



‘No peace No war’ situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea: Perspectives of Eritrean and Ethiopian students and local people, Adigrat Town, Ethiopia.

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List of Acronyms

EEBC.....Ethiopia Eritrea Boundary Commission

EECC.....Ethiopia Eritrea Claims Commission

Definition of terms

‘No peace no war’.....”አይ ሰላም አይ ከ-ናት”

Abstract

This study deals with the ‘no peace no war’ situation existed in Eritrea and Ethiopia. The study was aimed at assessing the opinion and experience of students and local people in Adigrat town. This study employed qualitative case study research design. Purposive sampling technique was used to identify a total of fourteen sample respondents from which ten are university students, two are elders and two women from the town. The study employs unstructured interview with open ended questions as a main data collection instrument which is supported by secondary sources with academic literatures including the theories of peace like the positive peace, Liberal peace and the ‘new war’ theory. Accordingly the findings, the study shows that ‘no peace no war’ situation currently existing in Ethiopia and Eritrea has an adverse effect for both peoples by prohibiting peaceful coexistence and integration to enhance their social and economic development. This ranges from separation of families, migration and economic entrapment to the absence of security and peace politically between the two countries. The finding also indicates that the historical politics of identity which widens the gap between the two peoples is starting to change with the new generation which is helpful in bringing the two peoples together. This can bring a positive peace when it gain consent from both parties of the government which is helpful to reverse the current ‘no peace no war’ situation in to cooperation and integration when the Liberal peace settlement left them with incomplete peace agreement.

Chapter one

Introduction

1.1. Contextual Background

The need for conducting this research emanates from the current situation of Ethiopia and Eritrea which so far failed to achieve a lasting peace and cooperation and normalized relations of the two states and peoples since the ruling of the boundary commission on their boarder issue in 2002.

Historically Ethiopia is a home to one of the oldest communities in the world with distinct culture and value named as Abyssinia. The existence of Ethiopian polity as an independent and organized political unit goes back to the period of Axumite civilization which is famous during the first century B.C (Bahru, 2001 in Kalewongel 2008: 31). On the other hand the Eritrea mainly exist as a separate political entity prior to 1890 when an Italian shipping company called Rubatino bought a sizable land in the port of Assab from the local Afar chiefs used for transit and service center of trade in the Red Sea region . Formerly, the central plateaus of Eritrea were part of the ancient Axumite civilization. Specifically, the predominant Tigrinya speaking ethnic groups who inhabited these highlands have more or less similar culture, language and tradition hence they claim their ancestry to the kingdom of Axum (Pausewang and Shruke, in kalewongel 2008:31-32).

Thus the contemporary history of Ethiopia and Eritrea begin with the Italian occupation of Assab from the private shipping company in 1882 after the Berlin conference in the so called ‘scramble for Africa’ headed in Berlin with Bismarck’s initiative allowing European countries to possess new territories in Africa. Italy take control of part of the Abyssinian highlands up to the Mereb River including Asmara in 1889. The name Eritrea was given to these regions occupied by Italy in 1890. In March of 1896, Italy invaded Ethiopia from Eritrea but was defeated at the famous battle of Adwa (Abebe 2007:12)

By the end of Second World War the Italians were defeated as a member of the Axis power (including Germany, Japan and Italy) by the members of the Allied powers (Great Britain, USA, Soviet Union and China). The forces then defeated Italian forces and drove out them from Eritrea. As a result Eritrea remains under the trusteeship of Great Britain for ten years until the UN declare in its resolution in 1950 suggesting that Eritrea should remain under federation with Ethiopia as a self-governing body under the sovereignty of Ethiopia by assessing the demands of the two dominant parties in Eritrea

(the Unionist and the separatist). Finally Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia in 1952. The same year, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia declared the previous treaties signed with Italy to authorize its control of Eritrea void. Finally the Emperor denounced the federation and made Eritrea the 14th province of Ethiopia in 1962 (Abebe 2007:13). This measure have far impact in bringing a new chapter of history between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The above event lead to the search for an independence of Eritrea which dates back to the time when the political arrangement of Eritrea changed from Federalism to complete unitary system. The weakness of the then federal structure was accompanied with the incorporation of the state of Eritrea in to Ethiopia by the imperial government. Beginning from the early 1960s and 70s Eritrean independence fronts as a newly organized forces struggled constantly in arms to bring the independence of the state of Eritrea in to existence. This was structured on the basis of the unique Eritrean identity that Italian colonialism has created as a specific entity accordingly with the Ethiopian emperors agreements to delimit its borders (Kalewongel 2008:35). The movement of Eritrean struggle resulted change in the geopolitical setup of the Horn of Africa creating a new state of Eritrea in 1991 which had left Ethiopia land locked country.

After the official independence of Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1993 in referendum, the two states were undertaking pledge to new era of development and cooperation activities to heal their long lasting war torn economy and devastation of their socio-political and cultural authority by adopting protocols on organizing their policies on trade and economy, on tourism, defense, education and health care services and the like (Tekeste and Tronvoll 2000 cited in Kidanu and Mulgeta 2015:96).

Kidist, (2011:35) also explains that both parties entered into serious economic, security, and political cooperation protocols and agreements. But in practice these were not friendships and alliances free of quarrels, reservations and mistrust. As Healy and Plaut (2007:2) explained, at the surface excellent relations existed between the two governments, but in practice were relations without reconciliation of differences that have been cumulated for many years before the rebels become governments of their respective states. As a result mainly economic such as financial and monetary policy skirmishes began to unravel their artificial relations.

Ethiopia and Eritrea went into deadly war over a small village along their common border when on May 6 1998 a group of Eritrean mechanized soldiers forcefully occupied one of the disputed areas the

village of Badme along the border. The area is displayed as part of Eritrea in the map but had never come under the Eritrean administration since the early times of colonization (Muller 2006:511).

After the two year war Ethiopia and Eritrea came in to table to end and resolve their 'border conflict' through the involvement of third party. They established commissions for the claims of their respective border territories and compensation for the war atrocities. The commissions delivered their respective decisions on the boundaries and determined the compensation to be dealt by the states based on the submitted requests. But still none of these were implemented which makes the states to stay on the verge of war (Seyoum 2012: 1).

The Ethiopia-Eritrean border tension was becoming serious since 2008 after the two parties signed a truce to end the 1998-2000 war in 2000 in Algiers. So far peace is not sustained following the strategic, historic and symbolic village of Badme contended by both parties, with Ethiopian and Eritrean troops standing face to face along the highly militarized border. Eritrea stayed with its argument of unconditional implementation of the decision of the boundary commission to demarcate the boundary and Ethiopia demanded for negotiation and normalization before the contested decision is implemented even though it accepted it with reservations(Terrence 2009:167).

Abbink (2003:408) also argued that the process of demarcating the boarder started since 2001 is slow and unstable, halted the normalized relations allowing the disagreements of the hostile parties open and continuous in the 'sense' that the decision of the boundary commission on April 2002 of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague mandated by both parties is not implemented.

The states inability to reach an agreement on implementing the decision given by the boundary commission extends the border dispute in general , and the restoration of peace and stability in particular for more than a decade (Kidanu and Mulgeta 2015:97).

Following the decision of the boundary commission published on March 21, 2003 Ethiopia clearly put its reservation especially in the western front/sector which it calls unfair and irresponsible (Abbink 2003:408).

In spite of the final and binding decision made by the Boundary and Claims Commissions respectively, the conflict remains unresolved in practice (Seyoum 2012:198-199).

According to Edwin (2010:66) the symbolic village of Badme which is the hallmark of the conflict, was rewarded to Eritrea by the Boundary commission although the Claims commission declares

Eritrea as an aggressor which caused the border conflict by occupying Badme which was being administrated by Ethiopia. In practice the decisions of the two commissions (EEBC and EECC) contradict with one another.

The Eritrean government took the denial of Ethiopia to implement the ruling of the Border Commission as a pretext for covering its internal problems holding the state under state of emergency (Daniel and Paulos 2011:70).

On the other hand Eritrea was declared by the Claims Commission as the state responsible for violating international humanitarian law by forcefully occupying the vilage of Badme (ibid 2011:178).

The border guards of Ethiopia at that time were made of militia and some police, who were quickly forced to withdraw by the invading Eritrean forces. As Ethiopian forces took a long time to reorganize and fight back, the Eritrean forces from the occupied lands undermined the recognition of the May 12, 1999 attack of Ethiopian forces to regain the previously occupied territories as lawful self-defense (ibid 2011:71).

Peace destabilization and protracted stalemate characterized by proxy engagements is still ongoing (Kidanu and Mulgeta 2015:98). According to Abbink (2003:413), a proxy war is practiced by both parties. For example in the time when Ethiopia fought with the Islamic militants Eritrea continues to support the enemies of Ethiopia.

These conditions depict the current context of the states in deadlock or stalemate with 'no peace no war' situation which blocked the possible normalization and relations of the two states and more significantly the people to people relations.

