



# ***The Unwavering Realism***

***A comparative case study of modern time security***

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## **Abstract**

In this paper the author performs a comparative case study between the Ethiopia-Eritrea War 1998-2000 and the Russian-Georgian War 2008 in regards to the theory Security Dilemma as depicted by John H. Hertz. The author has constructed a method to be able to see what factors are needed for an interstate war to turn into a prolonged and lingering war versus having a quick finish. It seems as the factors "Identity" and "Fear" dominant in wars that have an extended nature.

*Keywords:* Ethiopia, Eritrea, Russia, Georgia, War, Security, Threat, Protracted

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## 1. Introduction:

In a time where globalization and increased integration between states have become very frequent, the old views on war and security should thus hold less importance. After the end of the Cold War many scholars deemed Realism and similar theory's as outdated and useless as the international community had started shifting in a different direction. A direction where interstate war had become less desirable my most and where states started looking at the notion of security in different ways. However, there has been a number of interstate wars post Cold War and they all seem to be traced back to the notion of security one way or another. It is security as a whole I would like to examine in this paper. How important is security today in regards to the balance between states? With this paper I intend to find the true correlation between security and armed conflict as well as locating the dividing line between security and threat. The aim of this paper is to develop an understanding for why states keep engaging in interstate wars despite the fact that the modernized and globalized new world order. More importantly I wish to conclude why some interstate wars result in warfare of epic proportions and last for a seemingly excessive amount of time while others are over in a blink of an eye. By locating the differences in both these types of conflict I might be able to conclude the main-reasons behind contemporary conflicts and why they still have a place in today's society.

## 2. Research Question:

As mentioned we keep witnessing interstate wars, but at different extents. I wish to, with the help from the theory "security dilemma" see how the security dilemma affects the extent of contemporary conflicts and by doing so find main-reasons for why states keep engaging in long-term wars. My research question would thus be as follows; *What underlying factor/factors are necessary for the security dilemma to turn into prolonged all-out war?*

By using two "modern" wars that both took place post-Cold War I aim to compare and equate these confrontations in relation to the security dilemma. If I manage to answer this question I would thus be able to single out different factors that contribute to wars being extended and overblown but also be able to point out when lengthy full-scale wars are less likely to occur.

### **3. Theoretical framework:**

#### **3.1 Previous Literature:**

The security dilemma by John H. Hertz is a most viable theory to incorporate into this paper. Hertz believed that states will always look to improve their security, whether that means forming new alliances or improving their military capacity. But this, according to Hertz, does the complete opposite and does not in fact contribute to improved security. This is because neighboring states to the country that is subject to “improved” security will feel threatened by their neighbor and his growing power. That will ultimately lead to the neighboring states or state to also improve their military power, thus creating tension that could eventually turn into full scale warfare between them (Hertz. 1951: 7).

Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler discusses the security dilemma in contemporary conflicts and make the argument that the security dilemma has a direct link to realism and what many view as global anarchy. They argue that there may not be a clear dividing line between legitimate self-defense and predatory behavior. States always seem to imply the “rather safe than sorry” approach, making them more prone to conflict. Both and Wheeler explains how anarchy may not be a suitable way of describing international relations nowadays but they emphasis that insecurity amongst certain states will never cease, and this makes the security dilemma so valuable for us to understand (Booth & Wheeler. 2008: 1-2).

### **4. Research Design**

#### **4.1 Method of design:**

I have chosen to use Mills Method of Difference as I investigate the two modern wars. The two wars will have a variation in the dependent variable (Y) but will in essence be very similar. They will both have taken place post-Cold War, both wars are between neighboring states, both wars are interstate wars and most importantly, they both trace back to the notion of the security dilemma. The variation of the dependent variable between the wars will be the extent of the time the wars went on. One war lasted for two whole years and claimed hundreds of thousands of victims whereas the other war lasted only for a couple of days and resulted in nearly a thousand deaths. Using Mills Method of Difference I intend to locate the dividing factor (X) that separates the two wars. If I locate the X I can thereby argue for why one war lasted for a

protracted period of time whilst the other did not, even though both wars seem to originate from the same principles of the security dilemma. Mills Method of Difference will help me find the lone dividing factor, making this the ultimate theory applicable for my paper (Teorell & Svensson. 2013: 226).

