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## Barbed wire through the Orchard

The study of how fenced borders affect the security of people

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# Abstract

The purpose of this thesis paper is to describe how a physical border affects the Human security of people living in the borderlands and to investigate how the theory of Zartman is compatible with Human security as described by Owens. The case described is the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) between Georgia and South Ossetia where Russian soldiers erect a fence in 2011. The study uses Zartman's theory to describe the borderland. Based on the *political nature* and *depth* the situation in the borderland can be fitted into a model. This analysis will be done twice, before and after the fence. In each of the cases the situation will be analyzed through Owens definition of Human security and concept of *regional relevance*. Finally I conclude that the physical shape of the border is of secondary importance next to its political nature. I also conclude that Zartman's and Owens definitions can be combined in a working analysis.

*Key words:* ABL, Administrative Boundary Line, EUMM, Georgia, South Ossetia, Border, Borderland, Human Security, Zartman, Owens, Russia.

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# 1 Introduction

The total length of all the barriers between countries in the world today equals more than half of the equator (57%) and that's more than there has ever been before.<sup>1</sup> Half of all the barriers built after the Second World War was built post-2000. Thus the number of barriers built is accelerating.<sup>2</sup>

In the last 20 years or so, in the era of globalization and after the fall of the Berlin wall, the research on borders and boundaries have shifted its focus more on borders embedded in new spatialities.

Borders can be mobile and concern boundaries between social, economic or cultural groups as well.<sup>3</sup> But, as we can see from the facts stated above, the world is, contrary to globalization, becoming more afraid of the dangerous “other” and borders are strengthened around the world.<sup>4</sup> Because of this, I believe that it is important to go back and examine the effects of the “old” research object –the physical borders in the shape of fences and walls.

One example of these “old” objects in a modern context is the region between South Ossetia and Russia. After the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 the region of South Ossetia, heavily backed by Russia, declared itself independent. The state of South Ossetia was only recognized by Russia, Venezuela, Nicaragua and two other minor pacific island states. Possibly to mark out their new independent state South Ossetia declared the Administrative boundary line, or the ABL, closed. A few years later, Russian troops started to erect a fence along the ABL.

Precisely when the process started is debated.<sup>5</sup> But the fence is to stretch 350 kilometer on the border between Georgia and South Ossetia. The most recent reports I have obtained, from June 2013, says that the barrier now stretches approximately 22-25 kilometers.<sup>6</sup> Tension along the ABL is growing, mainly due to the fact that even though the fence is only partly finished, the Russian and

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<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Thomas M, Hastings Donna, *A Companion to Border Studies*, 2012, Blackwell Publishing Ltd. p. 1.

Urban Think-Tank. *World of Barriers*, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Hassner, Ron E, Wittenberg, Jason, *Barriers to Entry - Who Builds Fortified Boundaries and Why?*. 2011, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Kolossov, Vladimir (ed), Anna-Laure Amilhat, Ilkka Liikanen, David Newman, Pertti Joenniemi, Nira Yuval-Davis, Stephane Rosière, James Scott, *Euborderscapes – State of the debate, report 1*, 2012, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Reece Jones, “Categories, borders and boundaries”. *Progress in human geography*. 2009, vol. 33, p. 183.

<sup>5</sup> Georgian foundation for strategic and international studies, *Russian-Georgian relations and the reaction from the European union*. 2013, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Civil.ge, ” Interior Ministry Briefs Diplomats on Borderisation”. 2013-06-04. <http://www.civil.ge>, Accessed: 2014-04-15.

South Ossetian border patrols regards even the unmarked stretches as closed and implement their force on unintentional trespassers.<sup>7</sup>

*"It's an extremely volatile situation. Freedom of movement is a huge issue, and detention cases are around five to six per week. It's a crisis"*  
– says Ann Vassen, spokesperson of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia.<sup>8</sup>

Some sort of border already existed before the war, but it was almost unnoticed and not relevant in daily life. The Georgians and the South Ossetians were mingled and the division between them was not prominent.

This case can also be considered extra relevant due to recent events in the Ukraine and what can be interpreted as Russia's new ideology of expansion. Another situation where a questionable border needs to be marked out by a fence or a wall is not impossible to imagine in the close future.

The physical border is one important part of this study, but as we can see, the other, perhaps even more important part is of course the borderland. Because without the borderland being affected, the shape and nature of the border would not be of any interest.

A borderland is defined in many ways. The simplest description is as a geographical area in close proximity to the border. However, most scientific definitions stress the effects that borderlands have on people's lives. This is also true of Zartman's definition which I have chosen to follow. Zartman also adds that a borderland is defined as a periphery to the power center or between power centers.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, most studies have a state centric viewpoint where the border and the borderlands are only analyzed in relation to the state and how it affects the state or other states. I believe that the situation on the new border between South Ossetia and Georgia is the story of a borderland itself and the aspects that should be analyzed are not only found in relation to the state, but in relation to the people of the borderlands. With this said, this study will view the borders from the periphery of the country and not from the center. In practice, this means that I am not interested in why the fence was built, I'm interested in how it affect the people on the ground.

Recent scientific studies on how physical border affect people's lives are rare and thus important to investigate. Combined with the fact that physical borders are becoming ever more common I believe it's highly relevant to study the effects of physical borders on people in the borderlands.

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<sup>7</sup> Insight on Conflict, "Borders of War – The Impact of South Ossetias New Border". 2014-03-07. <http://www.insightonconflict.org/2014/03/border-south-ossetia-war/>. Accessed: 2014-04-15.

<sup>8</sup> Vice News, "Russia is still building a 'Rural Berlin wall' through Georgia", 2014-02-27. <http://www.vice.com/read/russia-are-building-a-rural-berlin-wall-through-georgia>, Accessed: 2014-05-08.

<sup>9</sup> William (ed.), *Understanding life in the borderlands: boundaries in depth and in motion*, University of Georgia Press, Athens, 2010, p 3.

## 1.1 Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this study is twofold. First I wish to describe what may happen to the security of the people living on one side of the border when that border suddenly becomes a physical obstacle. Secondly, the purpose of the study is to provide a well grounded case study on the Human Security aspect of physical borders as well as to test if Zartman's theory is compatible with Owens definition of Human security.

- How did the fact that the ABL became a physical border affect Human security on the Georgian side?
- How is Zartman's theory compatible with Owens definition of Human security?

## 1.2 Limitations

First of all I will not specifically investigate the effects of demarcation even though demarcation is an important part of this situation and the effects of the demarcation is a part of the Human security issues discussed.