The measures taken by Eritrean government for building the state accompanied by military conscription and unlimited national service made the youth to outflow in masses of refugees towards Ethiopia and Sudan till now (Asfaw 2006:20). Asfaw also argues that the refugees are not all fleeing the state because of repression in political, economic and religious domains but also for economic reasons to find a better living in Europe and elsewhere. This exodus of the youth created difficulties diverting its resources away from economic development, and led at times to the extent of shortage of bread and fuel.

Both Ethiopian and Eritrean governments now deny their failure and argue that much was done on settling and resolving the conflict that stopped the peace process because of their hesitation and

rigidity. On the side of the Ethiopian people there is determination not to cede any territory to Eritrea. On the other hand the Eritreans fear an offensive by Ethiopia on their sovereignty because of the ill-defined territories (ICG 2003: 3).

Kidanu and Mulgeta (2015:97) also argued that even though the two countries reached temporary settlement through the Algiers agreement and decision of boundary commission on normalization and demarcation of their boundary respectively peace has held up over the last decades.

1.2. Identity and conflict

Construction of identity means establishing of relations between a dominant individual or group and subordinate one. In this case identity serves as a justification and legitimization of relations between people and social order in general (Mach 1993:6).

Individuals divide themselves by giving a collective meaning, sometimes resulting in aggressive social behaviors like crime or revolution (Galtung in Said and Pavan 2011:265-266). This is the result of the members' shared grievances of their common behavior to response of external challenges.

Identity can be either individual or collective (group). An individual establishes his identity through series of meaningful actions in their relation with other people. Identity is constructed as self-image in the process of communication with others who also express and communicate their identities. It is a very complex process, represents the multidimensional, integrated human personality and cannot be reduced to a series of separate roles which an individual plays in various social groups and situations (Mach 1993:3).

Collective identity was rooted in the notion of 'weness' of a group, considering the similarities or shared attributes around which group members gather. The members were believed to internalize common qualities such as traits, psychological makeup, common experience, and common regional features suggesting a unified, singular social experience by constructing a sense of self (Cerulo 1997:386-387).

According to Sen (2008:13-14), economic, social and cultural issues related to violence demanded serious efforts through integration. He argued that identity politics can certainly be mobilized very powerfully in causing violence and as an instrument to heal it.

Identity politics need to avoid the isolationist programs of explaining violence like economic inequalities or deprivations, identity or cultural factors and their interconnectedness (Sen 2008:15)

1.3. Statement of the problem

Since the war in 1998-2000 the relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea is marked by incidence of small scale confrontations at their common border as well as mistrust and political disputes. Both governments allegedly claim the cause of the 1998-2000 war is border, and the international community; presumably accepts their claim. The two years of deadly war closed at least for the time being, by the Algiers Peace Accord of 2000 and its subsequent border ruling of 2002 (Daniel and Paulous 2011). However, neither the peace accord nor the demarcation of the boundary is implemented till nowadays. The situation between the two countries remains tense and the two hostile parties are engaged still in threatening one another by using a third country as their instrument of offence between them. The local population refers to this stale-mate in an expression that there is 'no war nor peace'.

In the existing studies, since the early days of the war, attitudes and need of the two people about the war and its critical solutions were neglected. Peace efforts to settle the hatred between the two countries from the beginning to the end were on the mandate of the international community without meaningful understanding of the stake at hand, taking into consideration the directly vulnerable local people around the border areas.

Tekeste and Tronvol (2000) cited in Kidanu and Mulgeta (2015:97) argue that the factors that hampered and hold the peace process from implementation and restoring normalization is the rigid position and failure of the two parties to approach and act for the good of one another.

Today, the Ethiopia-Eritrean tension is almost at its seventeenth year since the open military confrontation has erupted in 1998 and it has been about fifteen years since the Algiers peace accord in 2000 was signed by both parties. But still it remains tense without any hope of peace for the Horn of Africa in general and for the given countries in particular.

For the Ethiopia-Eritrean recent "border war" and ongoing stalemate or deadlock seems logical to follow insights and opinions among the local people to understand what is the real threat of the two peoples at this time and what should be prioritized.

Indeed, the desire to understand and assess the overall story of the conflict between the two countries is very extensive. This thesis analyses the deadlock from the perspective of its impacts on the people in the border area who are directly affected by the 'no peace no war' situation.

1.4. Research Objectives and Questions of the study

The primary aim of this research is to explore and identify the experiences and opinions of the students and local people about the current situation of ‘no peace no war’ between Eritrea and Ethiopia. This is accompanied by the assessment of insights and suggestions among the local people to notice how the current situation is affecting them, their livelihood and their future and wish for the peaceful or cordial relationships in general and the socio-economic issues in particular. In particular, I focused on the experiences and opinions of the local people as well as students from the university in Adigrat, Ethiopia a small town less than 30kms from the border of Eritrea. It is one of the places/areas which were affected by the unresolved ongoing border dispute.

The main research question is; what are the opinions and experiences of the local student population in the border region on the current situation of Ethiopia and Eritrea border dispute in a ‘no peace no war’ context?

The following sets of sub research questions are outlined as relevant;

- What are the specific aspects of ‘no peace no war’ reality?
- How the ‘no peace no war’ situation affects the youth and in particular, the experiences of Eritrean and Ethiopian students?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The researcher is interested in exploring the most neglected situation between the two states on peace building and normalization nearly after 16 years of the peace accord between the two states and its politicization from the perspective and opinion of the local people to draw the picture of the current situation from their perspective. Principally, since the researcher is motivated to assess the core issue of ‘no peace no war’ by incorporating the grass root perspective of the two peoples of the two countries, this study will have significant scientific and policy implications.

More importantly, this study can serve as a base for further investigations on how identity politics can drive parties to conflict and how it can determine peace solutions and normalization processes in the Ethiopia-Eritrean conflict dynamics.

Currently the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia is getting little or no attention from the international community. The arbitration process was accomplished but not implemented. Inside Ethiopia the situation is almost getting no attention, although it is more felt when you go more and

more to the northern peripheries than in a capital city. Thus the research might serve to encourage other potential researchers to conduct further studies.

1.6. Description of the study Area

The town of Adigrat is located in the northern part of Ethiopia in the Tigray national regional state at around 900 kms from the capital Addis Ababa and 125 kms from Mekelle the capital of Tigray Regional state. Geographically it is situated at 14020'N and 30029'E. It is considered to be one of the six provinces in Tigray called the Eastern zone. The town is surrounded by four *Tabias* (village administrations) of the Ganta Afeshum *woreda* (district) (www.adigratcity.org.et).

The area is not more than 30 km from the border town of Zalambesa. It was highly interconnected with Eritrea through trade and other social dimensions of living prior to the 1998 'border war' between the two states. The town has one recently opened University, hosting students from all over Ethiopia. The university in Adigrat has started to host students of Eritrean origin/nationals who fled their home country because of the high militarization and unlimited military conscription in Eritrea, and live as refugees in several refugee camps in northern and north eastern Ethiopia.

1.7. Scope and Limitation of the study

Detailed analysis of what sustainable peace and normalization of relation require is beyond the scope of this study. The prospect of sustainable peace and normalization between the two counties will only be approached from the point of view of the small groups of local peoples – both Ethiopian and Eritrean in Ethiopia. In addition, the empirical data collected from the study will not be used to generalize the views of all Ethiopians and Eritreans. Assessing the view of the two current governments is also beyond the scope of this study.

The samples taken in this thesis will not be used for generalizing about the whole populations of the region. Rather it is limited to cast some light on the views and feelings of some influential segments of the society which are particularly affected by the conflict and its lack of peace building. Since the researcher is originally from Ethiopia this can raise the issue of being ethical and neutral. The sampling will be only limited to students of the university including the Eritrean refugee students and elders and women's association officers from the town so that it will be difficult to generalize the situation in the whole region.

To avoid some respondent related biases it would have been important that conducting the field inquiry by equally visiting Eritrea. However, travel to Eritrea could not be realized because of safety reasons. Hence, the empirical data presented in this research paper could be with considerable amount of possible biases.

1.8. Organization of the study

This study is divided in five chapters. Part one deals with the contextual background, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, description of the study area and organization of the study. Part two deals with the methodological approach of the study which is guides the structure of study. Part three deals with the theoretical approach/perspectives including the current state of academic fields of study which support the findings of the study. The fourth part as a main body of the paper is presenting the findings of the data gathered through interview from the sample respondents and try to link them with the theories suggested in the literature. Lastly chapter five presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Chapter Two

Methodology of the study

2.1. Research Strategy

This study employs qualitative research approach, because it deals with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviors. In qualitative research, the researcher's insights and impressions play a key role (Kothari, 2004). So the researcher aims at discovering the underlying motives and desires, using in-depth interviews to find out how people feel or what they think about a particular subject.

The study used case study design, which analyzes limited events or conditions in a very detail manner. It can facilitate intense study of specific phenomenon which is generally impossible if we use other research designs. This is the reason why case study method is being frequently used by social science researchers (Kothari, 2004). This method perfectly goes hand in hand with the purpose of this research i.e. to deeply explore the opinion of the local people in the current no peace no war situation in Eritrea and Ethiopia and probably to suggest some institutional and other mechanisms to address the issue.