#### **4.2 Operationalization:**

The two wars I intend to use in my study is the Ethiopia – Eritrea War that took place between 1998 and 2000 and the Russian – Georgian War that took place in 2008. Assuming that both wars can be explained in terms of the Security dilemma I intend to, with that theory in view, look at the origins of both wars. The security dilemma is in fact a sort of accumulation, something that takes place before the actual war breaks out. I am looking to break down the security dilemma as follows; history, self-perception and view of the other party. In order to understand the reasoning of the different states it is imperative to understand their own view on security and survival.

These 3 factors; history, self-perception and view of other party will be looked at and analyzed in the period before the outbreak of war. As mentioned earlier I am not interested to examine contemporary dynamics, but rather the undercurrents leading up to the two wars.

#### **4.3 Material:**

My theory in this paper will be the security dilemma theory as it's presented by Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler in their book "The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust In World Politics". Regarding the empirical data of the wars, there has been a lot of material available. Both wars are relatively new and are represented well in the academic research community. I have taken part in various analytical papers examining the dynamics that surrounded both set of countries prior to the wars. The majority of my data comes from scientific articles but I have also tried to widen my sources and thus incorporate a variety of other materials such as political editorializes in order to get as much clarity as I possibly can about the two cases at hand.

## **5. Cases:**

### **5.1 Ethiopia – Eritrea war 1998-2000**

#### **5.1.1 History:**

Eritrea had for many years been under colonial rule by Italy but Italy left the country in 1952 and ten years later Ethiopia annexed it. For thirty years a war for independence went on between Eritreans and their oppressor. The Eritreans were also helped by Ethiopian rebels, fighting the harsh dictatorship of their home country. In 1991 Mengitsu, the head of the Ethiopian government, abdicated and went into exile. This marked the beginning of the Eritrean liberation. In 1993 after decades of fighting the international community finally supervised a referendum where nearly the entire Eritrean population voted for independence (Shah, Anup. 2000). The United States played a big role in the negotiations leading up to the independence of Eritrea. Ethiopia has had a good relationship for many years, dating back to the Cold War where Ethiopia was important to the US mainly because of geopolitical reasons.

Both nations seemed to get along fairly well after the independence even though there still remained questions about where the actual borders were located. In May 1998 the war broke out, over what is said to be a border-dispute. However there was much more to it than just a dispute about borders. The war was also a result of growing differences in ethnic and economic approaches. The real fighting began when Eritrea, as a result of several border incidents where Eritrean soldiers had lost their lives, entered the area known as Badme which was located in Ethiopia's northern region. Ethiopia responded by mobilizing a full scale assault against Eritrea and the war began. (Shah, Anup. 2000).

It is important to distinguish what events that were crucial leading up to the war. Many agree that this had little to do with just borders but was a result of growing tensions and the fact that Eritrea was asserting its independence on Ethiopia more and more. The fact is that Ethiopia no longer possessed a border along the Red Sea. The Red Sea had been imperative for Ethiopian trade but they were after the Eritrean independence forced to go through other countries in order to ship and trade their goods. As Eritrea had changed their currency and made it harder for Ethiopian trade through the country many argued that Ethiopia saw this war as a chance to regain their stronghold of the Red Sea or at least put an Eritrean government in place that was more Ethiopian friendly (Shah, Anup. 2000).

## 5.1.2 Self-Perception:

### Eritrea

Eritrea has always had a trouble creating a gripping national narrative but that has not stopped the country from trying. Before and after its independence Eritrea sought to assert its sovereignty on all Eritreans. It was very important not to identify with for example Ethiopians or other nationalities. After its independence many institutions were established in the country, their purpose was mainly to further the Eritrean transnationalism and to attach Eritreans to their new nation (Riggan, Jennifer. 2011: 137).