However, demarcation stands for the sudden appearance of a border where there did not use to be one, demarcation does not necessarily mean that the border affects the borderlands and the people living around it. Demarcation can simply be a new line on a map which is not implemented in reality or implemented on a very small scale. This study will focus more on the nature of the border and more specifically, the effects of fenced borders.

It would also be interesting to compare the ABL on the Ossetian border to the AB the ABL in Abkhazia. This however would take up to much space and time which is way I have decided to only focus on the ABL between Georgia and South Ossetia. The study would also be uneven since the border to Abkhazia has not had the same development towards a physical border.

My study will focus on the Georgian side because of the lack of reliable material on the situation in South Ossetia. I will however mention the situation in South Ossetia whenever I can find reliable facts to broaden the picture, although it is not part of my analysis.

There are many problems in the borderlands in northern Georgia and I will mention quite a few. But because of the limited size of this thesis I have restricted the text to only cover the two main security threats. In this way I will have sufficient space to describe the threats in a little more detail without compromising the rest of the analysis. Security is itself a contested subject and could easily be the focus of this entire study. I have however chosen to use

Human security as my way of determining the fences effect on people in the borderlands without delving into the vast security debates.

Last but not least, I have been forced to minimize the amount of criticism directed at Zartman's theory as well as the amount of comparison to other potential theories. I believe that I have left a sufficient amount.



## 2 Theory

### 2.1 Multidisciplinary or Undisciplined

Borders create differences. They are always implemented in order to create “us” and “them” and have always done so, at least since the Westphalia system was introduced.<sup>10</sup> This moment in time is often held forth as the birth of international borders, but at the time, this notion of borders had of course to do with national integrity and the concept of sovereignty. The broader concept of borders has probably always existed, but it took scholars until the early 1990’s to start examining these other dimensions of the creation of “us” and “them”.<sup>11</sup>

The renewed interest in the effects of bordering did of course coincide with the fall of the Berlin wall and the creation of new states as a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. But more importantly, when the field started growing, it did so separately, in many different fields from Geography to Anthropology and Political Science.<sup>12</sup>

According to David Newman, the problem with this broadening however, as is the case with many other theoretical schools which grows quickly, was that border studies became too diverse and could no longer speak the same language or agree upon a single set of recognizable parameters.<sup>13</sup>

*“Crossing the language barrier of the borders between academic disciplines and practitioners is often harder than the trans-boundary movement which is increasingly taking place across the borders between states and regions”*<sup>14</sup>

As a result of this diversity in border studies, the concept of the borders as a process emerged.<sup>15</sup> The idea is that in the process of bordering there are common features that are shared by all types of borders, physical and social. The most salient of these features is the fact that borders create differences in that they include some and exclude others.<sup>16</sup> There have been many studies with borders

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<sup>10</sup> David Newman, “On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework”, *Journal of Borderland Studies*, vol. 18, No. 1, 2003, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Wilson, Hastings, 2012, pp. 5-8.

<sup>12</sup> Wilson, Hastings, 2012, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Newman, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup> Newman, p. 16. Newman in turn refers this quote to Becher, 1989, Bourdieu, 1991 and Newman, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Kolossov, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Newman, p 15.

themselves as their main focus. But until recently there have been very few studies concerned with the nature of the land and the people who are divided by a political dividing line.<sup>17</sup> A few studies have been made on this phenomenon since the importance of the borderlands as areas of intensive interaction between economical, cultural, and political systems has been discovered.<sup>18</sup>

## 2.2 Zartman's Classification

I have chosen to use William Zartman's analytical approach to investigate my case. The reason for this is that it mirrors the discipline and does something which other attempts at creating an overarching theoretical model has not managed. It does not shy from complexity. Instead, it accepts that the study of borders and borderlands is multifaceted and multidimensional and instead of trying to simplify reality, it creates an analytical tool which can handle the complexity.<sup>19</sup> Of course, all theories are simplifications of reality, but there are levels of how simple the reality can be described. With this said, Zartman allows some measure of generalization. For example, his view of the nature of borderlands boils down to three founding conditions – borderlands are a population on the margins of power centers, intersected by a political boundary, living dynamic relations internally and externally from the power center. The main point however, is that these three conditions are constantly changing.<sup>20</sup>

These conditions are founding concepts on which the analytical frame is built. First in his analysis, he recognizes that even if the border is a socially constructed, artificial entity, its physical nature can affect other non-physical values. Because of this he starts by defining the border itself. He does this by using two salient characteristics of borders – *political nature* and *depth*.<sup>21</sup>

*Political nature* – refers to the borders connection to the center and how much force is used to sustain and guard the border. To exemplify with two extremes a border can be loosely demarcated and unadministered, or it can be closely guarded and run by a strong central authority, or somewhere in between.<sup>22</sup>

*Depth* – refers to the differences between the two sides of the border. To once again exemplify with two extremes: A border can divide two areas with little difference in for example culture or religion. The border is simply and administrative line on a map and the inhabitants largely ignores the differences. This would be a shallow border. But, it could also run between two areas with big

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<sup>17</sup> Zartman, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Kolossov, p. 30.

<sup>19</sup> Zartman, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup> Zartman, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Zartman, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Zartman, p. 6.

differences concerning language or religion where the different identities are unmistakable. This would constitute a deep border.<sup>23</sup>

To return to the overarching main point in Zartman's conditions of borderlands: the situation is never static –it is constantly changing. But, before we continue to the dynamics of the change itself, I will present Zartman's models. These models represent ideal types or stylized versions of the spatial reality of borderlands. They are like snapshots and exist only to determine change from one model to the other.<sup>24</sup>

*Black-and-White* model refers to a sharp border between the two borderlands. The border can be formal or informal. The borderlands in themselves can be seen as outposts of their respective power centers. The difference between the people living on both sides is apparent. The difference is probably linked to some objective fact but the people's conviction that the two sides are different is of much more consequence. Because of this the situation is hostile towards the other and there is little or no cross-border interaction.<sup>25</sup>

*Grey* model refers to a situation which is, as mentioned, at the other end of the scale. Even if people in the borderlands are different than the other the differences don't matter in relation to the border since the populations are completely intermingled. The border may exist but it's permeated. The borderlands and the extensive cross-border interaction create a culture of its own.<sup>26</sup> This type of extensive interaction is sometimes called hybridization which refers to a situation where mutual adaptation and negotiation is norm through daily contact. This does not necessarily mean that differences disappear but they do not need to be enclosed by borders.<sup>27</sup>

*Spotty, buffered* and *layered* models are somewhere in between the two extremes. *Spotted* model refers to islands or enclaves separated from the other by internal borders. Difference is of some importance, especially for the "islanders" who will try to protect their integrity, but culture from the outside will penetrate since the borders are quite permeated.<sup>28</sup> The *buffered* model is the one closest to the Black-and-White model since it refers to a situation where a third culture or population is situated between the main populations to separate them, hence the name. The buffer zone could also refer to a hybrid zone. *Layered* model differs from the others because it concerns horizontal rather than vertical demarcation. One culture or population is dominant over another such as in a colonized society or in the Apartheid system in South Africa.