2.2. Data type and Source

The researcher used primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is gathered through interviews with key informants selected from among the university students, elders and women in the town. The primary data are supplemented by secondary sources such as books, journals, articles, and reports. The reason for selecting these students is that I can access both Eritrean refugee students and Ethiopian students who experience the war from different perspectives. The selected study area also helps me to gain basic information of the situation as it is not far from the border on which the current situation of the 'no peace no war' is more pronounced in their day to day activity.

2.3. Background and selection of the Respondents

Addressing specific research questions stated in this study requires the involvement of different respondents which can be categorized into three groups.

Student Participants; the first group consists of students of Adigrat University. The reason for selecting these students is mainly because I can find both Eritrean and Ethiopian students in the school. Using purposive sampling technique I selected 14 students, 10 of them from Ethiopia and another

four refugee student from Eritrea studying in the university. Purposive sampling is suitable in case study method which required to be studied intensively.

Local elders; the researcher conducted an interviews with two local elders on their opinion on the current ‘no peace no war’ situation of the two states which are selected purposively so as to identify what the current stand of the people is. Opinion leaders are rich in providing in-depth information on one issue.

Women’s association officers; the researcher conducted an interview with two women which are working in the in the town’s office of women’s affairs.

The respondents were asked to offer their opinions and suggestions about the current ‘no peace no war’ situation. Eight out of the total 18 respondents have a cross border experience. Two of the respondents are elders from the town of Adigrat. The Ethiopian students are from seven different disciplinary backgrounds i.e. History, Geography, Medicine, Civics, Accounting, Civil engineering and Economics, while the Eritrean students are from two departments i.e. Economics and History. The Ethiopian respondent’s age ranges from 25-38 years old and they are originally from different parts of Ethiopia. Four of them are with cross border experience. Four of my respondents are Eritreans originally from the capital Asmara. Their age ranges from 23-30 years. They are all migrants.

2.4. Data Collection Tools

A semi structured in-depth interview is used as a main data collection tool in this research. This is because semi structured interviews gives the respondents enough time and scope to speak their views and elicit narratives about their personal experiences in a very detail manner (Creswell, 2012). Beside this the researcher uses literatures, articles, journals as a secondary data to discuss the theories in order to support and reinforce the primary data gathered through an interview.

2.5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data that are collected through interview with the key informants is analyzed qualitatively, by making use of specific themes and topics brought up by the interviewees. I expected the economy (employment, livelihoods) and social life (such as family relations, exile, migration, etc) would be among important themes. The interviews are translated from local language into English and an attempt is made close to keep to the original version. The data are presented in a narrative form so as

to keep the originality of the research findings. Topics that were brought up by the informants are compared to the issues addressed in secondary data such as books, articles and journals.

2.6. Original contribution

The academic literatures done so far on the Ethiopia-Eritrean conflict mostly focused on the causes from institutional perspective, largely based on the secondary data, government reports and agreements, but not by viewing the perspective of the grassroots people. For instance, the articles by Seyoum (2012), Kidist (2011), Daniel and Paulos (2006), Kidanu and Endalkachew (2015), etc discussed the causes and prospects of the Ethiopia-Eritrean conflict and the present status after arbitration largely from above. They argue on how the causes are going to be transformed into prospects of peace building in the region with reference to the institutions and the international community's role on implementing the previous peace process. This shows that they don't give much emphasis to grass root perspectives on the situation, whereas this thesis is focused on the opinion of the local people on how they see the current context of the states. This can bring new insights on the current situation between the two states by having new suggestions and ideas from among the peoples directly affected by the 'no peace no war' situation.

2.7. Ethical considerations

Considering the sensitive nature of the issue, it is not easy task to obtain data without getting the confidence and trust of all respondents. Thus, all research participants who are intended to be involved in this research are asked their willingness and consent before the proposed interview was conducted. Anonymity of respondents is guaranteed in order to give them the chance to freely express their personal experiences. Tape recorder is used in the interview with the consent of the participants. Moreover, ideas of other authors are fully referenced with ISS-Harvard Referencing System.

The researcher is originally from Ethiopia and this raises the ethical question of neutrality. One may tend to question my arguments from Ethiopian bias. Although a great effort is made to incorporate the ideas of both peoples including those of the Eritrean migrant students fairly, as an Ethiopian, writing on this issue is the challenge, and the researcher is faced with possible bias.

Chapter Three

Theoretical perspectives/Approach

3.1. Discourses on peace, violence and conflict

The concept of 'peace' doesn't show the thing which is absolute, natural and perfect existence of peace with the absence of personal violence characterized by none of physical harm and any offensive as well as absence of structural violence, which is described by absence of any systematic violations of rights, values and conducts. Galtung's understanding of 'positive peace' is that it should connote an absence of personal violence and absence of structural violence (Galtung 1969:185).

From the mainstream, liberal academic point of view the main definition of peace relates to the question whether a physical violence like armed conflict and war is settled. But the occurrence of peace settlement agreements and end of war is not necessarily equated with the reality of peace beyond the absence of war which needs further follow-ups of the post-settlement societies (HÖGLUND and Söderberg 2010:367-368).

Peace may signify existence of a common basis, a feeling of oneness, consensus with a common goal and future that led to the ground for deep rooted and significant means of relationships afterwards (Galtung 1969:167).

Following Galtung, Höglund and Söderberg argue that after a peace agreement a society can adopt a strategy that addresses dealing with 'peace triangle' shaped by issues, behaviors and attitudes (HÖGLUND and Söderberg 2010:368). Those elements of human behavior determine the existence of peace and conflict.

According to Johan Galtung (1969) cited in (Grewal 2003:2) there are two forms of peace called 'negative peace' and 'positive peace'. 'Negative peace' is a peace characterized by lack of physical violence and confrontation, existence of peace which is not accompanied by existence of normalization and beyond. It is mainly related with physical violence like war, assault or physical attacks. 'Positive peace' is on the other hand characterized by integration, social justice and equality and the absence of structural or indirect violence. It is related with structural violence which is rooted deep in the structure of the society like culture, values, identities, economy and politics etc.

Galtung summarizes three principles from which the idea of positive peace is going to be discussed:

- “The term 'peace' shall be used for social goals at least verbally agreed to by many, if not necessarily by most
- These social goals maybe complex and difficult, but not impossible, to attain
- The statement peace is absence of violence shall be retained as valid”..... (1969:167).

With the continuous change of the theory of peace since 1964, Galtung’s theories of peace also changed to incorporate the concepts on causes and effects of violence and peace so that it makes easier for peace to be understood. These includes the structural and physical violence in which the former is built on the system where as the later is faced directly by the victim (Grewal 2003: 2).

Most of the time the comprehensive way of understanding violence gives rise to a comprehensive way of understanding of peace. They are similar in a sense that they are the two sides of the same coin, in which one side alone can’t be complete to give meanings as well as existence for a peace. Peace also has two sides: absence of direct violence, and absence of structural violence which are of different characteristics (Galtung 1969:183).

The only means of addressing the difficulty of direct violence results in little to solve the fundamental causes of conflict in identifying its causes as well the means of minimizing the factors to lessen the effects. Moreover, ‘Positive peace’ could also help to address the existing power relations and inequalities. Most of the work of maintaining peace-support and order practices are done under the order and practice of the liberal peace mechanisms which can be explained as the way of ‘problem-solving’ without addressing the root/structure of the problem. It is greatly artificial and unable to solve the main causes of conflict (Mac Ginty 2010:147).

As ‘negative peace’ is the absence of direct violence, absence of war, ‘positive peace’ mainly refers to the integration of societies peacefully as it goes far deeper into cooperation and interdependence among societies. In this fact ‘negative peace’ is a peace which we see as tried to be enforced and implemented by a single dominant body in the world like either the super powers or the United Nations with a might to do it. This is done in a belief that it may bring and secure integration or what is called ‘Positive peace’ (Grewal 2003:1).

However, Galtung did not agree with the above mechanisms unless all around and total disarmament is made. He outlines it as multilateralism, arms control, international conventions, balance of power activities, etc. which are all policies and proposals of negative peace. Rather he put the policies and

proposals of 'positive peace' by employing effective communication, engaging in peace education, functioning international cooperation, good skill of conflict resolution, arbitration and negotiation skills as well as management skills.

Liberal peace also called perpetual peace implies to a principle of peace ordered by interrelationship of three guidelines which are mutually interactive. These are the republican representation, the ideological commitment and transnational interdependence. They are collectively bringing guarantee for sustainable peace (Doyle 2005:463). This theory shows that it is impossible to guarantee liberal peace if any of the three principles is absent or inefficient. Overall existence of these factors is necessary for the guarantee of liberal/perpetual peace.

According to Keen (2000:19), a successful peace agreement need to incorporate two important measures. One is agreement between the top leaders. The second is leaders should adhere to the law and must follow it to organize institutions and; individuals which can benefit the very act of making the peace process. This means without appropriate leadership based on the rule of law and participation of determined/committed citizens during the peace process it is impossible for a peace agreement to bear fruit.