Ethiopia has maintained that prior to the Italian colonization of Eritrea the country was in fact a part of the Ethiopian empire and has therefore no right to nationhood. The Eritreans on the other hand claimed the colonization had created a nation for them and that it was their right to have autonomy (Jaqiun, Dominique. 1999: 120-21).

In 1992 at the time where Eritrea no longer was ruled by Ethiopia the Eritrean leaders, in order to take advantage of the strong nationalism that surrounded the country shortly after their freedom, proclaimed that anyone with an Eritrean parent was deemed Eritrean. Their country was desperate to attain legitimacy and did what it could to bring its people together (Riggan, Jennifer. 2011: 144).

Another important factor that plays into Eritrean self-perception and their vision of themselves is the fact that there are not much historic accounts of the country of Eritrea prior to the time when the colonial powers conquered the country. This leaves room for both sides to interpret and in many cases manipulate the available facts in order to find support for their respective beliefs. So basically the vague history of Eritrea makes the country even more prone to assert a strong nationalism and identity, perhaps in order to create a new history where there has been none prior (Jaqiun, Dominique. 1999: 124-125).

To understand the Eritrean cohesion it is also imperative to take the 30 year war of independence into account. With absence of any external support during the fight against Ethiopia, armed organizations had to mobilize fighters and support from all over the Eritrean society. Christians, Muslims and women all fought together on equal terms. This helped further the emotional attachment between Eritreans and helped form a nation-bond (Jaqiun, Dominique. 1999: 165-166).

## Ethiopia

Ethiopia has a very long and proud scene of nationalism. Ethiopian historians claim that the Ethiopian state dates back to fourth century and that the Ethiopian emperors can be traced back to King Solomon himself. This abstract long gone nation consisted of what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea, thus making an historical claim on the Eritrean lands (Riggan, Jennifer. 2011: 138).

In 1991 when the Ethiopian leader Mengistu fled the country and Eritrea gained momentum towards liberation the Ethiopian self-perception suffered. The old imaginaries of Ethiopia as a superpower with a history of dynasties now took a big hit. The national pride of the country was severely damaged and Ethiopia struggled to retain its legitimacy. (Riggan, Jennifer. 2011: 138-139).

After the Eritrean independence Ethiopia had to cope with situations they were not accustomed to. Namely they had to make distinction between ethnic groups that bridged the border between the two countries. This was highly problematic at times because Ethiopia shared common ties, such as language and tradition with many of these ethnic groups (Riggan, Jennifer. 2011: 138-139).

It is worth noting that many nationalist Ethiopians strongly opposed the independence of Eritrea and argued that Ethiopian government was a traitor to their own national identity. There has always been a scene of proudness in Ethiopian history, a proudness that was severely tarnished after the country gave up Eritrea. Memories of past glory are in many ways the essence of the national ideology of Ethiopia. (Gebrewold, Belachew. 2009: 81, 93-94).

The notion of ethnic nationalism is also a very perplex one. There remains a strong mistrust between many ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Even though there is a strong sense of pride and history in the Ethiopian culture there still remains groups that are not easy to integrate despite their "great common history". However, the long war against Eritrea has tied the country together and ethnic groups have fought side by side. Even though that process has been successful in terms of a unity perspective, many argue that the constellation of attitude that goes with Ethiopian nationalism gives birth to violence and makes peace with other states very hard to attain (Gebrewold, Belachew. 2009: 93-94).

### **5.1.3 View of the other Party:**

#### **Eritrea**

Obviously the relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia is very difficult to comprehend. Some scholars claim that the 1998-2000 war was so extreme was because paradoxically both countries view each other as brothers. When a war or conflict revolve around a very intimate relationship like the one between Eritrea and Ethiopia, it tends to take extremely violent proportions (Gebrewold, Belachew. 2009: 92-93).

Before the Italian colonialism the two sides viewed each other as brothers. The Italians slowly broke this bond as well as contributed to a growing alienation between both sides. The colonial years built up many differences between them (Licht, Conrad. 2002).

