devastating for a tribe of a hundred to lose twenty people, than for a nation of hundred million to lose twenty million people. So the parameter we need to observe is the one of losses. What is an acceptable loss for a society? This depends on its war-making culture. Some societies would push itself into destruction before the losses would become unacceptable. A more peaceful society would consider unacceptable even a minor loss. Why is it so?

Theories of Malthus and Youth bulge offer demographic explanations why a society will go to war. Malthus sees expanding population and scarce resources as a source of violent conflict. Youth bulge states that a male youth cohort with a lack of regular, peaceful employment opportunities is a risk for violence and a recruiting pool for aggressive policies (S. Huntington, 2007, p. 118). It is not without a reason to state that a society will be more willing to go to war (of conquest) and to sacrifice a lot of its people, if it has a large number of young males fit for military service. Societies such as Mao's China had (and still have) the numbers. What is famous are Mao's statements that China should not be afraid of a nuclear war, because even if hundreds of millions of Chinese were killed, there would still be hundreds of millions more to continue the fight. This kind of statements would confirm the demographic theories, but it would be wrong in the cultural segment. Why should it be more acceptable for a Chinese family, which is allowed to have only one child, to sacrifice it for the sake of the country – than for a British family with six children to lose just one or two? The USA in Vietnam War had far more young males to send to Vietnam than the North Vietnamese, and yet Americans were strongly opposing the war even though their casualties were much fewer than those of the Communist Vietnamese. The answer to what is an acceptable loss, lies within the culture of war-making of every specific society. This culture is based and developed on grand strategic objectives which are then influencing both demography and economy.

Strategic culture

Strategic culture is a permanent attitude of leaders and other decision-making segments in the society, who are aware of the strategic processes (forces) around them and have a common attitude on how to achieve long term objectives of strategic importance for their political entities.⁷

Culture of many societies' both in the past and present demands from a young male to earn his rite de passage. For example Norman conquests in 11th century were primarily triggered by a large number of young warriors holding a noble title but no land. So these skilled warriors went on conquests to make kingdoms of their own. This process did not happen by hazard, it was the result of the strategic culture of Norman decision makers. Their strategy was first to have more children. Secondly, to train all of their male children

⁷ Defined by author, influenced by the theories of Edward Luttwak. See more in Luttwak E., *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace*, Harvard University Press, 2001.

into skilled warriors. Thirdly, to deliberately deny them the right of land and instruct them to go and seek land elsewhere. For the glory of both - themselves and their nation, to earn their prestige within this society.

Similar to the Normans, societies of pre-WWI European Empires also had a lot of young people as a result of significant economic development. This meant a lot of young and able people at loose. Youth meant strength of a society but it also meant trouble for the central government. Because, unlike the Normans, in whose time warfare was only reserved for the professional warriors (knights), pre-WWI Europe had the situation in which every able bodied male was a warrior. This situation developed with the revolution of firearms. A warrior which trained all his life for combat with a sword could now easily be killed by anyone able to carry a gun. European Empires all had a big population of young able bodied men and it represented a problem for the central government as such a group is hard to control. Therefore the processes of militarization of societies and colonial expansion served the primary purpose to send these people and potential social unrest somewhere else, but still within control. If someone would be unhappy with the existing situation within the European mainland, there was always a need for fresh recruits to go to the colonies. There they had the opportunity to fight for the riches and glory of both themselves and their society. Same as in the time of the Normans, young people were eager to earn their rite de passage and wealth.

Millions of young men were eager to prove their valor. In this way of thinking, a male which is a proven warrior is also a proven man – so the prospect of marriage, family and prestige depended on it. However, with such expansionistic policies, strong European Empires eventually came into an open conflict with each other as there was no other enemy power strong enough to either pose a challenge or force them to unite. Their usual adversaries were inferior in both strategy and technology, but when Empires clashed directly with each other in WWI it resulted in a bloodbath.

So how much exactly is worth the human life? This is the crucial factor which defines strategic culture. To answer it we must observe the relation between the individual and the society (state). Strategic culture defines key strategic objectives for the society. These must be achieved by a resource and a force to move those resources. We can divide this relation of objectives, resources and individuals into four distinctive categories.

