

DRIVERS FOR SECURITIZATION AND DE-SECURITIZATION OVER THE NEGOTIATION OF THE GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM

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Abstract

This study examined the drivers of securitization and de-securitization discourse over the negotiation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project (GERD). The study employed a qualitative research approach in which data are gathered mainly from secondary sources such as journal articles, conference papers, books, riparian countries water policy, report of International Panel of Expert (IPoE) on GERD, governmental and intergovernmental organizations briefings and statement. The central argument is that Egypt's securitization of GERD as an existential water security threat is neither an actual nor perceived threat. Current water scarcity in Egypt is not due to the hydropower projects of Ethiopia like Tana Beles and Tekeze hydroelectric power projects. Rather water scarcity is largely attributed to Egypt's poor water management, high evaporation at High Aswan Dam, and primitive irrigation system and water-intensive agriculture. The study also identified that the discourse of absolute Nile water dependency and Egypt's notion of 'water security' are the major drivers of Egypt's securitization approach on GERD. However, the study shows that Egypt's absolute Nile water dependency discourses is a myth. Rather Egypt is a groundwater endowed country with infinite access to sea water so that its historicism of the Nile as matter of life and death is a fabricated myth. Based on this, the author argues that GERD is an invented fictitious threat neither has a legal ground nor supported by scientific research. On the other hand, Ethiopia uses tactical securitization-cum-desecuritization approach over the GERD issue using principles of international water law such as equitable and reasonable utilization, discourses of the right to development, and poverty reduction. Thus, two kinds of transformation are needed. On the part of Egypt, the securitizing actors should bring the securitized GERD into the realm of normal politics. On the part of Ethiopia, it should deconstruct the unwarranted myth of Egypt on GERD in particular and Nile in general through proactive discourse targeting international community, regional organizations, Nile River Basin countries, media, and the wider Egyptian public.

Keywords: Securitization, De-securitization, GERD, Nile, Ethiopia, Egypt

INTRODUCTION

Since the second half of the 20th century, Ethiopia has been engaged in building small hydroelectric power development. With the coming to power of Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), however, there are large-scale water resources development projects. The GERD project, which is under construction on the Abbay River, is one of the mega hydroelectric power project. The project has been viewed in the existing

literature as game changer,¹ new legal order² and fair system.³ Despite scientifically verified broader positive regional implication of GERD, Egypt regards GERD as an existential security threat.⁴ Egypt securitization approach over GERD is not based on recognition of Nile as a single hydrological unity and shared resource but as a national security and geopolitical issue,⁵ deep sense of entitlement and monopolism, doctrine of prior use, discourse of absolute water dependency,⁶ absence of alternative water resources other than Nile River in Egypt, and overriding importance to the principle of not to cause significant harm.

In its face value, the major controversies raised by Egypt were the potential downstream consequence of GERD, reservoir filling strategy and time, and overall technical aspects of dam design, and its impact on Egypt's water security.⁷ However, in practice what Egypt insist is not the above-mentioned issues but securitization of GERD as a threat of Egypt's notion of water security⁸ which is grounded on the logic of not to give a drop of water for Ethiopia whose water is feeding Egypt.

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¹ Rawia Tewfik, *The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Benefit-sharing Project in the Eastern Nile?* 41 Water International, 1, 4 (2016). See also Ana Elisa Cascão and Alan Nicol, *GERD: New Norms of Cooperation in The Nile Basin?*, 41 Water International, 550, 565-569 (2016).

² Salman M. A. Salman, *The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: The Road to the Declaration of Principles and the Khartoum Document*, Water International, 1, 1 (2016)

³ Zeray Yihdego & Alistair Rieu-Clarke, *An exploration of fairness in international law through the Blue Nile and GERD*, 41 Water International, 528, 544-545 (2016).

⁴ Letter From Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, to the United Nations Security Council (June 11, 2021), Security Council Report (19 Jun 2020). Available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3893948/files/S_2020_566-EN.pdf (Accessed on 12 March 2021); Hamdy A. Hassan, *Contending hegemony and the new security systems in Africa*, 9 Afr. J. Pol. Sci., 159, 164(2015); Omar Nasef, *National Security as Told by the Nile*, Century International (Aug. 4, 2016). Available at: <https://tcf.org/content/report/egyptian-national-security-told-nile/?session=1> (Accessed on 20 March 2021).