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<sup>23</sup> Zartman, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Zartman, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Zartman, p. 7.

<sup>26</sup> Zartman, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> Newman, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Zartman, p. 8.

## 2.3 Human Security

Human security started out as a way of broadening the security concept by challenging Realism.<sup>29</sup> I will not dive too deep into the background of the Human security concept. I will however say that the concept has been criticized for being too broad. When talking about things that may threaten people the list can be made endless and the concept has thus been hard to define.<sup>30</sup> There are a number of different examples of how one should or should not interpret Human security.

And because Human Security is such a broad concept I have chosen to follow Taylor Owens definition of human security based on what he calls *Severity relevance*. This means that threats should not be included in Human Security just because they happen to fall within a certain category. Instead, Owens suggests that there should be a categorization of threats based on the severity of the threat and the policy response required. He divides this “hybrid” definition of Human Security into two parts and six categories. The first part is defined as “*Human security is the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive threats.*”<sup>31</sup>

The advantage of this definition is, according to Owen, the possibility of keeping the broad aspect of Human security without confusing it with issues of human well-being and human development. Furthermore, by including “*vital core*” and “*critical and pervasive threats*” the definition includes only the most immediate and severe threats. The second part is a set of six categories and the remaining part of the hybrid definition: “*Human security is the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political threats.*”<sup>32</sup>

These categories are obviously based on the UNDP definition. However, the categories themselves are not threats as such. Instead they work as a conceptual grouping which simplifies the analysis.<sup>33</sup>

I will also follow Owens associated concept of *regional relevance*. This is a way of measuring Human security and which provides some analytical clarity. One examples of how this can be done is to simply do what Owen calls a “laundry list” of threats where one picks threats randomly, or base the selection on data which would entail perfect information of all the potential threats. But instead he suggests a selection based on the threats relevance to the region. This improves

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<sup>29</sup> Owen, Taylor, “Challenges and opportunities for defining and measuring human security”, *Human Rights, Human Security and Disarmament*, 3 issue, 2004. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR): Geneva. p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> Thakur, Ramesh, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 2006, Cambridge University Press: New York, pp. 83-84.

<sup>31</sup> Owen, p. 20.

<sup>32</sup> Owen, p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> Owen, p. 20-21.

ones chances of gathering the relevant data as well as stay true to the broader interpretation of Human security.<sup>34</sup>

I have chosen to use Owens definitions since it provides a focus on the security of people; it keeps the broad aspects of Human security as well as clearly restricts the number of threats defined as Human security. As such, this is plausible to adopt and use in a methodological context.

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<sup>34</sup> Owen, p. 21.

## 3 Method

### 3.1 Case Study

According to Robert K. Yin the optimal situation for conducting a case study is when the research question is based on “how” or “why”, when the study attempts to investigate a current set of events and when the researcher has little or no control over the events taking place.<sup>35</sup>

Another reason for choosing a case study method is its ability to deal with a more diverse set of evidence which I believe is needed to get the full picture in this case.<sup>36</sup>

I will use Zartman’s theory as my descriptive theory. By doing so I will not develop a theory of my own, instead I will be able to concentrate on the research question at hand. Zartman also provides the method with which his models are to be measured. In that way he provides us with an operationalization. I will also follow Zartman’s demand to include the changes in the borderland by doing two analysis, one before, and one after the fence was built. This is the main point of using Zartman’s theory in this study, to easily determine if there is a difference between the pre-fence and the post-fence situations by juxtaposing the models.

Following these guidelines given by Zartman I will conduct the study as follows:

I will start by analyzing the situation in the Georgian borderland before the fence was erected. By doing so I can quickly see which of Zartman’s models is the most appropriate to help explain the situation. I will do this by using *political nature* and *depth* as explained in the theory chapter.

When I have established which model is appropriate for the situation I will start investigating the human security in that situation. As mentioned in the theoretical discussion, Zartman’s theory is based on stylized models of reality and these models cannot be said to represent reality. He writes that these models are only gross simplifications of reality and they are not likely to fit. Instead they are to be seen as analytical tools, they represent what is typical for the case by highlighting salient properties in the phenomenon one wishes to analyze.<sup>37</sup> This will in turn help me when I analyze the human security.

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<sup>35</sup> Robert K. Yin, “Case Study Research – Design and Methods”, 2009, 4. Ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage. p. 13.

<sup>36</sup> Yin, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> Esaiasson, Peter, Gilljam, Mikael, Oscarsson, Henrik, Wängnerud, Lena, ”Metodpraktikan – konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad”, ed. 3, 2010 Nordstedts Juridik AB: Vällingby, pp. 158-159.

However, the models can only give me indications of a specific moment in time and borderlands are not static and can only be described in a state of constant change. To handle this, Zartman has identified three main dimensions from which an analysis can capture and describe that motion.<sup>38</sup>

*Time* as the first dimension is quite straight forward. During what time span will the border be examined?<sup>39</sup>

*Space*, as the second dimension, explains what spatial region you are interested in. It is also important to note that the analysis may vary depending on what area within a particular region you choose to focus on. The focus must thus be on the level which provides the best opportunity for understanding. A study of any borderland region will contain many different situations and components at the same time.<sup>40</sup>

The *time* and *space* variables will be defined in the Operationalization chapter. *The third variable* concerns the *activity* or variable which is the focus of the analysis. In this case the variable is human security.

To determine what human security means in this particular situation I will use Owens definitions and his methodological suggestions mentioned above. Based on his *regional relevance*-concept I will be able to determine what human security threats are most prominent.

Depending on which activity one chooses to observe, there are three different layers that one can focus on according to Zartman. These are:

*The local level, the national level, the mythological layer* which concerns the way in which the border is perceived.

In this study, which focus on the Human security effects of a physical border, will view human security on the local level. Indeed, human security is in itself defined from a local level.

When all this is done, I have a clear image of the situation before the fence was erected.

I move on to when the fence is erected and I will do the same procedure here. Start by deciding which of Zartman's models fit the situation the best. When I have these two situations I will be able to draw a conclusion if, and how, human security has changed by juxtaposing the pre-fence and post-fence borderlands.