1. Democratic societies

This society is organized for the purpose of serving the individual. The state exists to improve the security of its citizens and they in return willingly accept obedience to the state for their own well-being. In a democratic state every individual (citizen) has determined rights and these are defended by legal mechanisms and regulated norms. No individual is above the state and no one has the absolute power over it.

2. Totalitarian systems

This is a society in which the primary objective of a strategic culture is to maintain the social and legal order of the state itself. The life of an individual is of little significance because the only thing that really matters is that the state lives on. Totalitarian systems such as Communism and Despotism will go as far to sacrifice huge portions of their people if it means keeping the system itself alive.

3. Societies dominated by religion

This category is very similar to totalitarian systems in the way that the role of the individual is to serve the state and its systems of beliefs. To satisfy the religious needs is the primary objective of its strategic culture. Gods (supernatural) are above the state and above the individual, and both exist with the sole purpose to please them. This kind of society will be willing to sacrifice all of its individuals and even the state itself, if it means pleasing the supernatural forces in which it believes.

4. Societies dominated by aggressive ethnic nationalism

This expression we use here to describe a society which rests on norms of primitive social behavior. There is a dominant cult of manhood and war is made with the primary objective to physically destroy and humiliate the members of the other tribe which is identified as the main threat. This society bases its nationalistic myths and desire for bloody revenge on false historical facts. War-making is conducted with barbaric methods. Even though such a society will put priority to preserve members of its own tribe, it will also not hesitate to sacrifice a huge portion of its people in pursue of the ultimate goal of destroying the other tribe. The society is above the individual and he is not considered as a rightful member of the tribe before killing the enemy. For this society, there is no long-term strategic planning beyond the point of securing its local position and destroying the enemy tribe.

General features

In ancient Greece which is a representative of a democratic society, not all the people were free individuals (citizens). Some men and women were a strategically more valuable resource than others. Men - because they were warriors and women - because they were giving birth to warriors. Since the warrior was the protector of the state and the primary force which achieved the strategic objectives of the state, it was only the warrior who had the right to actively participate in the political structures of the society. Technology determined the part of the society which was the warrior (citizen) since at that time combat was mostly hand to hand in closed ranks. Weapons were expensive to acquire and combat techniques difficult to master. It required extensive training and great physical strength. For this reason the warrior cast could be nothing else but warriors. There was a limited amount of time in which they could be working on anything else - like agriculture which was the primary activity of the time. Ancient Greek warrior was difficult to equip, train and logistically support to go to war. Because of this, the warrior was a scarce resource, and to lose him was strategically expensive. This is why a considerable resource was invested into the armor and tactics which ensured warrior's combat effectiveness and minimum casualty risk. Rest of the society, the ones with no political or personal rights (slaves) existed to serve the warrior. And these, expendable parts of the society were kept obedient to such a democratic system, because they could never challenge warrior's superior fighting skills and equipment.

The feudal system of European mediaeval kingdoms maintained a similar situation. A king was not a despotic ruler, he was simply an institution within the existing social and legal order. As such, a king would always have to take into account the political demands of his warrior cast (nobility) and sometimes was even ruled by them. This situation was changed with the revolution of firearms. By the 18th century the so-far expendable part of the society became stronger than the warrior cast. Because it was easy to train and equip large numbers of men (and even women and children) to march into combat, where thanks to technology – for the first time in history, they could easily kill a warrior who had trained for combat all his life. So this technological change was soon followed by a social change in the form of revolutions, which resulted in wide spread political rights. Every individual able bodied to serve in the army also had political rights. Soldiers became cheap and were as such more expendable.