The process of building peace is much determined during the post-agreement phase of a conflict. It faces a sum of difficulties to deal with the violence avoidance/agreement, preservation and societal reconciliation and reconstruction after the war by bringing them together. Post agreement peace building refers to the essential and unique phase in a conflict process which implies when both conflict management and conflict transformation challenges co-exist and are not being separated. Peace building includes the 'negative' task of avoiding a worsening or decline into open aggression. Additionally it involves the 'positive' work of helping recovery of a state and fasten the eventual maintenance of underlying or fundamental causes of internal war. In reality the nature of any peace processes is not clean, clear cut, straight forward and able to be distinguished only in terms of a series of negotiation activities involving mainly the political parties and armies which are on the top of the conflict. To be successful and effective the peace process needs a wider attention to incorporate and address the root causes of conflict such as, 'inequity, poverty, racism, ineffective governance and impunity', and involving many more actors in civil society as they are determinant bodies in bringing the people together to support the peace process (Schwartz 2008:3).

Coming with solutions for long lasting conflict needs to study its complex trends, dynamics, the various actors involved and their interests. Interventions by ‘the West’ and ‘International community’ should not be limited only to heal the humanitarian crisis resulted by the conflict. They should refrain from engaging in helping abusive governments to ignite the conflict prior to the disaster (Keen 2000: 19-20).

This study tries to see the current ‘no peace no war’ situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea from the spectrum of the above theory. Because the conflict is not so far transformed into normalization, but is blocked by several factors since the agreements and the Boundary Commission decision in 2000 and 2002 respectively. This shows that a ‘negative peace’ exists which is still unable to be transformed into ‘positive peace’. Therefore, the factors which can be of structural or cultural violence by their very nature hinder the normalization and further transformation of the relationship. Those are discussed from the point of view of the local people and students.

3.2. Current state of academic field

3.2.1. Conflict and peace in Africa

According to the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Aide-Memoire associate conflict in Africa ranges from inter-state to civil war. And they are explained in different aspects having different manifestations like ethnicity, resources, and the like. One of the requirements is that “significant military action must take place with at least 1000 battle related deaths per year inclusive of civilians” (Burja 2002:2). Given this approach there are a number of civil wars in Africa which gave it a symbol of the existence of civil wars in this world.

In the aftermath of the colonial period the history of Africa has remained complex and pessimistic to achieve post-independence reconstruction and development because of several internal and external factors. There was a motive to change the previous images of Africa and its devastated economy after many nations got their independence. But in practice the reality is reverse (Fransis 2008:3).

Most of the continent is overwhelmed by several incidences of conflicts leading to devastating effects, including deaths of civilians, refugees across borders, internal displacements, loss and obliteration of civilian and government property, distraction of socio-economic activities as well as costs in millions (Kutesa 2009:2-3).

A number of writers reflect on conflicts in Africa as being political conflicts initiated by different warring factions or parties such as wars between states, armed rebellion struggles against states that vary from small-scale or low intensive conflicts to large-scale civil war, armed secessionist rebellion also with a various scales, and coup d'etat with different purposes. Without a doubt, most African conflicts which are reported and which draw international attention, are those which fit the above descriptions and features of a conflict either escalated or dormant/silent in nature (Burja 2002:3).

Several conflicts existed and put African development into full of complexities and dilemma by holding the socio-economic and political aspects of life of the society by diverting their limited financial and natural resources for the purchase and funding of arms and military from the developed world (Albert 2008: 2).

Recent years have sought new attention to questions of “building peace” beyond the instant break of war, principally driven by the civil wars in the 1990s and other inter-state wars in Africa. The war-torn societies of Africa are characterized by high rates of dislocation, damaged infrastructure and weak or absent institutions. They are also more exposed to disease and may under some circumstances provide concussive ground for other international problems like arms trafficking, transnational crime, and terrorist networks (Patrick 2006 in call and cousens 2008:1).

The expense resulted from failing to build and settle peace is harsh and diverse by its nature. By most accounts, a significant amount of armed conflicts that are transformed into wars in Africa and many more in other parts of the world are a so called “new” wars which occur in countries that have failed to consolidate peace with their internal capacity and that of international interference. When peace building fails, parties to conflict often set free to enter into greater hostility which benefit none of them (ibid: 1)

The complication of post-conflict transitions to settle the peace, the disparity between prospect for rapid recovery and processes to address the conflict that have historically taken considerably longer, and the crucial issue of state-society relations as well as the types of state institutions needed to sustain peace, especially in poorer countries. This happened not by accident but needs integrative setup to adjust the system to meet the international standards. This is a way needed and expected by most states engaged in armed conflicts to date (ibid: 3).

But the current predominant method to peace building is a ‘top-down’, elitist and interventionist in characteristics. This excluded or at least gives least attention to the needs and interest of the public.

And that is the reason why most of peace processes experienced failures (Bendana 2003 cited in Shanmugaratnam 2002:3).

The work of peace building however takes a long and complicated path which is multi-dimensional and uninterrupted process. This needs a structural change and/or reform of different aspects of life and livelihood including the underlying policies and strategies such as the foreign policy and the like (ibid 2002:2).

Different individuals also argue that peace building is not just to prevent the existence of conflict but also to address the main root causes of the conflict; not just to calm down the war but also avoiding all potential factors that are believed to ignite conflict, although the studies on civil wars still have a propensity to give emphasis to the more modest outcome of “negative peace” (i.e. the absence of armed conflict). The expertise and promotion of community and some scholars increasingly focus on a more determined goal of “positive peace” i.e., incorporation of justice, equity, and other basic social and political goods which are useful in maintaining the social order in the manner it fits the community (Call and Cousens: 2008:3).

Position of refugees is another important field of study within the conflict studies. It is relevant for my research because I am interested in experiences of Eritrean students-refugees studying in Ethiopia as well as in experiences of the Ethiopian students.

3.2.2. Youth and conflict

Youth in many cases should not be constructed firmly based on age. Rather, it is best understood as a midway stage between childhood and adulthood. This chapter of life is characterized by a period where there is availability of freedom in making one’s own decisions and experiences, taking the role of adults although not fully admitted to them (World Bank, 2007 in Hilker and Fraser 2009:9).

The numerical population increase and the resulting fierce competition for resources within the contexts of malfunctioning or failing states have led to a relative decline in the well-being and social advancement of young people in Africa. African youths are over-represented in armed rebel or insurgent movements of various kinds as well as in criminal activities, to which they are so easily recruited. There is no prospect that this situation will change for the better in the near future. Being young in Africa is widely and consistently perceived as problematic in essence. Social analysts, policy makers, NGOs, governments and international organizations all reiterate that African youth is in deep

trouble and enmeshed in violence because of the existing unstable situations in the continent (Abbink 2005 :7-8)

In most cases youth make decisions in practice in order to examine their social surroundings and encounter the structures of power and authority which are prevailing there in to the extent they are conducive for their wellbeing. In developing world, young people may be raised in countries with rigid and traditional authority and patron-client relations in most cases (Hilker and Fraser 2009:25).

This may prohibit them from integrating and cooperating with other members of a society to widen their horizon of the real world. They are chiefly characterized as idealistic and innovative, brave, knowledgeable about their peers' realities, future-oriented, more open to change, etc which make them to stand firmly on behalf of their members (Hilker and Fraser 2009:26).

As young people in Africa are part of active and vibrant groups in a society they are playing a vital role and having key position in renovating their society which is characterized by conflict into peaceful and democratic ones. Youth in conflict are in a position of taking positive, preventive and transformative roles both during violent conflicts as well as non-violent ones (Felice and Wisler 2007:3-4).

Youth are considered to be distinct and major actors in the process of peace building in any society. Accordingly, Levy (2001:11-17) argued that youth have in many cases been active driving force in several armed resistances and they have special and diverse needs as a group in the post-war period of settlement and transformation to peace.

Paradoxically youth are often the primary creators of violence in the post-war agreement period. They participate in different levels ranging from political rebel violence to criminal offense. On the other way they are also important to the success of new law and order measures to rule and accommodate conflict. For instance, we can take the youth in Palestine and Northern Ireland. Similarly youth are also the victims of much post accord violence characterized by direct attacks and disruption as well as structural violence. Youth may be in a situation to affect the peace process by shaping attitudes and behaviors over the long-term. In this aspect youth are the primary actors in grassroots community and development work they are at the forefront of peace building and transformation (Levy 2001).

Youth who are overwhelmed by the hazards of conflict and post conflict situations are encountering some degree of challenges that intervene and change their lives and their future prospects which turned up their valuable future programming to be problematic and yet essential (Sommers 2006:2).

Whether they like it or not the young people have gone from being passively awaiting for what to happen to being active members in conflicts, with their consent or not. As members of the communities they play a much more considerable role as conflict parties in addition to their potential conflict interventions as conflict managers and transformers, or as peace builders in their community. Youth can play an important role by forming opportunities for their age group to convey their requirements and concerns to those liable for resolution efforts and by providing young people who have been affected by conflict with the opportunity to extend and convey their experiences and come into contact with the “other side” i.e. the perceived enemy (Ohana 2005:116). The above practice seem to be absent to a greater extent among the Ethiopian and Eritrean youth which left them to be suspicious of one another.