Eritreans and other countries on the African Horne have had a very pessimistic view on Ethiopia for many years. They view Ethiopia as a “colony-owning African state”, meaning Ethiopia has a long history of conquest and domination in the area of the African Horne (Lata, Leenco. 2003: 372).

There was clearly a lot of suspicion surrounding both sides leading up to the conflict but also, as it turns out, a lot of misunderstandings and misconception. Eritrea and Ethiopia clearly had different definitions of nation. Eritrea views Ethiopia as a separate nation, with no claims what so ever on their land (Lata, Leenco. 2003: 373).

#### **Ethiopia**

As tensions between both sides worsened, they both started to accuse each other of trying to make life of the other harder. Instead of viewing each other as peers they suddenly started viewing each other as enemies. Ethiopia viewed Eritrea as a direct threat to the security of the nation and vice versa (Licht, Konrad. 2002).

Ethiopia at times viewed Eritrea and its unwillingness to emulate ethnic federal politics as undemocratic and something they might be able to exploit later on (Lata, Leenco. 2003: 374-375).

Another important factor in the aspect of view of the other party was how Ethiopia started to view nationalism differently in regards to the rest of the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia adopted a different form of nationalism, namely the definition of Stalin. Stalin argued that a nation was created through history and that it was not a tribal phenomenon. This led Ethiopia to want to create the greater “Tigary” nation which then would include big parts of Eritrea. Ethiopia viewed Eritrea more and more as a part of their own nation, a nation which they hoped would grow in time (Lata, Leenco. 2003: 373).

#### **5.1.4 Summary:**

It is safe to say that the 1998-2000 war has many dimensions to it and is very complex in nature. It seems as this is a result of two countries searching for a new identity. An Eritrea that for the first time in centuries is an independent nation and eager to assert its self-determination and Ethiopia, a country that no longer possess the same self-image as it has in the past.

The shared a very close relationship and shared similar languages and cultures. Yet there was a growing sense of nationalism, from both sides, that pushed them apart and alienated one another.

Eritrea was determined to maintain its independence as a nation and feared it would yet again fall victim to imperialism and be conquered by a greater and more powerful state. The victory for independence seemed also to have shaped Eritrean cohesiveness and showed that it is indeed possible to shake of an invader.

Ethiopia experienced a loss of reputation and perhaps also anxiousness for what the future would hold. Having lost much of its power and influence in the Horn of Africa and having to rely on the likes of Eritrea to manage trade of goods and so on did not seem to well with the Ethiopians, especially as many of them still viewed Eritrea as part of their country.

The war is as mentioned very complex and multi-dimensional but it is clearly narrowed down to a quest for identity and a mindset that there can only be one.

## 5.2 Georgian – Russian war 2008

### 5.2.1 History:

The Georgian – Russian war 2008 also known as the “Five Day War” was a result of a Georgian attempt to re-take and silent the rebellious enclave of South Ossetia, located in northern Georgia. As Georgian troops marched on the breakaway-state Russia, who long had supported independence for the province, quickly mobilized its army and rendered a full scale invasion on the country of Georgia. Russia also took the opportunity to strengthen their military presence in other breakaway-sates in Georgia. It is often talked about the swiftness of the Russian military in the five day war and how they so quickly, without a doubt, invaded Georgia (King, Charles. 2008).

The reason Russia invaded was unclear at first but many seem to agree that this was an attempt by Russia to prevent Georgia’s restoration of its territorial integrity as well as undermining the country as much as it possibly could. It also became clear that Russia, through the invasion of Georgia, was sending a strong message to the world. Not only to frighten Georgia and other neighboring states but also to assert their dominance over ex-Soviet regions and show US, NATO and EU that they were still the supreme superpower in the East and that they were not afraid to flex their muscles (Malek, Martin. 2009).