As technology progressed armies became bigger and bigger. States were able to field millions of soldiers into a battle and afford huge losses. Protection in the form of armor and adequate tactics was no longer a priority, if a soldier dies it was cheaper to simply train another soldier. Such strategic thinking enabled European Empires to establish world-wide domination. But when they clashed with each other directly in WWI – it caused such unseen loss of life which was not possible to compensate anymore, and this shook the very foundations of those societies. Because their strategic culture since the time of ancient Greece was that war is a bloody business. It meant that the primary motivation to go to war was to improve that society's security in the sense to gain profit and prestige for the warriors. This was exactly what millions of young men were hoping for when they marched into war. But what they got instead was neither glory nor riches, but a war of such destruction that it came close to Clausewitz's concept of an absolute war. No wonder that large mutinies took place in the French and German armies. Warriors did not want to go to a war where there was clearly no profit to be gained. They could force themselves to kill and risk to be killed if there was something to be gained from it. To most of them, bloodshed for the bloodshed itself was not an acceptable behavior. This kind of thinking is a typical feature of Western war-making as it rests on ancient Greek civilizational norms.

1.1. West and barbarism

So after WWI, Western societies re-endorsed that philosophy and changed their strategic approach in the way that protection of the warrior once again became important. They devised those kind of tactics and invested in that kind of technology which offered protection for the soldier. The French built the Maginot line and the British developed tanks. But it was the Germans who went the furthest by inventing Blitzkrieg.⁸ It enabled them to preserve their soldiers and impose defeat on the enemy quickly, thus bringing the war back to its rationale of a bloody business. And in every sound business the profits must outweigh the losses. This kind of thinking is still the dominant feature of modern

⁸ German mechanized offensive deep penetration, combined warfare strategy in WWII.

Western⁹ war-making. However, sometime during the last years of WWII it became obvious that in Germany, the country which invented Blitzkrieg – a concept which best described Western war-making tendency of the time – German strategic culture was suffocated by the one of National Socialism. German society was being changed from within. By giving its loyalty to Hitler, the Wehrmacht found itself caught in an unsolvable situation. On the one hand, it was bound by honor to perform its duty of a warrior, and on the other - the strategy to which it served was not the one which represented German strategic culture. This is because Nazism was not a western, but a barbaric culture. The one in whose foundation was the concept of youth and its strength and blood which will be spilt for the sake of the *Fatherland*. In other words, Nazism as a totalitarian barbaric culture was ready to sacrifice its people as a mean to perpetuate its own existence. And so, by irony of history, Germany – the most technologically advanced society in WWII became a barbaric country where basic western civilization's norms were drowned. Waffen SS was a true army of Nazi ideology – savage fighters with little regard for the value of life, either of their own or of the enemy. It was on the Eastern front where Germany turned to barbarism. Wehrmacht physically and psychologically broke under the sheer savagery of combat with a culturally different enemy.

Communism, the same as Nazism, saw as its principal strategic objective to perpetuate its own existence. In order to do so it was ready to throw as many people as necessary into death. Tactics and strategies of the Soviet Union were making little or no effort to protect the lives of its warriors. It is because USSR had a lot of people and was willing to sacrifice them for a victory – in this case perpetuating its own existence and expansion.

Unlike Nazism which had limited recruiting ground because of its racial policies, Communism rested on universalism – meaning that all the people regardless of their race were potential communists. Its principal adversary is the class enemy and the class enemy can be easily destroyed as there are many more poor people than rich ones. To this kind of expansionistic strategic policy and savage way of war-making, the West, learning from German example, could only answer in one language it could understand – sheer force. As the prominent western military strategist of the time, US gen. George Patton noticed:

“Russia knows what it wants. World domination. And she is laying her plans accordingly. We, on the other hand, and England, and France to a lesser extent, don't know what we want and get less than nothing as the result. Let's keep our boots polished, bayonets sharpened, and present a picture of force and strength to the Russians. This is the only language that they understand and respect.” (C. Province, 1983, p. 100).

And Patton was right, Soviet Russia and other communist and totalitarian societies of this kind in general, could only be deterred from its expansionism if shown brutal force. Not just any kind of force, but the one which will put such fear into their soldiers' hearts which will be stronger than the fear of the despot.

⁹ Modern term “West” comprises countries of USA, Canada, other NATO (except Turkey), Australia, New Zealand, South Africa etc.