. This layout will insure that I follow Zartman's demand for description in constant change since I follow the *time*, *space* and *activity* guidelines in both separate descriptions. Since the fence is the independent variable I may conclude that whatever change there is in human security it should have been caused by the fence. This sort of study would be called an embedded case study by Robert K. Yin since it contains many different sub-categories in the same case.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Zartman, pp. 8-9.

<sup>39</sup> Zartman, p. 9

<sup>40</sup> Zartman, p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> Robert K. Yin, p. 50.

## 3.2 Theory Testing

This far, the method described above is what could be called a theory consuming study.<sup>42</sup> But, my second research question allows me to move towards the more theory testing field.

I will not do a specific theory testing study which would demand a more elaborate methodological undertaking and a lot more space. However, since I have the opportunity to combine two theories, which to my knowledge has not been used in the same analysis in any previous study, I am interested to see if they are compatible. The method to do this is quite straight forward. I will conduct the study as described in this chapter and afterwards I will take some time to discuss the result. This is not a main focus in this study, it is simply a way of taking the opportunity of perhaps furthering the field of border studies by combining a theory which describes borderlands and combining it with a definition of Human security. A combination which I believe has a lot of relevance as stated in the introduction.

## 3.3 External and Internal Validity

As this study is designed so far, it is clear that the study only attempts to say something about the case at hand and makes no attempts to produce results that could be applied to other similar cases.

I do not agree with the constant strive towards the generalization of results and the ability to draw general conclusions.<sup>43</sup> One reason for this is that the demand for general conclusions could keep researchers from attempting to conduct studies that could otherwise turn out to be good case studies. Instead I believe that it's important to conduct studies based on the researcher's interests.<sup>44</sup>

As long as the study has a high internal validity it can still be of use to other studies and policymakers as well. In this case, the study could give useful insight into the phenomenon of borders effects on human security in other cases even if this link is not presented in the study itself.<sup>45</sup> External validity can also be achieved by the *building block principle* where other studies can add to the

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<sup>42</sup> Esaiasson, Peter, Gilljam, Mikael, Oscarsson, Henrik, Wängnerud, Lena, "Metodpraktikan – konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad", ed. 3, 2007, Nordstedts Juridik AB: Vällingby, p. 100.

<sup>43</sup> Esaiasson et al, 2007, p. 27; George, Alexander L, Bennett, Andrew, Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences, 2005, p. 229.

<sup>44</sup> Jan Teorell, Torsten Svensson, "Att fråga och svara – samhällsvetenskaplig metod". 2007, ed. 2. Liber: Malmö, p. 17.

<sup>45</sup> Esaiasson et al, 2007, p. 64.



development of Zartman's theory and thus, or to the description of this case, and by a cumulative effect strengthen the external validity.<sup>46</sup>

## 3.4 Operationalization

The first thing I need to decide is which time span I'm interested in analyzing. Since the fence is my independent variable I need to focus my pre-fence analysis as close to the building of the fence as possible.

In this way I minimize the number of variables which otherwise may interfere with the analysis and affect my conclusions. The moment in time that I have chosen to focus on is the years 2010 and early 2011. It's after the war but before the fence. It was in May in 2011 that the first reports of a barbed wire fences along the ABL started to surface. By examining this moment in time the immediate effects of the war will have dialed down but I will still get a clear view of which effects the war had on human security. I will thus be able to discern the effects of the war from the effects of the fence later on.

The geographical area which I am interested in is harder to decide since it is not a definition based on geography, but on how far the effects of the border can reach. But based on Zartman's definition of Borderland, the things I am interested in analyzing is: Everything that is affected by the border but still in the periphery to the power center.

As long as the facts that I analyze adhere to these two guidelines it should give me enough precision to determine the effect of the fence. To guide my material collection I will look at the geographical area northern part of Georgia, in the vicinity of the border to South Ossetia. This is the region where I believe I will have the biggest chance of finding material which full fills the definition states above.

### 3.4.1 Human Security

Instead of making a list of potential human security threats, which could be ridiculously long, and then test all different threats on the situation at hand I will use Owens concept of regional relevance as well as data availability. Because of the limits in time and space which accompanies this thesis I will choose the two treats which are extra prominent in the borderland in the 2010 to early 2011 period. In this way I will be able to describe them in some detail. (I will however mention other threats). The two main threats will be measured in both time

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<sup>46</sup> Alexander L. George, Bennett, Andrew, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005, s. 111-112.

periods to see if they change. I will also do a new analysis of which threats are the most prominent in the later time period to see if other threats have emerged. The later time period will be the year 2013.

### 3.5 Material

In this study I will work with both primary and secondary sources. Reports from organizations and articles will make out the bulk of the sources from my theoretical descriptions and discussions.

The trickier part is the post-fence analysis. This analysis is a lot more dependent on journalistic material.

The question of using journalistic material forces me to be much more critical towards the sources. But, since I'm not able to travel to the region I have no choice but to rely on the material that's available. To remain critical towards my empirical material I have chosen to use Teorell and Svensson's so called *critical criterion*.

These criteria consist of *authenticity*, evaluating if the facts are true or fabricated and if the provider of the information is who it says it is. *Concurrency*, concerns the distance in time between the creation of the article, or fact, and the actual event. *Tendency*, can the empirical fact reveal a tendency or lean towards a certain ideology or way of thinking?<sup>47</sup> There are many different criteria concerning the evaluation of facts, but I believe that by using these three simple guidelines I will be able to conduct a study with high validity.

I have also found documents and articles which I knew contained important information but which were in Russian or Georgian. I have not had the time or the ability to translate these documents and have thus been forced to keep my information gathering to English materials.

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<sup>47</sup> Jan Teorell, Torsten Svensson, "Att fråga och svara – samhällsvetenskaplig metod". 2007, ed. 2. Liber: Malmö, pp. 105-106.

## 4 Old Point of Analysis

### 4.1 The Pre-fence Situation in Northern Georgia

The first step of my analysis is to determine which of Zartman's models is the most appropriate. I will start by determining the *political nature* of the situation.

Right after the war in 2008 the South Ossetian de facto authorities who took over the region closed the ABL. Still in 2010 and early 2011 the ABL was closed and the only legal way to enter South Ossetia was through Russia. The authorities treats the ABL as a state border. The same is more or less true in the opposite direction. South Ossetians are however, on paper, allowed to travel to the Georgian held territories provided they have the proper documentation. In practice, the situation is not that simple according to Crisis Group Europe. South Ossetians have a hard time crossing the border into Georgia. The only place where such a crossing is allowed is at the crossing in Akhagori, and even then, the decision of whether someone is allowed to cross is up to the discretion of the local police. The difficult and the fear of detentions keep many South Ossetians from traveling to Georgia.<sup>48</sup>

Quite a substantial amount of force was being used by Russia to protect the ABL in 2010. Russian soldiers had taken over the control of the border from the South Ossetian troops and during 2010 an estimate of 900 Russian soldiers guarded the border. Twenty Russian border posts were constructed during 2010 but they were not completed until 2011.<sup>49</sup> Because of the extensive Russian presence in South Ossetia the South Ossetian de facto authorities disbanded a large part of the soldiers conscripted during the war.<sup>50</sup> These facts point to the ABL being very much in the focus of at least the Russian power center in 2010 and early 2011.