On August 10<sup>th</sup> Georgia declared a ceasefire and started to pull out their troops form the areas of south Ossetia. On August 12<sup>th</sup> the Russian President Dimitry Medvedev tells his troops stop the fighting. By this time the Georgian forces had been forced out of Ossetia and other areas held by separatist and autonomists. Two days later Georgia and Russia both sign a peace deal. The peace deal was negotiated with the help of the French President Nicholas Sarkozy who at the time sat as the European Union President. The deal entails that both sides will have to withdraw to the original borders that were held before the war. Russia, even though they signed the peace deal, is yet to fully withdrawal from certain areas. These areas include South Ossetia and the Port of Poti (Institute for War & Peace Reporting).

It has become clear that Russia has no intention of giving back the enclaves they ceased during the five day war. The people of Ossetia have do not wish for a union with Georgia either, a country they feel no bond with. Georgia has come to understand that those enclaves will never be a part of the country as long as Russia has its way (King, Charles. 2008).

## 5.2.2 Self-Perception

### Russia

The Russian self-perception is particularly hard to evaluate. Since the fall of the Soviet Union the country has been defined and then re-defined many times. There might be several ways to view Russian nationalism. Firstly, there is the notion of Russia as the superpower that needs to include all people and religious groups that have at one point or another been a part of the Soviet Union or before that, the Russian Empire (Hale E. Henry. 2014)

There seems to be a strong correlation between Putin's rise to power and the ever growing nationalism in Russia. The support for nationalist slogans rose severely after he became President and the support has continued to grow ever since (Satter, David. 2012).

The Russian nationalism has unfortunately also become synonym with the growing xenophobia the country has experienced heavily the last couple of years. Kremlin has in many ways helped create this growing sense of racism. It is very common in Russia today to hear chants for anti-migration and similar opinions as a majority of Russians are starting to view themselves as "Core-Russians" whom are extremely patriotic (Whitmore, Brian. 2013).

Anti-Western Nationalism is also something that characterizes Russia these days. At least much more than it did in the 90s. This nationalism has according to many, started to influence the foreign policy of Russia to a very high extent. This has indeed created more polarization between East and West (March, Luke. 2011: 188-189).

In the case of the five day war Russian self-perception became very obvious. There is a growing sense amongst many Russians that their country is "under siege" by Western Powers and that outside powers have a natural fear and resentment towards the country of Russia. The strong nationalism in Russia is in sharp contrast to the Western-friendly governments such as Georgia, Moldova etc. Civilizational nationalism has indeed made many Russians anti-Western and there is a "we versus the world" mentality that is gaining momentum all across Russia (March, Luke. 2011: 191-192).

## Georgia

Georgians are slowly becoming more westernized, mainly through various European and Euro-Atlantic partnerships as well as policies. However, as the country moves closer to the West voices of antagonism are starting to be heard. The Orthodox Church of Georgia has been quite hostile against the Western practices and sees Europe as a direct threat to Georgian National identity (Merabishvili, Gela. 2014).

There are also those who have a different perception of Georgia and what would be best for their country. Some nationalists view Europe in a very positive light. They wish Georgia would embrace the practices of Europe and model their country similarly. Many Georgians are eager to take their place as a member of the European family, and so is the Georgian government (Merabishvili, Gela. 2014).

One could say that the Georgian identity rests on the four following assumptions; Georgians believe that their country is of great strategic importance, no matter where their alliance would lay. Second, Russia's never ending meddling in Caucasian affairs is nothing but illegal and should never be accepted. Third, Russia and West, the US in particular, would always disagree about Georgia's legitimacy in the East as well as current borders in the area. Lastly the West would always prevail in a struggle with Russia, no matter the circumstances (Khelashivilli, George. 2010: 5).

Georgia has long had a quite strange approach to the notion of democracy. The population has supported strong nationalism in the face of the Russian aggressor over the year. This has led to the Georgian government tightening its grip on power and diminished the notion of democracy. They have used the threat of Russia as a means to stay in power and it has been effective. Georgians have since the collapse of the Soviet Union always preferred safety over democracy and the fear of Russia has never really seized (Khelashivilli, George. 2010: 5).

Talking about Georgian self-perception it is a must to mention Georgian Ethnocentrism. Georgians can happily accept that other nations and populations may be richer, more hardworking or even smarter. However they will claim that none of that matters because Georgians possess something that other nations don't, namely the understanding of life. This creates a sort of weird respectable but yet ambivalent relationship towards other countries, something Georgians don't seem to pay much attention to. (The Point. 2007).