Persians had the numbers against the Greeks at Marathon (490), Thermopile (480 BC), Plataea (479), Gaugamela (331 BC) etc. and in each one of those a smaller Western army achieved victory¹⁰ because it was armed with a superior strategy. A strategy which has in its core the principal idea that the state is there to serve the individual. Macedonians at Gaugamela smashed through the Persian ranks despite their technological and numerical inferiority. Because their tactics and fighting spirit rested on the premises that their commander will above all make sure that they make it back home alive and preferably rich. Majority of the Persians on the other hand had less protection and were aware that they are expendable. This caused them to lose spirit more quickly than the Greeks (Herodotus, 9:64). So in the same way as ancient Macedonians broke the vast despotic Empire of Persia, the modern West did the same to check Communist expansionism. West's nuclear arsenal was a force so terrifying that it struck fear deeper than the one whose any repression system could ever do to motivate its subjects. And when the USSR obtained weapons of mass destruction as well, the war transformed once again – this time into a war without warfare.

Cold war (1945-1991) was not conventionally manifested but it was very real. Warfare itself became obsolete because the Communist bloc understood that a direct armed confrontation with NATO would result not just in destruction of a huge portion of its society, but in destruction of all the people and the planet itself. Previously mentioned Mao Zedong's propaganda boosted the morale of Chinese people, but strategic reality was something else. China and the rest of the Communist societies would be wiped out completely. So why did the West not react while it had the technologic advantage and attacked preemptively before the Soviets and they also had the atomic bomb (1949)? The reasons are unknown, but some of them might include the strategic situation of the USA in the years after WWII and the US strategic culture. Because in order to defeat the Soviet Union and Communism in general the West would have to wage a war of total destruction of all the people under the Communist sphere. For such an action to take place it would mean that the West embraced a policy of genocide, and this is contrary to its strategic culture which regards the war as a bloody business.¹¹

So once the Soviets had the same weapons, there was no prospective gain anymore for neither of the sides. MAD doctrine¹² made warfare obsolete. Therefore, both cultures waged war on each other for 45 years by using other, indirect strategies – but always ac-

¹⁰ Thermopile was a defeat in terms of operational strategy, but prove to be a victory in higher strategic levels.

¹¹ U.S. strategy in Vietnam, for example, assumed that after sustaining a certain level of casualties, North Vietnam would no longer be willing to support the insurgency in the South. The search for this breaking point, and uncertainty over whether it would have any political utility, bitterly divided the Johnson administration. There may in fact have been a breaking point in Vietnam, but as U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara concluded in 1967, reaching that point would have resulted in virtual genocide (Arreguín-Toft I., 2001).

¹² Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) is a doctrine of military strategy and national security policy in which a full-scale use of nuclear weapons by two opposing sides would effectively result in the destruction of both the attacker and the defender.

ording to their strategic culture. In the end it was the West that prevailed, because it had put in its focus the idea that the state exists for the individual. This was seen by the East as a weakness, but in fact proved to be the very thing which brought the Communism down. Its people were tired of living under despotic yoke and wanted more. Because Communism did not fulfill any of the promises it made and people originally accepted it because they too wanted a better life.

1.2. Different Societies

The West in the core of its strategic culture is not genocidal, but it is also far from a charity organization. Its displayed willingness to use the atomic bomb against the civilian population of Japan was a cold political decision of the renowned strategist Harry Truman, with dual purpose: to both shorten the war and show determination to Communistic despotism – in other words, to strike fear. By late 1945 Imperial Japan was already defeated, but not forced to surrender. It was so, because this society belonged to the third category of societies where a state is dominated by religion. It was one of the last major societies to be so, as this category today is present e.g. mostly in some societies or segments of societies within the Muslim World. To the Japanese society and its warriors, the main deity and zeal was Japan itself. The cult of the Empire of the Rising Sun was the incentive for which Japanese were willing to fight to the bitter end. Kamikaze, banzai charge, seppuku and Bushido codex are all distinctive features of Japanese war-making culture. Willingness to sacrifice people and equally, people's willingness to be sacrificed for the sake of Japan, their fanaticism and devotion tells us of their strategic culture. But when faced with tremendous firepower of the atomic bomb, Emperor Hirohito decided to surrender. Japan had to survive and to do so, it had to change its strategic culture from the roots – adopting a culture of peace ever since.¹³