The *depth* of the border is also important to determine which of Zartman's models is appropriate.

The differences between the people living on either side of the ABL were not that great before the war, even though there was a bigger population of ethnic Ossetians in South Ossetia (about two thirds) and one third Georgians. The situation on a people-to-people level was quite cordial.<sup>51</sup> However, during and

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<sup>48</sup> South Ossetia: The Burden of Recognition, Crisis Group Europe, Report N°205, 7 June 2010, p. 15.

<sup>49</sup> Crisis Group Europe, 2010, p. 8.

<sup>50</sup> Crisis Group Europe, 2010, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> Crisis Group Europe, 2010, p. 15.

after the war South Ossetian troops conducted what Human Rights Watch called an “ethnic cleansing of Georgians” of many villages in South Ossetia.<sup>52</sup> This, “ethnic cleansing” and the 2008 war itself generated a lot of IDP:s (*Internally displaced people*). UNHCR estimated in November 2009 that about 220 000 people lived displaced in Georgian territories and about 10 000 people lived displaced in South Ossetia. On top of this, about 106 000 people lived in IDP-like situations in South Ossetia, Abkhazia and the areas in close proximity to South Ossetia.<sup>53</sup>

In this displacement people fled to the areas they felt most connected to which brought a polarization of the demographical situation in South Ossetia and Northern Georgia. Still, a lot of family ties and former economical connections still existed across the border but the lack of freedom of movement made it hard to re-establish these links.

To sum up this description of *political nature* and *depth* in the borderland of South Ossetia and Georgia I would say that the political nature points to a border closely guarded by both sides. One part in the conflict sees the ABL as a state border and freedom of movement is restricted by both sides. The large number of troops from Russia on the South Ossetian side points to a large interest from at least the Russian power center. The restricted movement from the Georgian side is not as strict but the situation on the ground is quite different. However, I believe that it should be safe to say that the border situation is of interest for the Georgian power center as well, even though they have a more relaxed approach on paper.

Even though South Ossetia and Georgia had always been differentiated on a political level, in the power centers, since the South Ossetian declaration of independence right after the collapse of the Soviet union, the situation in the periphery, in the borderland, were much more pragmatic. The depth of the border land was greatly changed by the war. People fleeing the war and South Ossetian troops conducting ethnic cleansing contributed to the situation in 2010 which displays a much deeper separation.

All this convinces me that the border situation between South Ossetia and Georgia in 2010 should be labeled as a *Black-and-White* border with a formal, but not physical border according to Zartman’s model.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Up In Flames - Humanitarian Law Violations and Civilian Victims in the Conflict over South Ossetia, Human Rights watch, January, 2009, p. 131.

<sup>53</sup> UNHCR Georgia, 2010 budget structure, IDP-background. November 2009, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> Zartman, p. 7.

## 4.2 Humans Security in this Situation

To determine the human security in this pre-fence situation I will, as mentioned earlier, use Owens definition. Which three threats are most prominent in this definition?

### 4.2.1 Detentions

Due to the situation in the borderland being of the Black and white model the ABL is guarded very closely, even though it's not a physical barrier in 2010 and early 2011. This means that the restricted freedom of movement is a big issue in the area. However, the lack of freedom of movement, even though it has regional relevance, is not a human security issue according to Owens. The issue is not a "critical and pervasive threat" to the "vital core of human lives".

But the detentions can be, and they would fall under the category of "personal threats". Since the war ended and the borderland situation took on a Black and white appearance there have been many arrests and detentions. Crisis Group Europe reports that in 2009 and 2010 there were as many as 5-10 detentions per day and they estimate that at least 100-200 people risk detentions each day by crossing the ABL. (People crossing the ABL at Akhalgori, as the only legal crossing point, are not included in this number). Some people do it unintentionally, and for some it is a calculated risk to attend cattle, check on property of visit funerals or family.<sup>55</sup> These arrests are done by both Georgian and South Ossetian border guards. Most detentions end quite quickly, but some can last for months and become a sort of hostage situation<sup>56</sup>

Through interviews done by Human Rights Watch the situation for the Georgian detainees in South Ossetian prisons was described as terrible. Right after the war the detainees were forced into crowded basement cells and subjected to degrading treatments such as being stripped naked. The poor conditions of their captivity, which entailed lack of water, food and electricity, were largely due to the war. Prisoners were however also subjected to frequent beatings.<sup>57</sup> The Ossetian prisoners in Georgian prisons were also beaten and ill treated during and right after the war.<sup>58</sup> However, the situation, at least in the Georgian prisons, is said to have gotten better in 2010, it is hard to say how the situation is in the South Ossetian prisons.<sup>59</sup> Even though this is a direct threat to people's lives it is not that serious that being arrested leads directly to death. It is however a potential

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<sup>55</sup> Crisis Group Europe, 2010, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Crisis Group Europe, 2010, p. 17.

<sup>57</sup> Human Rights watch, 2009, p. 176-177.

<sup>58</sup> Human Rights watch, 2009, p. 79.

<sup>59</sup> Council of Europe: Committee for the Prevention of Torture, *21st General Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)*, 2011, p. 24.

threat, partly because of the potential risks of a direct affect on people's survival and partly because of the number of people that frequently cross the border. This, in my opinion, constitutes a personal human security threat based on the relevance in this region.

#### 4.2.2 IDP Situation

Seen to the situation in the region in 2010 and early 2011, another important issue is the situation of the IDP:s or internally displaced people's. In 2010 Amnesty international estimated that at least 26, 000 people were still displaced because of the war. Most of them were Georgian and were unable to return to their homes because of the border situation.<sup>60</sup> About 10, 000 people were displaced within South Ossetia in 2010 which are the latest figures available.<sup>61</sup>

In 2010 the Georgian government adopted a strategy of not trying or forcing IDP:s to return to their place of origin which improved their situation. A lot of people were able to move in to 38, more or less, temporary settlements.<sup>62</sup> Still, many others lived in unofficial collective centers and some live in privately arranged dwellings. The living conditions in these places are inadequate according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. These places does not meet the minimum required sheltering standards and they are very cramped since one or more families often share the same room. Many families also share bathrooms which are very unsanitary.<sup>63</sup> These centers are also located in areas that are isolated. There are no public transportation in these areas and the IDP:s are generally to economically challenged to own any kind of transportation of their own. This leads to poor access to schools, jobs and first and foremost, health care.