### **5.2.3 View of the other party**

#### **Russia**

A lot of signs point towards Kremlin wishing to assert a firm grip on Georgia, and many other former Soviet states for that matter. Putin may say he has no aspirations of annexing Georgia but he has still said various times that he regrets the collapse of the Soviet Union, thus implying where he truly believes Georgia belongs (Indans, Ivars. 2007: 134).

Russia is fearful, particularly in the region of Caucasus, that the emergence of a stronger and more independent Georgia could potentially complicate Russia's handling of its own frequently troublesome ethnic minorities in the region (Indans, Ivars. 2007: 134).

Russia is certainly skeptic to increased Georgian influence. This becomes even more evident as Russia consistently opposes Georgian moving closer to NATO. Russia argues that a Georgia allied with NATO certainly would not help the stability in Europe. Simultaneously the Russian regime keep putting blame on Georgia for being unwilling to work with the leaders of South Ossetia and their counterparts as well as not accepting any agreements put forward by those leaders (Indans, Ivars. 2007: 138).

#### **Georgia**

For some Georgians Russia is nothing more than an aggressive, corrupt and a war prone northern neighbor that would not hesitate to attack when it saw fit. In a sense you can say many Georgians view west as their potential savior and Russia as the vicious attacker. There is a strong belief that Russia consistently tries to undermine the Georgian state and worsening Georgian problems (Merabishvili, Gela. 2014).

The Georgian government in particular has been very harsh in their criticism of Russia in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Then Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili urged the European Union to take a strong stance towards Russia and its attempt to increase its influence over European Union members through the means of separate trade talks and energy deals (Indans, Ivars. 2007: 134).

#### **5.2.4 Summary:**

The war between Russia and Georgia 2008 might have been short but it highlighted the growing instability in the area. The war was in many ways a direct consequence of Russia flexing its muscles to the outer world.

The political landscape in the east has undergone heavy changes the last decades, which has resulted in altered power-balances. This certainly seems to be the case of a worried Russia and a Georgia very determined to step out of its former shadow and move closer to the EU.

Russia, experiencing a wave of strong nationalism saw this as an opportunity, not only to assert its dominion in the area but also expand its empire. Perhaps, above all, show other eastern states what might happen if they became too western-friendly. So in many ways this was nothing more than scare-tactics from their side. It is highly debatable if those tactics ended up in their favor or not.

Georgia did not seem to expect Russia to come down so hard on them as they did. After all, Georgia was not invading Russia, but an enclave that had belonged to them not long ago. Had they known of the Russian response their actions would likely have been different.

The easiest way to view the war would be from an imperialistic mindset where both countries, and Russia, in particular sought to assert their dominance in the region.

## 6. The Security Dilemma /Analysis

### 6.1 Eritrea-Ethiopia

Booth and Wheeler explain that the notion of trust is central in regards to the security dilemma. They argue that history has shown us that states tend to prefer the risks of mistrust to those of betrayal. In other words, former adversaries rather view each other with skepticism and the other part as not trustworthy. Booth and Wheeler explains that these states have no other choice since it is virtually impossible for a former aggressor to persuade its then enemy that their country now can be trusted (Booth, Ken & Wheeler J. Nicholas. 2008: 231-232).

We can see clearly that in the case of Eritrea-Ethiopia that there was no trust what so ever between the countries leading up to the war. As described in the Ethiopian self-perception part, Ethiopians spoke openly about annexing Eritrea and never stopped thinking Eritrea was a part of Ethiopia. There was also mistrust on so many levels, not only nationally but between many ethnic groups, which of course increased the insecurity of both countries.

The heavy sense of mistrust can certainly be seen as a major reason why the Eritrean-Ethiopian war took the course it did and dragged on for so long. There is a strong case to be made that a peace-deal did not appear sooner since the lack of trust was so imminent. Neither state simply believed that its counterpart would follow up on their side of the deal, thus letting the war drag on even longer.