The radical Muslim military organizations demand a similar devotion from their followers as their strategic culture demands sacrifice to satisfy their religious beliefs. According to those, a war cannot be anything else than a holy war – jihad (Keegan, 2012). In its radical form, Islam strategic culture is not only willing, but deems necessary to sacrifice both the lives of its subjects and infidels. And this kind of strategic culture devised those kind of strategies and tactics which have little regard for the protection of human life. But it too proved to be inferior to the Western understanding of war-making. However, as it is an on-going conflict there can be no final word on it. But it is likely that radical Islam, like Communism, will be defeated primarily from the inside, by its own subjects. Because it is in the nature of all the people to seek security – it is the very reason why societies are made, and once the people realize that this kind of society fails to offer any security, they too will either change their strategy or perish.

Other types of societies, those dominated by aggressive ethnic nationalism have a tendency to wage genocidal wars. The purpose is to improve its sense of security by

¹³ One of the most radical examples of a religion dominated society is the Mayan Empire in its Classic period (250-900). The strategies, tactics and technology of war-making were designed in such a way not to kill but rather capture the enemy warriors, which were then sacrificed in mass public display killings. The objective was to please the Gods as this belief was the foundation of the Mayan social organization.

physically destroying the members of the other tribe (genes, nation), whom this society has identified as its primary threat. War is motivated by blind hate and extensively uses barbarism to achieve its strategic objectives. In this society the warrior recruiting pool is limited to members of the tribe only or to culturally similar other allied tribes. Tactics used by this kind of war-making are those which pay less attention to protection of its own troops, and more on how to hurt the enemy. Moderate members of this society are identified as enemies as well. The primary way to achieve prestige is to personally kill the enemy. More recent examples of such behavior are the wars of Serbian aggression (1991-1999) and Rwandan genocide (1994). Serbian society was more advanced than the Hutu tribe, but it was driven by the same concept of hatred – which in their case was primarily directed against the Bosnian Muslims, Croats and Albanians. Weapons of war were concentration camps, war raping, terrorism and mass executions of civilians and POWs. Hutu tribe unleashed its rage against the Tutsi using the same barbaric concepts, but in a more primitive manner due to the nature of the conflict. This kind of society will identify itself as the victim and try to justify its barbaric behavior by self-defense. Those members of the tribe who do not wish to participate in aggression or do not agree with the barbaric methods – will be considered cowards, traitors and enemies by the other more radical segments of the tribe. When an enemy is captured, tribe members will be encouraged to torture and kill them in a brutal manner. Mass rape and deliberate impregnation of enemy women is a weapon which is used with the purpose to eradicate the enemy tribe in its core.

Morality of war

All of these four representative types of societies will go to war based on their sense of security. There must be some moral high ground for war-making and it is interpreted differently in each of the different societies. Morality of war is based on the following equation.

$\text{Sense of fear} / \text{sense of security} \times \text{interest} \times \text{prestige} = \text{make war yes/no}$
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Source: Developed by author.

A democratic society puts in the focus of its strategic culture the needs of the individual. If the sense of security (economic, political, physical) of an individual is jeopardized than this society will decide to go to war as long as the threat is not eliminated. The usual methods of war-making is not barbarism, but civilized warfare where the priority is to protect the warrior. Because warriors have the political rights on which the society is founded. War is regarded as a *bloody business* and once the physical and economic security has been achieved there is no more reason for destruction as it is politically costly. This society will prefer to kill the enemy from distance and if hurting its civilian population it will try to morally justify it to itself.

Despotic and totalitarian societies put themselves in the focus as they feel that their position is constantly threatened, because they must retain control over its population. For this reason these societies have an attitude of permanent insecurity, so that their subjects' energies do not become focused on changing the system, but on defending it against the imaginary threat. A democratic society can deter this hostile behavior by a constant show of physical force as it is the only way to reason with such a society. Because the objective of a totalitarian society is not to make profit from war, but to maintain the system itself.