Young people can deal directly with the grass roots of the problems, because they are part of the grass roots, and they can communicate with several parties without losing credibility. They are able to take risks and consider new methods through trial and error which can led them to the appropriate solution. In addition, young people have more choice to act as agents of change in contrast to senior politicians because they are not constrained by the need to maximize votes in regular elections or by specific limited mandates (Ohana 2005:117)

Conflicts are in most cases creating devastation for humans and things. The effect of the so called “new wars” may be the impacts they cause upon “young people’s social worlds” (Newman in Sommers 2006:12). Likewise, it is only possible for the peace building and conflict transformation to be maintained if the multiple needs, interests and expectations are satisfied, so that the youth’s contribution becomes more significant from what was prevailing before. The emphasis needs to be put on addressing structural causes of violence built into political, social and economic systems which allowed unfair division of power, resources and opportunities, leading to actors feeling marginalized and threatened unable to meet their needs as well as building on creativity and local capacities of their respective communities (Felice and Wisler 2007:6).

Hilker and Fraser (2009:47) argue that the basic factors that exclude youth from being active in different aspects are including range of unemployment and/or underemployment and shortage of sufficient income, inadequate and unevenly distributed education with poor quality, bad governance with passive political participation, inequalities of gender with hampered socialization, and inherited past violent experiences.

It is not only the above structural causes that cause youth problems and insecurities. In addition to the above structural problems, a number of proximate factors appear to be significant in triggering some individuals and groups to enter violence. These include recruitment, coercion and indoctrination of politics and militarization, identity politics and ideology which sharpen their mind towards single party led with narrow nationalism that might adversely affect the other categories in other state/nation, leadership and organizational dynamics of the state on failing to maintain good governance. All of those can be taken as trigger events that can aggravate hatred so that they led into protracted conflict (ibid).

In similar fashion some violent movements pursue political or identity based ideologies which may bring and ignite young people to their cause and create cohesion among the group. Even though religious and ethnic differences or the intersection of these differences do not in themselves cause conflict, they can provide effective explanatory frameworks for criticism and powerful discourses of mobilization, particularly for more educated youth (Hilker and Fraser 2009:5).

In war situations, many youth are subjected to forced labor, recruitment into armies or militias, and child prostitution. Many more are displaced, separated from their families, or orphaned, and must undertake a long, painful process to rebuild their lives after war. They find themselves heading households, unemployed, their traditional livelihoods are disrupted, their daily lives affected, their futures are jeopardized; many youth grow up with the weight of hopelessness that influences their adult life choices (Felice and Wisler 2007:8).

As long as conflicts are extended they can lead to a vicious circle in which the groups adopt instability as a standard. It impacted the way of living of the youth extremely. For instance, the young ex-fighters often face particularly big challenges in returning to their normal civilian life and at high risk of further involvement in violence in future. Accordingly, these problems make the youth to feel uncomfortable with the stalemate prohibiting their future dreams to sustain their lives in freedom (Hilker and Fraser 2009:4).

There are so many youth in war-affected areas, which are engaged in the activities directly related to war. Ignoring youth might lead them to engage in some activities which destabilizes the security of the society. For instance they may participate as gangs, militias, prostitution and drug rings. These groups may destabilize the peace and could spoil the culture and tradition being a bad role model for the next generations. Several academics and scholars who have established many times over just how effective

young people can be in the service of war and abuse in their society. This happened as conflict is turned to creating destitute and insecurity which can destroy the hope of cooperation and working together to achieve common goal i.e development in the case of developing countries. Engaging youth, in other words, appears to have surfaced as a humanitarian and post-war necessity because there really is no alternative (Sommers 2006:8).

3.2.3. 'No peace No war'

The extension of war-like social and economic conditions often happen although a ceasefire and truce between the main warring factions is made. The making of an extensive peace accord and the existence of peace-support from the fundamentals of the global neighbourhood. Such situation could be described as 'no war, no peace', or a midpoint between war and peace (Mac Ginty 2010:146).

'No war no peace' refers to a situations which is complex in its context in which a large-scale civil war that has just ended for nothing but for a dilemma. A termination of aggression brings armed groups for agreement and the introduction and implementation of disarmament and demobilisation of troops from the conflicting area/position. In addition the recitation of compassionate, development or post-war reconstruction and settlement programme may propose that there is much positive advancements and new changes in the 'no war no peace' situations (ibid 2010:146).

Several articles and research studies were so far done on the relationship between peace and war and particularly on the 'no peace no war' situation. Among these include the case of Chechnya over Abkhazia and Karabakh (walker 1998), the case of Northern Ireland (Mac Ginty etal. 2007), and the case of Cambodia (Ovesen 2005). In these situations the cause for the 'no war no peace' situation were different. In some cases like in Chechnya the reasons are secessionist forces for self-determination; in Cambodia the issue is linked to international crime of genocide by the act and/or of intervention of the state as a Rogue Terror. The case of Northern Ireland is characterized with less degree of physical confrontation after the Belfast or Good Friday agreement followed by sectarianism and repression of specific group's rights.

'No war no peace' situations happened in three forms. Primarily, the situation of 'no war no peace' may happen in a time where a fierce conflict has largely been controlled in a limited geographic region of a larger state. The second form of 'no war no peace' situation happens in a time when a peace agreement has been reached between the main opponents in a civil war but the implementation of the accord becomes hindered and fails to move toward s a truly peaceful transformation and settlement. The third form of 'no war no peace' situation happened in cases of peace process during a ceasefire

and an occasionally during an inter-group meetings for peace settlement and accommodation. While the peace process provides an interval from hostility and make possible inter -group discussions or further interns of national thought and consideration, it fails to develop into a means of expression to have a skill to bring an all-inclusive peace agreement. The peace process becomes a long-lasting, but ineffective, contest; a calm zone that fails to support the warring factions to compromise, which is necessary to attain a peace resolution (Mac Ginty 2010:162).

During bilateral talks the conflicting parties mainly solve the basic issue of direct violent armed conflict mainly from the institutional level highly relying on external actors and aid connections which makes the peace processes to be complex (Shanmungaratnam 2002:3). However as argued earlier, according to Galtung, the end of armed conflict is not the same as peace. These ideas will guide my research of 'no war no peace' situation in Ethiopian border region.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1. 'No peace No war' Realities

According to my respondents 'no peace no war' is a situation where the two peoples on the opposite sides of the border are in unstable state of mind regarding the security of one another. It refers to the current situation of the two states in which none of the parties and or another third party are playing a determinant role in making any positive relationship such as through dialogue and any other forms of negotiation. This expression is used among the residents of Adigrat town and many other Ethiopians as a colloquial short-cut name given to the current situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The 'no peace no war' situation as an expression is given to explain the current situation between the two countries which denied the fraternal and brotherly/sisterly relationships among the peoples of Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is commonly pronounced around the border areas than in any other places found far in hinterland, for example Mekelle town or Addis Ababa city. This is probably because of the proximity to the border of the two countries which is still experiencing a difficult time than the rest of Ethiopia.

The 'no peace no war' situation is currently existing between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Accordingly my respondents replied by giving several instances where the two countries are on a time characterized by neither hostility nor peace/settlement. They are on midway between peace and war. Lack of direct /indirect (formal and informal contact of the two governments), the heavy militarization of their respective boundaries which leave the border insecure, absence of any relationships between the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia to deal with their tantamount development issue etc. are among their arguments for the existence of 'no peace no war' situation.

One Ethiopian respondent added a different aspect/meaning for the 'no peace no war' situation. In his words:

“This situation is a deliberate measure taken by the government of Ethiopia to control and deter the Isaias’s regime of Eritrea from its aggression by avoiding war. It’s aimed to protect the government of Eritrea from the abrupt and destabilizing behavior it played, not only with Ethiopia but also in the whole region of Horn of Africa.”

Another respondent from Ethiopia also put the ‘no peace no war situation’ as follows:

“No peace no war’ is mainly seems to be a policy or political as well as diplomatic order through which the government of Ethiopia uses in order to control, undermine or may be isolate the Eritrean government of its hostile approach mainly against Ethiopia. In this sense the measure can help the government of Eritrea to deal with the contest and disagreement on the decision on the Ethiopia – Eritrea boundary delimitation of 2002 by the Ethiopia – Eritrea boundary commission (EEBC) and get through demarcation to close the chapter of border conflict”.

This refers to the question whether Eritrean government can accept the invitation by the Ethiopian government for dialogue on the specific issues before the demarcation of the border is conducted or not. To this end the Eritrean government dismisses any kind of dialogue until the demarcation of boundary is fully implemented. This is the juncture where the current situation of ‘no peace no war’ is experienced.

Most of the Ethiopian as well as Eritrean respondents agree that the situation makes the two states to maintain and produce large accumulation of armies at huge cost although they have a limited amount of resources and wealth in their search for being dominant power in the Horn of Africa. They averted their limited finance to buy more arms with enormous expenses rather than spending for survival of their people who is known in the world to have among the lowest income earnings and live under poverty.