Another important security dilemma aspect is the notion of fear. Booth and Wheeler put a strong emphasis on how fear always has dictated international relations. Fear of extermination, fear of oppression, fear of never having a homeland. These are all fears experienced after being subject to many years of war and violence (Booth, Ken & Wheeler J. Nicholas. 2008: 71-72). It should not be forgotten that the Eritrean-Ethiopian war 1998-2000 came only short after the bloody war for Eritrean independence. Eritreans still possessed these fears and thoughts of despair which helped create a form of security competition.

The history of Eritrea tells us that the country was desperate for a own homeland and the constant fear om Ethiopian aggression, which had become eminent in the past, made the country seemingly more determined to assert its independence on Ethiopia and show that it would not be pushed around.

The Eritrean-Ethiopian war was undoubtedly characterized through the search of identity which gave birth to an “Us vs. Them” mentality. As both countries struggled to find their new identity in a political landscape they had not experienced before they were both quick to cement themselves as a hero and the other a villain. This goes hand in hand with the work of Booth and Wheeler. They make the case that when two states have deemed themselves as good and bad respectively, it is very hard to exit the war because then you would challenge your own identity (Booth, Ken & Wheeler J. Nicholas. 2008: 67-68). And as we all know, identity in the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia means everything.

It became clear when analyzing Ethiopia and its social structures that war seemed to be something widely acceptable in the Ethiopian society. Ethiopians consider themselves a warrior-population in many ways, which the country’s history also can attest to. As explained earlier, a lot of people point out that Ethiopian nationalism breeds war and therefore makes Ethiopia an aggressive state by nature. Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler agree that there is a strong correlation between social structures and the security dilemma. According to them social structures are always in process and they are not easily changed. They continue explaining that actors see this social structures as natural and inevitable, thus making them even harder to change (Booth, Ken & Wheeler J. Nicholas. 2008: 93-94).

Looking at the 1998-2000 war between Eritrea and Ethiopia from a security dilemma perspective certainly makes things more interesting. The security dilemma and its principles are well represented in the years leading up to the war. The most obvious forms of the security dilemma you can point to in the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia are the fear between the countries as well as the built-in notion of Us vs. Them. The fear seemed to grow slowly but steady as soon as Eritrea gained its independence. This fear made it almost impossible to ease the tensions between both sides and the result became the opposite. Ethiopia saw almost every action taken by Eritrea as a threat and a blow against the Ethiopian state. The strong nationalism surrounding both countries and the Us vs. Them mentality can be traced back to the Eritrean war of independence. The war certainly seemed to create a polarization, especially from the Eritrean side, that made it very hard for the two countries to work together. When you do not have a dialogue the only way to communicate is through military actions as happened in this case when both countries after exchanging small skirmishes and trying to show military dominance finally engaged in all-out war. I strongly believe the notion of identity was key in this war. Both countries struggled to find their new identity but this war seemed to have started to define their new identities. Therefore it became imperative that you do not give up on your new identity, which can be a viable explanation for why the war raged on for as long as it did.

## 6.2 Russia-Georgia

The security dilemma in regards to the Russia-Georgia is quite different in some aspects. The bottom line is that Russia did not really fear Georgia as a nation capable of doing them any serious harm but they feared what would become if EU and NATO tightened their grip on regions just outside the Russian border. It was arguably from this long-term view they decided to invade Georgia. Booth and Wheeler at one point bring up Threat Assessment in their work. They argue that threat assessment is something many states fail at and that it is particularly hard to foresee and evaluate potential threats. The “worst-case forecasting” is often a defensive approach taken by many states (Booth, Ken & Wheeler J. Nicholas. 2008: 58-59). As was said before, Russia does not fear Georgia or its military power but it fears what might happen if all its buffer-states ally with the west. This makes Russia prone to prepare for the worst plausible situation even though that situation may be far-fetched.