Religion dominated societies are driven by a similar sense of insecurity which in this case comes from the need to satisfy their system of beliefs. Their supernatural deities must be pleased. Structures which control the society cannot allow for other, more peaceful religions to replace it. For this reason they maintain a sense of insecurity in the society and seek for religiously different enemies against which they direct their society's energies.

Societies dominated by aggressive nationalism perpetuate a national myth based on false historical facts. Following this myth, generations of the tribe are raised in hatred and desire for revenge against the other tribe(s) which they identified as the primary threat. Any barbaric action is justified, because they believe that the enemy has done even worse to them in the past. This kind of society does not have far seeing strategic objectives nor the idea of what kind of consequences their behavior will have within the international community. So when other nations judge their barbaric actions and (sometimes) use force to stop it, they further identify themselves as the victim against which a world-wide conspiracy is made. Such actions give further material for their national myth.

Conclusions

The aggressiveness of a society depends on its strategic culture. This permanent attitude of every specific society and its specific war-making culture is what brings this society into war or peace. When looking for answers why some societies go to war more easily and fight differently than others – we must not observe the variables to which they react, but the strategic culture in order to see how they will react to them.

The lack of economic resources to sustain population, enemy invasion, a sense of insecurity over a rising neighboring power, hatred towards another tribe – are all the reasons why a society could go to war. But it is not because of them that a society will make war or not, but because of its strategic culture. For some societies it will take long-to finally decide to make war and others will just be looking for excuses. And once in war, some societies will attempt to do everything that is possible to save the lives of the people, both their own and even their enemy's – and some others will make their men charge recklessly on well-prepared defensive positions, and encourage them to commit atrocities against enemy's non-combatants. Most of the societies contain more than one element of war-making features, which we defined in the distinctive categories. But what is the rule is that their strategic culture, once formulated, is dominating all spheres of the

society. It can only change (and not always) when faced with mortal danger. Other strategies, on lower levels, are subjected to constant change, but an overall strategic culture is a permanent attitude.

In the World of today we have a situation where the technologic development made direct (armed) warfare between major powers obsolete. However, it is obvious that there is an on-going latent war. Opposing sides belong to different cultures of war-making – but, because of the mortal danger of the planet's destruction most of the actors have redefined their strategic culture. The West still, more or less, maintains the view of a war as bloody business. The difference with the past is that the western world is now in a situation of a global strategic defensive and for this reason it is maintaining a very aggressive approach. Other major actors such as Russia, China and India (East) have redefined their strategic cultures which are now different than the ones which they had in the pre-nuclear era. The Muslim world's religious aggressiveness is collapsing under Western and inner pressures. It traditionally has no cohesiveness and each of the Muslim prominent state and non-state actors will soon have to change its strategic culture in order to maintain its existence. Ethnic hatred will continue to exist, but since such societies are strategically inferior, as they have no long-term far-seeing objectives – they will not have a decisive impact in the ongoing world conflict.

There is no possibility to predict the future, but if we closely observe different strategic cultures of every significant actor and the repeated pattern of behavior in their interaction – we will be able to interpret events more accurately.

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RÓŻNICE KULTUROWE W PROWADZENIU WOJNY: DLACZEGO RÓŻNE KULTURY RÓŻNIE PROWADZĄ WOJNY?

Streszczenie: Każda kultura ma swój sposób prowadzenia działań wojennych. Celem pracy jest zbadanie konfliktu zbrojnego w różnych społeczeństwach i kulturach. Analizując kluczowe parametry i zmienne dotyczące pojęcia wojny i strategii, autor koncentruje na różnicach kulturowych w sposobach prowadzenia wojny przez czołowe organizacje militarne.

W przeciwieństwie do innych publikacji, które szczegółowo opisują kluczowe cechy działań wojennych pomiędzy społeczeństwami różnymi kulturowo na przestrzeni wieków, niniejsze opracowanie kładzie nacisk na strategię. Kultura strategiczna jest czynnikiem dominującym, który determinuje sposób, w jaki społeczeństwo prowadzi wojnę.

Słowa kluczowe: strategia wojskowa, kultura, Wschód, Zachód, zimna wojna, działania wojenne, społeczeństwo, wojna nuklearna.