⁵ Stefan Deconinck, *Security as a threat to development: the geopolitics of water scarcity in the Nile River basin*, Royal High Institute for Defence Focus Paper (10, 2017), https://www.waternet.be/documents/Security_as_a_threat_to_development_Deconinck.pdf

⁶ Letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Arab Republic of Egypt to UNSC, *Annex-1, The Grad Ethiopia Renaissance Dam, Setting the Record Straight*, Security Council Report (19 Jun 2020). Available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2020_566%20Egypt%20letter%20of%2019%20June.pdf (Accessed on 12 March 2021).

⁷ Ahmed H. Elyamany and Walaa Y. El-Nashar, *Managing risks of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on Egypt*, 9 Ain Shams Engineering Journal, 2383, 2383–2388(2018)

⁸ Letter From Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, to the United Nations Security Council (June 11, 2021); Samuel Berhanu and Yohannes Eneyew, *Betwixt Development and Securitisation of the Nile: Competing Narratives*, Australian Outlook (Aug. 27, 2020). Available at: <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/betwixt-development-securitisation-of-nile-competing-narratives/> (Accessed on 25 February 2021); Antoaneta Roussi, *Row Over Giant Nile Dam Could Escalate, Experts Warn*, 583, Nature, 501(2020); Egypt Today, *We want to help Ethiopians in their development, but Egypt's water share is a 'red line': Sisi*, Egypt Today (Jul. 15, 2021). Available at: <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/106101/We-want-to-help-Ethiopians-in-their-development-but-Egypt> (Accessed on 10 September 2021).

In contrast to the zero-sum game politics of Egypt securitization, Ethiopia has used tactical securitization-cum-desecuritization approach.⁹ In Ethiopia, the GERD project has been viewed as an existential issue which can be considered as tactical securitization. However, Ethiopia's approach is largely desecuritization. Because, tactical securitization is emanated from the development narrative as GERD is regarded as a development project than an issue of security. Accordingly, GERD is presented by Ethiopia as a benefit sharing project having not only national but also wider regional and global significance. In this regard, the bedrock of Ethiopia desecuritization approach rests upon the recognition of Nile as a transboundary resource and its utilization based on principle of equitable and reasonable use, hydro cooperation and solidarity, and the right to development.

Against this backdrop, GERD is framed and marketed by Egypt as a threat not only to its water share (55.5 billion cubic meters of water) as per the 1959 bilateral agreement but also to the fabricated identity of inseparability between Nile and Egypt. The very intention of this study is, therefore, to examine the drivers of securitization and de-securitization discourse over GERD. Accordingly, the writer of this paper argues that Egyptian view of GERD as a water security threat of Egypt is a hyperbolically constructed myth that is neither actual nor perceived threat. The rationale behind Egypt securitization of GERD as an existential threat is to counter the broader geopolitical implication of the construction of GERD for Ethiopia and the region at large. Because, the GERD project has a potential in increasing Ethiopia's hard and soft power.

In doing so, the study employed a qualitative research approach due to the need to address who securitizes (securitizing actor) what (issues considered as threat), how (tools employed), why and with what intended goals. Moreover, qualitative research method is found viable approach for water securitization studies because securitization study requires a deep looking at and analyzing how the securitizing actor uses metaphors, policies, analogies, emotions, propaganda and fabricated knowledge in establishing rhetoric of existential threat.

Accordingly, the study principally employed secondary sources of data (documentary analysis and literature reviews) such as journal articles, conference papers, books, riparian countries reports, report of International Panel of Expert (IPoE) on GERD, government official speeches, and governmental and intergovernmental organization briefings and statements. Finally, the data is analyzed using critical discourse which is important in understanding how discourse of national security is constructed and maintained.

To address the foregoing issues, the paper is organized into four sections. The first section justifies the appropriateness of the theoretical framework the study had adopted: theory of securitization which is a constructivist approach. The second section provides a conceptualization of securitization and desecuritization theory in the context of transboundary river basins. The third section examined the drivers of Egypt's securitization discourse. It also questioned the securitization discourse of Egypt whether they are real or myth based on reliable data. This helps the reader to understand the drivers of Egypt's securitization policy. The final section provides a discussion on the tactical securitization-cum-desecuritization approach of Ethiopia. The paper has also concluding remarks.