Ossetian living in on the South Ossetian side of the ABL are at the same time very skeptical to Georgian IDP:s returning to their former homes. According to Crisis Group Europe the Ossetians say that inter-ethnic tension was one of the reasons behind the Russo-Georgian war in the first place. They also believe that if Georgians were to return the Georgian government would embed special forces soldiers with the civilians who returned.<sup>64</sup>

All these conditions could fall under the human security categories of *economic* and *health* threats as described by Owens. This is also a typical example of a situation that was brought on by the war but the new Black and white

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<sup>60</sup> Georgia - Amnesty International Report, Human Eights in Georgia, 2010, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/georgia/report-2010>, [Retrived: 11-08-2014].

<sup>61</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), *Georgia: Internal displacement in brief*, 2013, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/europe-the-caucasus-and-central-asia/georgia/summary>, [Retrived: 13-08-2014].

<sup>62</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), *Georgia: Towards Durable Solutions for IDP:s - IDMC briefing paper*, 2010, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> IDMC, *Georgia: Towards Durable Solutions for IDP:s - IDMC briefing paper*, 2010, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> Crisis Group Europe, 2010, p. 18.

borderland situation makes matters worse by not allowing people to return to their original homes forcing them to live in hopeless conditions.

#### 4.2.3 Human Security Conclusion

On the whole none of the issues mentioned above is, in my opinion, enough to full fill Owens definitions of human security because of the lack of severity, even though the threats attack the *vital core*. However, the concept of regional relevance and the categories put forth by Owens helps me to identify the most pressing issues in the borderland in 2010 and early 2011, even though the severity may not reach up to Owens definition.

# 5 New Point of Analysis

## 5.1 Post-fence Situation in Northern Georgia

Now that we have moved on to the post-fence situation, which is the year of 2013, I will conduct the analysis in the same way as in the pre-fence analysis. I will start by determining which of Zartman's models is the most appropriate to describe the post fence situation. The first step is once again *political nature*.

Reports of the ABL being marked out with the use of barbed wire had been around since the spring of 2011. The work seems to have stopped since there were no more reports until may 2013 when Russian forces started to erect a real fence in the vicinity of the village of Ditsi a few miles north of Gori. The local people complained that they were no longer able to reach their agricultural land or water sources.<sup>65</sup> According to the EUMM:s IPRM-meetings the tension seems to be rising in the borderland. Among other issues the even more frequent detention of trespassers as well as Georgian police cars near fatal confrontation with Russian border guards were discussed.<sup>66</sup> Apart from barbed wire the fence also included earth berms and ditches as well as high-tech surveillance cameras.<sup>67</sup> The Russians even expanded the South Ossetian territory in some places by building the fence on stretches of land that are clearly Georgian and they explain it by referring to Soviet maps and boundaries.<sup>68</sup> The rules prohibiting people from South Ossetia and Georgia to travel in to each other's regions still apply and have even become

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<sup>65</sup> EUMM, *Ditsi: EUMM calls for restraint*, 2013, [http://www.eumm.eu/en/press\\_and\\_public\\_information/press\\_releases/3980/?year=2013&month=12](http://www.eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/press_releases/3980/?year=2013&month=12). [Retrieved: 14-08-2014].

<sup>66</sup> EUMM, *EUMM calls for restraint after Kveshi incident*, 2013, [http://www.eumm.eu/en/press\\_and\\_public\\_information/press\\_releases/3950/?year=2013&month=12](http://www.eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/press_releases/3950/?year=2013&month=12). [Retrieved:14-08-2014].

EUMM, *EUMM facilitates dialogue via Hotline to release detainee*, 2013, [http://www.eumm.eu/en/press\\_and\\_public\\_information/press\\_releases/3824/?year=2013&month=12](http://www.eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/press_releases/3824/?year=2013&month=12). [Retrieved: 14-08-2014].

<sup>67</sup> EUMM, *EUMM voices concern about the impact of fences on local communities*, 2013, [http://www.eumm.eu/en/press\\_and\\_public\\_information/press\\_releases/3942/?year=2013&month=12](http://www.eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/press_releases/3942/?year=2013&month=12), [Retrieved:14-08-2014].

The Guardian, *Russian 'borderisation': barricades erected in Georgia, say EU monitor*, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/23/russia-borderisation-barricades-erected-georgia-eu>, [Retrieved: 14-08-2014].

<sup>68</sup> Georgia Today, *Russia pushes Georgia towards confrontation*, 27-09-2013, [http://www.georgiatoday.ge/article\\_details.php?id=11497](http://www.georgiatoday.ge/article_details.php?id=11497). [Retrieved: 16-08-2014]; The Guardian, *Russian 'borderisation': barricades erected in Georgia, say EU monitors*, 23-10-2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/23/russia-borderisation-barricades-erected-georgia-eu>. [Retrieved: 16-08-14].



more restrictive since the building of the fence started.<sup>69</sup> On the 8 of august 2013, precisely five years after the war, the fence stretched for 27 kilometer and crossed through and around 15 villages.<sup>70</sup>

The fence itself is not erected on the ABL. The stretch of the fence is, according to Russian sources, based on a Soviet map of the region from 1922. This has lead Georgian media to dub the borderization a “creeping occupation” since the occupied area is slowly expanding as the fence is erected.<sup>71</sup> I do not have enough secure sources, or neutral sources, to determine if this is part of the Russian agenda or if this is the case along the entire ABL. According to one source the ABL is about 15 meters in front of the fence which means that if you walk up to the fence, you have already crossed the line and are liable for arrest.<sup>72</sup> Although it seems to be clear that the fence is not drawn precisely along the ABL since there are many reports of people and settlements being affected by the fence that were not necessarily affected by the ABL.

All this seems to indicate that the border is as closed as it was in 2010 if not even more. Thus, the amount of money spent on the installation of the fence the borderization of South Ossetia must be very much in the focus of the Russian power center.

The depth of the borderlands has not changed since 2010. The situation is still polarized due to the forced displacement of Georgians out of South Ossetia. The people living displaced in Georgia proper have still not been able to return because the de facto authorities in South Ossetia do not allow it. They are afraid that the sudden influx of Georgians would upset the ethnic balance in South Ossetia and thus risk renewed conflicts.<sup>73</sup>

To sum up the post-fence situation in the borderlands the situation is in large parts the same as the pre-fence situation, only worse. The Depth has not changed a lot. The demographic polarization happened right after the war 2008 and the situation remains unchanged. The political nature on the other hand has grown even tenser in 2013. The power centers spend more money trying to control the ABL and detentions are even more frequent. Through this I conclude that the situation still falls into Zartman’s *black-and-white* model. This means that there has been no great change in the situation from the pre-fence to the post-fence situation, except for the construction of the fence in some areas.