One of my Ethiopian respondent argues that;

“The buildup of hundreds of thousands of soldiers along both sides of the border is shows the stress of tension that may probably ones a day could be developed to erupt in to a fights that could make possible the second round of devastating war and destruction to occur. This is nothing but a result of the wrong approach the two parties are following in order to handle and solve their border problem by dismissing the way of compromise, give and take, and dialogue to end the conflict”.

Most of the respondents agreed that with ‘no peace no war’ situation there are only losers no winners. Probably there may be differences between Eritrea and Ethiopia in a degree and extent of effects of ‘no peace no war’ situation. This are determined by the geographical, demographic and economic

potentials of the states. As a result, the situation existed as a result of ‘no peace no war’ seems to affect Eritrea more. One of my Ethiopian respondents put it as:

“The current situation is affecting Eritrea more whereas Ethiopia is doing its business as usual, Eritrea is so far pre-occupied and sticks to the no demarcated border, obliged to remain or stay more on the edge of war given its size and population number as well as its economic might until nowadays. The heavy militarization and constant military conscription and unlimited national service hurt Eritrea more than Ethiopia in relative terms. Ethiopia’s military conscription and militarization is by far seen as an economy ridden by many aspects although there are bodies especially the opposition which argues unfair and elastic allocation of budget to the military”.

Most of the Ethiopian and Eritrean interviewees agree that under the ‘no peace no war’ situation direct military confrontation on battle grounds are replaced by proxy wars which aimed at mutual destabilization. Ethiopia and Eritrea are openly providing financial and material support to their respective military groups and opposition forces operating within their territories. They both allow their territories to be used as training camps and operating grounds for the opposition forces/parties. This has an adverse effect on the peace and security of both states and their people in general and the people who are living across the border areas. Two of my respondents reflected on the policy they follow on the issue of conflict in Somalia and South Sudan.

This study shows that ‘no war no peace’ policy has dissolves all the possibilities of trade and economic relations and abandoned human mobility and economic transaction between the two states. As the people to people relationships and cultural affinity were strong. A significant amount of the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia have a close and deep rooted memory of earlier periods while they live together in their previous periods. Whereas the current situation is still continuing to separate them and terminate the close relationship of the two peoples as the amount of years of stalemate still continuing to exist which is by far limiting their hope of mutual co-existence and peace.

One of my Ethiopian interviewee stated that:

“Currently Ethiopia is allowing Eritrean refugees to stay in its territory by building four refugee camps in Shimelba, Maiayni, Adiharush and Hitsats in Tigray regional state and additional one camp in the Afar regional state. The Eritrean refugee are getting support to get basic services and education in their respective camps. The support also allows many of

the Eritrean youths in refugee camps opportunity to complete their education in Ethiopian Higher institutions. Referring Adigrat University is one of the instances”.

This act has far more impact and message to the governments and people of Eritrea and Ethiopia revisiting their action to amending the close relationships among the two peoples. Thorough it requires them to end the ‘no peace no war’ situation by establishing normalization of relations, and reinstating free mobility of people and their transactions while keep working in their border problems side by side. Mutual respect for the right of the Eritrean and Ethiopian people can make the issue of Border less relevant.

According to one Eritrean student respondent, Eritrea finds itself in crisis of ways. He explains this as follows:

“As an Eritrean citizen I can witness the youth in Eritrea are currently enslaved with long and complicated system in the name of national service, arrested in prison centers like Eraero, Dahlak, Wia, Gahtely and many more for different reasons. Some are caught to cross the border, while others are accused for their political views and links with opposition forces active in Ethiopia or abroad. Most also arrested because they flee the unlimited national service conscription. Leaders of Religious institutions such as Protestant as well as Evangelical churches were still arrested or nothing known about their whereabouts under custody. Many muslim people are also kept in these prisons suspected as jihadists and are kept alone in separate cells. Although it is decreased now, the parents of those who leave Eritrea crossing border were used to be arrested or forced to pay a sum of money or their properties are confiscated.”

This are some of the aspects of the current situation in Eritrea. Eritreans are devoid of any freedom in their home and feel that they are in ‘no war no peace’ situation. Another Eritrean respondent also described his words on the current situation like this;

“Eritreans are facing torture, detention and unlimited national service conscription by the current regime. The youth are getting disappointed to that end that they can do nothing else than leaving the country to migrate far. Their hope to live peacefully with their neighboring countries after their long struggle has almost totally failed. Currently the international community too gives less attention to the peaceful solutions of the situation leaving the two

states alone to conduct or push forward their matters as they refused cooperating with the international arbitration decision”.

According to one Ethiopian respondents the Ethiopian position on the current situation of the two states still continues to emphasize that everything has to be settled through conducting a dialogue to bring back the status quo (a situation before the two countries engaged in the war) through compromise in order to contribute to the sustainable peace.

Most of the respondents replied that Ethiopia and Eritrea need to live peacefully, and fight their common enemies such as drought, famine, which regularly and constantly happen in the areas accompanied with disease, illiteracy, backwardness etc. and striving for maintaining food security. They have to building hospitals and clinics to treat and support their citizens' health and expand the educational institutions and facilities to every corners of their country by increasing the access to higher education to support/build a well-integrated system in their respective countries and make all Ethiopians and Eritreans stand for development and prosperity. This should be the main target and a rudimentary requirement needed to fulfill people's prospects and spirits. And this is what is expected from the leaders and peoples of both countries.

This is what Ethiopia was doing and is still doing to address the problems related with the daily life of the ordinary people through expanding different developmental infrastructures like education and health centers. It also support the Eritrean refugees at least with temporary shelter and education in order to make the people close with each other and contribute to the future peace and stability between the two countries.

Another respondent from Ethiopia also stated that:

“when it compared to the diverse problems both societies are facing, Border as an issue in itself could not have come at all as a primary issue in the ‘no peace no war’. But once raised, if the mechanisms of solving with mutual dialogue are not existed I am sure there will be another round of devastating war between Ethiopia and Eritrea which could be another mess on the history of Ethiopian and Eritrean people.”

This idea paraphrases that, there are a number of hot and needy issues needed to be raised for the well-being of Eritrean and Ethiopian people needlessly the border issue was put as priority to justify the other factors. Primarily, mutual dialogue is the factor which can facilitate the settlement and prevent devastating consequences between them.

In light of the theory of positive and negative peace the above findings demonstrates that there is an existence of instability in the state of mind of the people especially those who live around the border, migration and unrest among the two peoples and governments although it is not in the level of physical confrontation though given a few incidents happening around the border areas. This implies that there is no positive peace as post conflict settlement follow-ups, normalization is absent to bring secured integration as it is outlined by Johan Galtung (1969). These findings also confirms with the idea about limits of Liberal or Perpetual peace outlined by Doyle (2005), Keen(2000), Mc Ginty (2010) as peace is stalled even though a peace deal with settlement of the violent conflict is made between the two countries which at least ends the war. This agreement was final and binding following their agreements through mediation and arbitration process. But the end of war never cultivated the peaceful coexistence of the two people which bring them to unlimited disruption of the status-que. This shows one of the weaknesses of liberal peace theory to handle and sustain peace and stability between or among states in conflict.

4.2. Aspects of the ‘no war no peace’ reality

4.2.1. Economic and political Aspects

My informants gave me different specific ideas about the economic and political impacts of the no peace no war reality. Economically it is obvious that both states and their respective people especially those living near the borders are so impacted by the situation to the extent that they cannot even imagine their previous trade relations to be returned. This is specifically affecting the local people, especially the youth in this region. The youth since long started to migrate either to the major towns and cities in Ethiopia or mostly trying to enter in to the Middle East like Saudi Arabia illegally with the help of smugglers by crossing the Red Sea and as a result facing many casualties. One of my respondents explained it as follows;

“Youth are almost totally unemployed around this area. Before the war there were a lot of opportunities in the area. A number of youths left for working to Asmara (Eritrea) and other towns like Massawa and Assab in Eritrea serving their living and their family’s needs. There was also another opportunity like engagement in small scale trade exchange along the borders with the Eritreans to and from Asmara. Additionally they engage in trading different

consumer goods which are rarely found in Eritrea like coffee, Teff¹ etc. from Ethiopia and bringing back with them some industrial goods from Eritrea to Tigray”.

Such opportunity helps a number of individuals in both countries to possess some amount of wealth to reach middle income group as one of my respondents suggested as

“Before the war there were many Eritrean and Ethiopian millionaires in Addis Ababa and Asmara respectively. These individuals were possessing hotels and several factories and businesses. But, this was totally changed after the border conflict which is followed by deportation of civilian Eritreans and Ethiopians from Ethiopia and Eritrea respectively”.

Some of my respondents do not agree with the above. They argue that before the war most of the economic activities were pulled largely towards Eritrea especially Asmara, as a detriment of Ethiopia. As most of the youngsters were used to migrate to Asmara in search of jobs, merchants and investors also did similar move. This greatly downgraded the growth and development of Ethiopia especially the northern part which borders Eritrea. But now everything is changed. With the coming and engagement of different professionals as well as merchants and investors to Ethiopia scale up the diversity and expansion of economic activities in Ethiopia in general and particularly the northern part, Tigray.