In order to understand the complexity of Russia and its view on security it's imperative to understand the relationship between East and West. Booth and Wheeler point out that the rapport between both sides has been very unclear and uncertain through the years. This in turn has created uncertainties and provoked new dilemmas. After the end of the Cold War NATO made several attempts to enhance their influence in new democracies in central and Eastern Europe, countries that had previously been under Soviet rule. They initially sought to promote peace and stability in the region but were also in favor of a NATO-enlargement (Booth, Ken & Wheeler J. Nicholas. 2008: 160-161). This could explain Russia's decision to invade Georgia, they were under the impression that NATO and the west as a whole were set out to diminish the importance of Russia as a global actor. This goes hand in hand with the Russian narrative of the outside world constantly trying to weaken its state.

When you study the Russia-Georgia war it becomes clear that this was more a conflict between West and East than a war between two states. There is no evidence that either country wished to completely wipe out or annex the other, at least that was not a primary concern. As discussed in the data, Georgia was convinced that the west would never allow the whole of Georgia to fall in Russian hands and Russia seemed to have the same view of the situation. The security dilemma breeds from uncertainty but when it came to the Russia-Georgia case they both seemed to be pretty clear with one another. In other words, they knew each other's aspirations and approximately to which extent they were both willing to go in order to achieve their goals. Georgia also had much trust in EU and NATO that they would quickly intervene and do everything in their power to sort of the conflict.

The security dilemma in regards to the Russian-Georgian war is different yet similar to the case of Eritrea-Ethiopia. Many of the same principles appear in the Russian-Georgian war, such as suspicion, lack of confidence and so on, however the dynamics differed. The Russia-Georgia war was not a war for survival, which you can argue Ethiopia-Eritrea was. This was more a more a war of precautionary matters. Russia also wanted to stress that they still was a superpower and that they were the superior ruler in this part of the world. The security dilemma was therefore not as voluminous, since the fear for the safety of the nation had not reached those levels of despair yet.

## 7. Conclusion:

Having analyzed both wars in regards to the security dilemma a number of conclusions can be determined. The security dilemma is represented in both wars but to different extents. Both cases experienced deep levels of mistrust and uncertainty. However the notion of identity seems to be a dividing factor when comparing both cases. The Ethiopia-Eritrea case was highly characterized by the search for a new identity, something that eventually became synonymously with the war. Neither side seemed interested to give in and settle for terms, they both were aware that they had to look strong and resilient in the face of the enemy and not become the oppressed one in a new political landscape. They felt they could not give in since that would challenge their newly acquired identity. There was also the notion of fear that seemed to vary between the two wars. It becomes evident that even though Russia and Georgia have a mutual suspicion towards one another neither side believed that their entire country would ever be conquered by the other. Ethiopia and Eritrea on the other hand were under a strong belief that if they did not act in the ways they saw fit there could be a strong possibility that their respective countries would eventually fall or lose all of its power. The fact that the survival of the state is much more concerning in the case of Ethiopia and Eritrea is not odd at all. They had only a few years prior fought an extremely bloody war and Eritrea in particular knew that the idea of their country being annexed by Ethiopia was a strong possibility.

So thus far we can determine that the aspects of Identity and Fear are deviant as we compare the two cases. It appears as when those two aspects are present in the security dilemma, the more likely it is that the security dilemma will turn into a conflict/war that could elongate for a very long and seemingly disproportionate time.

Russia-Georgia War	Characterized by; Precautionary measures & Show off	Lasted for 5 days
Eritrea-Ethiopia War	Characterized by; Search for identity & Fear for survival of the state	Lasted for 2 years

So, clearly the factors that are protruding in the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia seem to be the prominent reason why the outcome of the two cases differs to such a big extent. Identity and Fear have the ability to prolong wars and delay peace.

With this in mind it is easier for us observers to understand why warfare still plays a big part in international relations and why this phenomenon is not easily put to rest. By no means do I

argue that these are the sole reasons for why wars still occur. I simply state that some factors are having an increasing effect on interstate wars and that tells us that as long as those factors are embedded in future conflicts it is more likely than not that those wars will be very difficult to maintain and find a mutual solution to, even though the reality is that war nowadays seldom favors any of its participants.

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