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69 EUMM, EUMM voices concern about the impact of fences on local communities, 2013.

70 Eurasia.org, Georgia: Is Moscow Building Another Berlin Wall?, 08-08-2013, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67352>. [Retrieved: 16-08-2014].

71 Georgia Today, Russia pushes Georgia towards confrontation, 27-09-2013, [http://www.georgiatoday.ge/article\\_details.php?id=11497](http://www.georgiatoday.ge/article_details.php?id=11497). [Retrieved: 16-08-2014];

The Guardian, Russian 'borderisation': barricades erected in Georgia, say EU monitors, 23-10-2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/23/russia-borderisation-barricades-erected-georgia-eu>. [Retrieved: 16-08-14].

<sup>72</sup> VICE News, *Russia is Still Building a “Rural Berlin Wall” Through Georgia*, 27-02-2014, <http://www.vice.com/read/russia-are-building-a-rural-berlin-wall-through-georgia>. [Retrieved: 16-08-2014].

<sup>73</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), Georgia: Internal displacement in brief, 2013, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/europe-the-caucasus-and-central-asia/georgia/summary>, [Retrieved: 14-08-2014].

## 5.2 Human Security in this Situation

When examining the human security situation in 2013 it's important to decide if the faults in the human security are derived from the fence or from other causes. In some instances it is possible that the faults in the human security can be traced to causes which are common to both the fence and (for example) the war of 2008.

Just as in the pre-fence analysis I will use Owens definition of human security as well as his concept of regional relevance to determine which human security threats are most prominent. To follow up the situation of the detainees which qualified as a personal threat in 2010 and early 2011, the situation has improved a lot. The ICRC has hardly anything to criticize in their 2013 Annual Report about the situation of the detainees. 15 of the prisons in Georgia visited by the ICRC had improved their healthcare and there is no mention of further abuse.<sup>74</sup>

The ICRC does not mention the situation in the borderlands in particular but they do say that one of the more common crimes that people are detained for is illegal crossing of the ABL, thus one can assume that the improvements in the detention centers also apply for those places located in the borderlands. In South Ossetia the ICRC reports that especially the hygiene, as well as the health care has improved a lot.<sup>75</sup> To summarize the detainee situation I would not consider it a personal security threat, as was the case in the pre-fence situation.

Apart from the once that I have mentioned there could also be a *health* threat related to the fence. Some more severe medical cases that were untreatable in South Ossetia had to be evacuated across the ABL into Georgia.

These evacuations were managed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as the only neutral intermediary accepted on the South Ossetian side.<sup>76</sup> But since these medical emergencies are relatively few in comparison to the number of people living in the borderlands I do not believe that the fact qualifies as a human security threat. It does however show that the freedom of movement can induce other potential human security threats.

### 5.2.1 IDP Situation

Still in 2013 none of the IDP:s have been able to return home because of the relationship between South Ossetia/Russia and Georgia which in turn is crystallized in the ABL.

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<sup>74</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *ICRC Annual Report – Georgia*, 2013, p. 376.

<sup>75</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *ICRC Annual Report – Georgia*, 2013, p. 376.

<sup>76</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *ICRC Annual Report – Georgia*, 2013, p. 374.

Some of the IDP:s left the collective centers and tried to return but were not able to cross the ABL. Instead, they settled on the Georgian side of the ABL but as close as possible to their old home. The situation of these people have been made worse by the installation of the fence since it physically prevents them from accessing land, homes, other livelihood and water. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, the people who live close to the ABL, as described above, fell very unsafe because of this despite the presence of Georgian border guards.<sup>77</sup>

The situation have improved for the IDP:s who stayed in the government owned collective centers since 2010. After five years of not being able to relocate the IDP:s to their original homes the Georgian government realized that they need to integrate the IDP:s into their society. This policy has been carried out with mixed results. The IDP:s who stayed also face threats on a daily basis.<sup>78</sup>

More IDP:s are able to live in their own houses or apartments than two years before. However, their main income is still the government's monthly allowance which places the IDP:s economically on the same level as other poor people in Georgia.<sup>79</sup>

Despite the policy that IDP:s relocated from collective center are to be able to chose their own housing, the real situation does not allow this. Usually the families that move to own housing arranges by the government does not have a choice in location, standard or other special needs. Thus, most IDP:s, even in own housing, does not live in places which supports their livelihood or needs. Furthermore, these arranged houses are, as mentioned in the pre-fence analysis, isolated, geographically and by means of public transport. And just as the IDP-situation in the pre-fence analysis the biggest threats are the poor economic situation as well as poor housing. The poor housing situation can in turn be described as a health threat.<sup>80</sup>

### 5.2.2 Economical Threats

It is not only the IDP:s who relocated to the vicinity of the ABL who were affected when the fence was built. Other people living in the borderland, and in some cases on the border, were also affected.

In august 2013 the EUMM voiced concerns that the "physical obstacle" had a growing impact in the freedom of movement and the livelihoods of the local

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<sup>77</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), *Georgia: Internal displacement in brief*, 2013.

<sup>78</sup> IDMC, *Georgia: Internal displacement in brief*, 2013.

<sup>79</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, Submission from the Internal Monitoring Displacement Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) for consideration at the 109th Session of the Human Rights Committee, 2013, p. 3;  
IDMC, *Georgia: Internal displacement in brief*, 2013.

<sup>80</sup> IDMC, *Georgia: Internal displacement in brief*, 2013.

communities. They also stated that it disrupts patterns of life of the local population and divides communities”.<sup>81</sup>

Many of the negative effects of the fence were sentimental such as being cut off from family, friends or cemeteries. Even though it’s sad, it does not have the potential of threatening people’s lives and does not qualify as a threat to the human security. On the other hand, the economical effect of the fence does threaten people’s lives.

The most severe consequence is that people live on one side of the border and their farmlands, or part of their farmlands, end up on the other side of the fence. One such case is described in The Guardian where Tina Bidzinashvili and her husband’s apple orchard is suddenly demarcated from their farm as Russian soldiers draw barbed wire across it. The apple orchard is their only economical income. Their only chance of legally getting in to South Ossetia is by hopefully being allowed to cross a checkpoint. The checkpoint is however six hours away.<sup>82</sup>

Another such story is that of Georgian farmer Georgi Chatlitschvi.