Politically, the situation is totally blocked peaceful relationship and the hope of negotiation between the two states become minimum, because neither of them seems to ease the stalemate by making compromises on their difference. In their internal politics Ethiopia seems more stable and predictable than Eritrea. One signal which shows the instability of the Eritrean government is the exodus of the Eritrean youth from their homeland, mainly to the Sudan and Ethiopia as a way to get Europe through Libya illegally and risking their life crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Two respondents each from Eritrea and Ethiopia agreed on this situation as follows:

“Without any change or amendment of the policies within our respective government political stability between Ethiopia and Eritrea is impossible to happen. Commitment and transparency is not demonstrated on their policy with one another. This is what makes us felt skeptical about the peace deal would bring peace and political stability between the two governments.

¹ A dominant cereal food grown in Ethiopia used a major staple food to make popular pancakes in both countries

With regard to the status of the town, most of the respondents agree that the town's economic development and progress in general is so far deteriorated or at least become stagnant although new achievements of development and growth are seen recently with the commencement of the Adigrat University. But it is not enough to refresh the town which was so strongly harmed with the termination of the trade relations and other transaction activities between the two states.

However two of my Ethiopian respondents replied in different manner. They insist that the current situation of 'no peace no war' is more or less for the good of Ethiopians especially Tigray regional state. One thing is that Tigray region is revived in terms of trade and investment. Before the war with Eritrea major goods and services were transported to Eritrea because of the availability of good market for Ethiopia at that time.

One of the elder respondents also said that the hinterland of Tigray region before the Ethio-Eritrea conflict was suffered from significant development and trade activities which left all the major towns in Tigray including Adigrat almost barren lands. Another thing is that most of the members of the middle class which could be engaged in investments and trade, by importing and exporting activities to run businesses, factories and industries, either migrated to Eritrea or based their major economic activities there because of the relatively more demand and supply as well as investment and trade opportunities with higher degree of availability of market. Additionally a number of youth had no choice but to migrate to Eritrea in search of daily jobs. This condition by far harmed the healthy growth of the Ethiopian towns, especially the Tigrean towns including Adigrat.

The relationship between development, economy and violent conflict is complex and not linear. It is obvious that the rise in income guarantees the economic development to be sustainable which gives rise to a significant human development. But growth failure and related mismanagement of economic activities could led to aggressive behavior because of the inequalities that affect a group of people. This mean that in some instances growth also can lead to violent conflict, especially if related to the so called resource curse (availability of natural resources such as minerals), as said by many scholars. Long lasting and extreme economic inequalities between groups within a society can lead to a violent conflict (Murshed 2015: 70-75).

Based on the above literature, my findings suggested that there was economic incompatibility prior to the conflict since the majority of the economic transactions (imports and exports) and investments were geared towards Eritrea because of its strategic position on the Red Sea with the port outlets.

Whereas on the side of Ethiopia especially the northern section was harmed and face stagnant economy followed by migration of the young for work. These economic and income inequalities further led to the grievances which are believed by my informants to account among the main causes for the devastating conflict between the two countries.

4.2.2. Social Aspects

Most of the respondents noted that the current ‘no peace no war’ situation affected both states negatively. They argue that the two brotherly peoples with a common ancestry, language and tradition are left with hatred and suspicion mainly because of the lack of commitment and good will through compromise for sustainable peace of the two antagonizing parties. Almost all of the respondents agree on the negative impact of the situation on their personal, professional as well as family matters. Primarily, it separated them from their families and loved ones which is still prohibiting them from visiting and getting one another. This has far implication on the people who live around the border areas. One of my respondent originally from the border town of Zalambesa put this as follows:

“It is impossible to get an individual originally from Zalambesa and Erob area who do not have at least one relative from Eritrea. The people is inter-married since long time. Thus you can imagine how far this situation creates family separation and inconvenience”.

For instance one of my Ethiopian respondents implies that he was separated from his father as well as his wife and children in the time that he was deported from Massawa, Eritrea during the war mainly because he is Ethiopian by origin. However, he continued:

“Because of the current policy of Ethiopia to accept and accommodate Eritreans who fled from their state to Ethiopia peacefully, I am able to reunite with my children and my wife too, even though she is Eritrean”.

According to the respondents, socially the situation created fear and suspicion for the people who live not far from the border towns. Sometimes they heard stories about the gunshot exchange from the people who live in the border towns when they came to the market. But they seldom knew what caused the incidence and what the casualties are. The border of the two states is heavily militarized across both sides which made any movement impossible except the convoy of soldiers and armaments. One of the respondents suggested that:

“Many families were separated from one another because of the conflict. Most of the families are still separated. But some Eritrean families come to Ethiopia via Sudan to visit their families. This is a good will and policy of Ethiopia allowing any Eritrean citizens to enter Ethiopia and visit their families. Such activities can be good start for the people to people relationships”.

Majority of my respondents agree that socially the “no peace no war” situation forced a large amount of youth to leave their country every time. From Eritrea a large number of youth are at exodus through any direction they get to flee military conscription and unlimited national service. From the part of Ethiopia there is migration of youth but different from the case of Eritreans. Around the border area the level of migration is additionally including internal migration to cities and big towns.

The findings are supported by what (Sommers 2006) suggested as youth are endangered by the risks of conflict and post conflict situations are encountering some degree of challenges that intervene and change their lives and their future prospects which turned up their valuable future programming to be problematic and yet essential (Sommers 2006:2).

This was further explained by what Ohanna (2005) suggesting on the role of youth have gone from being passively awaiting for what to happen to being active members in conflicts, with their consent or not. As members of the communities they play a much more considerable role as conflict parties in addition to their conflict interventions as conflict managers and transformers, or as peace builders in their community

4.3. The Role of Identity

The elders and most of my Ethiopian respondents argue that the ‘no peace no war’ brings no change in the sense of their identity. They argue that they respect their Eritrean neighbors from the beginning although Eritreans have a sense of superiority over the Ethiopians which were rooted during the time of Italian colonization. One of the elder respondents originally from Rama town described the impact of colonization and its consequent divergent identity politics as:

“As Italians took economic improvements to their colony mainly to serve the Italian settlers in the Eritrean plateau bring Eritrea to experience new technologies including modern infrastructures and modern style of living. This helped it to be more industrial and civilized On the other hand Ethiopians, especially Tigryans are less experienced in technologies and

modern way of life. This was continued as a perception until nowadays by figuring the Ethiopian people in general and Tigrayan people in particular as disadvantaged and uncivilized. Many Tigrayans mainly those from Adigrat and its vicinity as a province had opted to migrate to Eritrea in search of jobs”.

When Tigrayans were migrating to Eritrea in search of job they know nothing about an urban infrastructure, while Eritreans have already been exposed to these things. This difference in status manifested by the Italian policies made Eritreans to feel superior over Tigrayans, or what they so called Agames, as they began to call all Tigrayans since the majority of the migrants were from the Agame region, a province in eastern zone of Tigray. It is from these processes where identity politics began to flourish affecting the minds of most of the Eritreans and Ethiopians. This division came to distinguish “civilized” Eritreans and “traditional” Ethiopians/Tigreans which is still not eliminated within the society.

One Ethiopian respondent suggested that the Eritrean perception of superiority, which was deeply rooted starting from the Italian colonial rule, was still continuing in the current situation of ‘no peace no war’. This is so regardless of the similar culture and language and tradition they have with Ethiopians, especially with the Tigrayans.

From the part of my Eritrean respondents I got different response. All of them argue that ‘no peace no war’ is showing Ethiopia and Eritrea their real sense of identity. They know in history that the Eritrean identity was initially born with the commencement of the Italian colonization of the current Eritrea. Before that it was a different story that characterized sometimes by different autonomous entities and sometimes of course as one part of the old Abyssinian state. Both add that:

“Before we came to Ethiopia we had no exposure to either of Ethiopian territories. But what we heard of and what we adopted from our environment about Ethiopians was that they are barbaric, cruel, inhumane, not to be trusted people, very traditional, etc. This was what we had as a picture in our mind about Ethiopia and Ethiopians. This was also reinforced by what we know in history that emperor Menelik of Ethiopia fought with the then colonial masters in the Horn of Africa i.e. Italy in 1896. At the battle of Adwa Italy was defeated in Tigray in their advancement to occupy the whole of Ethiopian region. But Menelik’s forces of Ethiopia left Eritrea for Italy by signing a treaty. This activity creates anger on the part of Eritreans

which had already a similar cultural and linguistic setup with their Ethiopian counterparts although they have a different psychological and colonial experience”.

Most of the Ethiopian students and both of my women respondents replied that they have positive attitude towards the Eritrean migrant students. They argue Eritreans are close to Ethiopians in culture, language, as well as socio-economic and political setups. They don't see them as threats, since they are not violating the rights and the interest of the people and the security of Ethiopia. They are coming because their rights and freedoms in their home country are violated by the current government of Eritrea. So the need to welcome them and make them feel at home is becoming timely for the people and government of Ethiopia. They don't have any problems with the people of Eritrea but with the political system in their country. Ethiopian students noted that there are Eritreans in their class. As classmates they have good relationship through the recently introduced peer networking which helped them to get and know one another and do school tasks together.