*“The Russian border guards told me my orchards were no longer mine—they were part of South Ossetia, not Georgia. Those apples were my livelihood. Now they sit behind the fence, on land they tell me is part of a different country.”<sup>83</sup>*

Other such stories describe people dependent on the cattle industry. If cattle, while grazing, happen to wander off to the wrong side of the ABL they are confiscated. If the herders try to retrieve the cattle, they themselves may be arrested for trespassing.<sup>84</sup> These issues have been discussed at EUMM:s IPRM-meetings and observers have tried to work out solutions where farmers will be able to get to their lands without the risk of arrest. In the earlier IPRM-meetings of 2014 no deal had been struck. Apart from this issue, other fence related issues discussed at the meetings are the water supply which in some villages is also cut off.<sup>85</sup> Without access to the full protocols from the meeting it is however unclear if the EU-monitors managed to solve the problem. Another issue which would fall under the economic security threat is the pension which elderly Georgians are entitled to. Some old Georgians are however on the South Ossetian side of the ABL which means that they need to travel to an authorized crossing and then to a government facility of some kind to collect their pension. Unfortunately, the pension is paid in Georgian Lira which, on their return to South Ossetia, is worthless since the

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<sup>81</sup> EUMM, EUMM voices concern about the impact of fences on local communities, 2013.

<sup>82</sup> The Guardian, *Russian 'borderisation': barricades erected in Georgia, say EU monitors*, 23-10-2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/23/russia-borderisation-barricades-erected-georgia-eu>. [Retrieved: 16-08-14].

<sup>83</sup> VICE News, *Russia is Still Building a “Rural Berlin Wall” Through Georgia*, 27-02-2014, <http://www.vice.com/read/russia-are-building-a-rural-berlin-wall-through-georgia>. [Retrieved: 16-08-2014].

<sup>84</sup> VICE News, 27-02-2014.

<sup>85</sup> Eurasia.org, *Georgia: Is Moscow Building Another Berlin Wall?*, 08-08-2013, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67352>. [Retrieved: 16-08-2014].

Russian Ruble is the only accepted currency in the de facto state.<sup>86</sup> This makes the situation of the elderly even worse, and they are already one of the most exposed groups.<sup>87</sup>

### 5.2.3 Human Security Conclusion

Based on the examples mentioned above and on the more overarching statements made by the EUMM and the ICRC I conclude that the situation is not positive.

The big difference in this analysis compared to the first one is that the situation has certainly changed. The most pressing issues are not the same after the fence as they were before except for the still very pressing IDP-situation. On the whole I draw the same conclusion as in the pre-fence analysis. The regional relevance concept help me to pinpoint the most pressing human security issues even if they are not as severe as the once I believe Owens had in mind when he created his definition of human security.

There are many issues that are brought on by the closed nature of the ABL and by the fence. These two are important to separate since I am interested in analyzing the effects of the physical nature of the border, that is to say the fence. To follow this train of thought I believe that the human security threats created by the fence, in the post-fence situation these would be the economic threats from people being cut off from their livelihood, are not as severe as the ones created by the closed nature of the ABL.

Another threat that accompanies a physical barrier in a former conflict area is that the fence or wall prevents people-to-people contact which is an important thing for reconciliation and to build confidence between former enemies. On the other hand, this is no Human security threat.

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<sup>86</sup> VICE News, 27-02-2014.

<sup>87</sup> ICRC, *Georgia/South Ossetia: life on both sides of the administrative boundary line*, 2009, <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/feature/2009/georgia-feature-060809.htm>. [Retrieved: 16-08-2014].

## 6 Conclusion

### 6.1 How did the fact that the ABL became a physical border affect Human security on the Georgian side?

Finally I draw my conclusions. I have chosen to save many of my conclusions till this last part. The reason is that I believe that if the conclusion is allowed to take up some space the reasoning can be more nuanced and precise. It is easier to follow logical reasoning if it can be read in one flow instead of being spread out piece meal over thirty pages. I will however summarize my final conclusion in the end.

I cannot say anything about other cases, but I believe that I can say that the situation in the borderland did not change drastically after the border transformed from a controlled border to a physical barrier. This leads me to draw the conclusion that the human security, in the case of the borderland in northern Georgia, does not depend on the physical state of the border.

Just as a border may just be a line on a map a fence can just as well be just a fence. Thus, the decisive issue is in not in the physical dimensions of the border but rather what Zartman calls *political nature* and *depth*, in this case the closed nature of the ABL. The whole borderland may be affected by the border being closed but the whole borderland is not necessarily affected by the fence itself.

There were differences in the Human security situation. In the pre-fence situation the main threats were the economical and health threats of the IDP:s situation. This situation is partly caused by the war and partly by the closed nature of the ABL which prevents them from returning. This situation continues into the post-fence situation, but the causes are the same. The addition of a fence does not add to the misery of the IDP:s. The other main Human security threat in the post-fence situation was the loss of livelihood in the borderland caused by people being cut off from their farmland and orchards and this is a direct effect of the new physical nature of the ABL. It did however only afflicts people who lived in the shadow of the fence.

To summarize my conclusion, I conclude that the fence, as a physical entity, is not of great importance. It is instead the nature of the border that is the cause of the more severe and wide spread threats. The physical nature of the fence only affects the people who live in its shadow.

## 6.2 How is Zartman's theory compatible with Owens definition of Human security?

I believe that the *activity* in Zartman's *time/space/activity* concept is not meant to be something as large as Human security. The activity should be something which in itself does not entail as many sub-categories.

An example would be to only investigate the IDP situation in the borderland. I believe that this would be a lot easier for Zartman's theory and methodological considerations.. However, Zartman's theory is compatible with Owens definition of Human security due to this addition of *activity*. The concept allows for a lot of freedom without losing track of the importance of the time and space definitions or of the *the local level, the national level or the mythological layer*, even if all of these levels are not relevant in every study. I also believe that one should not pick and chose from Zartman's theory but use the whole theory.

## 6.3 Reflections on the Research Process

The research process for this thesis paper was quite honest in the sense that I started by determining which theories would be most appropriate to answer my research question.

Not until I had decided this did I fully confront the empirical material. Later on I discovered that based on the empirical evidence I could have refined the theoretical part of the study to fit the empirical evidence. I did not do this which leads me to my conclusion that the study is in this sense honest and has a decent measure of internal validity.

The issue of collecting reliable information is hard when the study is about the situation of people on the ground and their daily life. Thus, if I had the opportunity to conduct this study again I would complement my material by doing interviews. While working on this study I have come to realize that the only, and best way to get reliable facts when studying people is to talk to them, or at least talk to the people who work in close contact with them, such as the EUMM in this case.

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