The above idea is equally supported by the Eritrean respondents. They said that they were surprised with the warm welcome they got from the Ethiopians and their government. They put in their words as follows:

“Before we came to Ethiopia we never expected such hospitality of the Ethiopian people, let alone to get a scholarship for the Ethiopian universities. What we perceived and expected while we were in Eritrea was simply either to be detained in refugee camps or deported to any country, mostly to Sudan. This was what we heard and perceive before we came to Ethiopia. But despite these rumors we calculated that it would not be as bad as how we live with the forced military service. The people welcomed us by building houses in the camps we live, searching and supplying woods for fire to bake and cook our foods, accepting us to practice our religion freely by letting us to build our respective church or mosque inside the refugee camps. This is so strange for us, which is totally out of our expectation. And the university administration is also making a close follow-up for us. In collaboration with NGO's they deliver us school facilities including tutorial classes and pocket money throughout our study period. And we hope it will continue till the end of our classes”.

The Eritrean students also suggest that they have good relationships with all Ethiopians in the school as well as outside the school. They also mention that they have a network of five Ethiopian students

in the school which helps them to work closely and help one another. One of the Eritrean respondents puts it like this;

“I never expected such respectful people. Frankly I like all people here for their kindness. It’s totally different from what our government was telling us about Ethiopia and its people. It’s always saying they are our enemies. This made us have negative perception on Ethiopia and its people previously. But now we are clear with the truth. We identified that it is the two governments that are in fact enemies not the people”.

This idea implies that the Ethiopian people need peaceful relationships with the Eritrean people. The migrants face warm welcome and less challenge. This is witnessed by the Eritrean respondents by explaining that “we got at least freedom from threats on our lives while we came here.”

One of my Ethiopian respondents, however, had ideas different from the above:

“I totally don’t trust Eritreans and their leadership. Given the state is young, the people are too nationalist to the extent that they never compromise in the sayings and stand of their government. They accept anything from the part of their government blindly regardless of its truth and rationality. They are still blind supporters of the regime in Asmara although their government abandoned them from their basic rights and freedoms forcing them to flee and leave their country in scores to Ethiopia and Sudan and further into Europe”.

The current exodus of Eritrean youth to Europe could be an example that they are not in agreement with their government. But the controversial issue remains whether in one way or another most of those youths are opposing their government in Eritrea or not, and, how much scope for political opposition exists within Eritrean borders (if the consequence of such opposition would be imprisonment and death). It is possible that those Eritreans who come to Ethiopia are not coming principally opposing and abandoning their government system for political reasons, but rather for economic reasons to make as a step towards Europe and other developed countries’.

According to my Ethiopian respondents the main challenge of ‘no peace no war’ situation is still affecting the growth and development of the two nations. In this globalized world border problems should not be sources of stalemate or violent conflicts. Ethiopia and Eritrea fought a war as a result of miscalculation of their leaders. Managing the current stalemate needs compromise, leaving the contested territories either for trusteeship or forming a joint administration in order to heal their relations for furthering their common benefit.

My Eritrean respondents informed that the peace process is going to be settled only and only if Ethiopia accept the demarcation process fully. When I asked them if they agree with the current stand of Ethiopia to make dialogue with Eritrea they insist that it is unthinkable for Eritrean government to accept dialogue before the full demarcation of the boundary delimited by the Ethio-Eritrean boundary commission on ground. Surprisingly this is the same as the stand of the Eritrean government at the current situation.

As a central theme to Kaldor's assessment of the 'new wars' is to argue about the feeling of those who thought whether they are included in or excluded from the global development process. This theory is not looking at the developed world. But, is limited to the politics of identity in the south, and looks at the developing countries uncivilized societies (Zarkov 2015:124) in (Hintjens and D. zarkov 2004).

Based on the above literature, my findings suggest that politicization of identity between the two people which was rooted historically during the colonization period was further successively followed and reinforced by the successive rulers. Most focus of the politics of identity here seems to be the ethnic identity, backed with the economic might of the two states which created the 'us and them' distinction by referring to one as a danger and threat to the other and vice versa. At the same time, in the case of Ethiopia and Eritrea politics of identities and state ideologies both play a role in how people think about the 'no peace no war' situation, and ideas about economic benefits and local and regional development are extremely important. Thus, the conflict is not seen only in terms of identity. Furthermore, many people believe that Ethiopians and Eritreans share many elements of culture and identity. This seem to be distinct from the Kaldor's ideas about 'new wars' theory and the role of identity.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

The study reveals that ‘no peace no war’ situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea jeopardized the hope of peaceful coexistence and normalization for years after the international community devised the boundary ruling decisions which ended the direct violence of war. This situation is harming both countries, especially forcing the Eritrean youth to flee their country in scores. It is also undeniable that this situation equally has social, political and economic underpinnings for the two countries in general and the border town in particular. This is more pronounced in Eritrea. To some extent the study shows that the ‘no peace no war’ situation is benefiting Ethiopia economically, especially the northern part (Tigray).

Interestingly, the Eritrean and Ethiopian respondents more or less made their respective governments responsible for their misery. But few Eritrean respondents claim the failure of the implementation of the boundary ruling as a cause.

Theory of positive peace as a durable and real peace is important in the management of the current situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia. It clearly depicts the states need to come up with existential peace which benefit their fellow citizens to progress and stability not only have a settlement made by the measures of the liberal peace.

Findings also reveal that the perception of the Eritrean and Ethiopian interviewees is changing to accommodate differences for durable and lasting peace and normalization from previously highly politicized socio-psychological perception and misperception. This findings may bring hope that similar process of acceptance and accommodation are going on elsewhere, and the rearrangement and change of the previous politics of identity is doing its role of bringing the two peoples closer to living together. Among the measures that seem to have contributing to closer relationships between Eritrean and Ethiopian youth are the state scholarships for the Eritrean young refugees, possibilities for family reunions and the warm welcome of refugees by the Ethiopians. A few of my Ethiopians respondents are still doubtful about those moves referring that Eritreans are positively changed simply to win the opportunity of resettlement to other developed countries. However, those differences are not withstanding the findings reveal many similarities in understanding of the ‘no peace no war’ situation and its consequences among the students. They agree that the situation degraded the hope of integration and opportunity of both peoples. Politically, those are important similarities as they may

indicate that the animosities are slowly transforming. Theoretically, the study shows the relevance of the concept of the 'positive peace' and the need for further investigation of the specific aspects and effects of 'no peace no war' situation. Neither identities, nor ideologies and economies have in this research shown to have only positive or only negative effect on the local population. Rather the 'no peace no war' situation seems to create a context of complex and fluid relationships when both trust and mistrust exist, and both benefits and deprivations are counted. This means that 'no peace no war' situation contains opportunities for peace, but also dangers of slipping back into war.

Appendix A

Interview Checklist

Interview questions for students and the elders;

1. How do you understand the ‘no peace no war’ situation?
2. How the ‘no peace no war’ situation affects the life in town?
3. How the situation does affect you and your family?
4. Are there any social, political, military, economic aspects of the current situation affect them personally?
5. Does the current situation affects your sense of identity and the way you identify yourself? How?
6. How is your relationship with the Eritrean migrant students? Did you feel comfortable with them?
7. Do you have any concern on the current status of relationships between Eritrean and Ethiopian government?
8. What do you suggest for the sustainable peace and normalization between Eritrea and Ethiopia to exist?
9. How did you see the current situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea?
10. What is the experience of relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrean students?
11. Is there any change/difference before the war and after the war on your relationship?
12. As an Eritrean migrant student, how do you have the living here? Is it similar with your expectation? Did you expect to get this scholarship back in your home before you immigrate to Ethiopia?
13. What do you think is the real cause/problem for the peace and normalization not to be happened? And what can you suggest as an appropriate solution

Appendix B

Background of the respondents

No	List of informants	Age	Gender	Nationality	Original residence	Position
1	Informant 1	23	M	Eritrean	Asmara	Refugee student
2	Informant 2	25	M	Eritrean	Asmara	Refugee student
3	Informant 3	29	M	Eritrean	Asmara	Refugee student
4	Informant 4	30	M	Eritrean	Asmara	Refugee student
5	Informant 5	25	M	Ethiopian	Axum	Student
6	Informant 6	30	M	Ethiopian	Zalambesa	Student
7	Informant 7	33	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Student
8	Informant 8	34	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Student
9	Informant 9	27	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Student
10	Informant 10	24	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Student
11	Informant 11	26	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Student
12	Informant 12	38	M	Ethiopian	Shire	Student
13	Informant 13	29	M	Ethiopian	Adwa	Student
14	Informant 14	28	M	Ethiopian	Alamata	Student
15	Informant 15	27	F	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Secretary
16	Informant 16	28	F	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Secretary
17	Informant 17	60	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Elder
18	Informant 18	65	M	Ethiopian	Adigrat	Elder

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