⁹ Eloise von Gienant, "*#Itsmydam*": *An analysis of Ethiopian and Egyptian discourses surrounding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam*, Ch 6 (Master Thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2020)

1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The study of hydropolitics is largely dominated by the realism and liberalism school of thought. Founding on the assumption of realism and power analysis, the water war analysis of transboundary water resources contends that water scarcity will led to violent conflict.¹⁰ This is the hydro-pessimist approach to hydropolitics. Their manifesto is that “the war of tomorrow is over water”.¹¹ Nile mainly the Eastern Nile sub-system is most cited example of war-waiting scenario. Nevertheless, the hydro-pessimist approach lacks empirical evidence as there is no recorded overt conflict over water resources. Empirical study shows that internationally cooperation over transboundary water resources is more dominant than conflict.¹² From 805 AD to 1984 more than 3600 water agreements had been signed over transboundary water resources.¹³ Moreover, since 1948 more than 295 water treaties have been signed whereas approximately 37 conflicts have been recorded.¹⁴

In contrast to the hydro pessimism, the neoliberalism variant of water-cooperation scenario portrays transboundary Rivers as an arena of cooperation. Proponents of this perspective characterize the water war thesis as hyperbolic. Despite their optimism, there is no genuine cooperation so far albeit the signing of several agreements and establishment of river basin organizations. Rather there exists pseudo cooperation. For instance, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) has not yet transformed into a permanent Nile River Basin Commission due to the delayed ratification of the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA). The pre-NBI Egypt engineered cooperative frameworks such as Hydromet, Undugu and TECCONILE (Technical Cooperation Committee for Promotion of the Development and Environment Protection of the Nile Basin) were also an example of pseudo cooperation.¹⁵ Because, they were not inclusive in terms of both membership and focus area. The main focus of these initiatives was technical cooperation that neglect most controversial and important Nile issues such as legal and institutional framework.

As stated above, both the water war and water peace perspectives assumes that Transboundary Rivers may induce water war and cooperation respectively. Nevertheless, in reality at least in overt form, neither principled cooperation nor overt conflict is happening. Moreover, these two theoretical approaches cannot explain why, how and for what riparian countries tend to construct water securitization. Therefore, adopting a securitization theory which is a constructivist approach seems a right theoretical approach to study issues of water securitization like the

¹⁰ Thomas F Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, 5 (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1999)

¹¹ Brahma Chellaney, *Water, Peace and War: Confronting the Global Water Crisis*, 1 (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Maryland, 2013).

¹² Lucia De Stefano, Paris Edwards, Lynette de Silva and Aaron T. Wolf, *Tracking cooperation and conflict in international basins: historic and recent trends*, 12 Water Policy, 871, 876-881 (2010)

¹³ Aaron T. Wolf, *The Transboundary Freshwater Dispute Database Project*, 24 Water International, 160 (1999)

¹⁴ Atlas of International Freshwater Agreements, https://na.unep.net/siouxfalls/publications/treaties/2_WorldsAgreements_atlas.pdf

¹⁵ Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw, *The Nile: Why multilateralism and no room for divide and rule?*, Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw's Views on Transboundary Watercourses and Related Issues Blog. Available at: <https://zenileabbay.wordpress.com/2013/05/18/the-nile-why-multilateralism-and-no-room-for-divide-and-rule/> (Accessed on 10 March 2021).

GERD issue and the Nile water. In order to fill the existing gap, therefore, this study has used the securitization and desecuritization theory. The former is used in analyzing why Egypt securitizes GERD, for what and its implication; while the latter is employed to examine Ethiopia's attempt in bringing the securitized water back to mainstream politics and negotiation based on win-win scenario with due consideration of principle of international water law such as equitable and reasonable use.

2. CONCEPTUALIZING SECURITIZATION AND DESECURITIZATION IN TRANSBOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES

Unlike traditional security conception that emphasizes the material aspect of the threat, securitization is a process focused notion of security in which a securitizing actor frame and suddenly transform a normal or neutral issues into a security issue.¹⁶ As a theory, securitization focus on how “a securitization actor refers to an issue as an existential threat, and tries to convince an audience that extraordinary measures must be taken in order to contain the problem”.¹⁷ It helps us to look at who securitizes (securitizing actor) what issues perceived as threats for whom (referent object).

In this regard, securitization theory has three steps and five components. In terms of steps, identification of an existential threat comes first. An existential threat is considered as superior of all issues. If it is not addressed it will endanger the very survival of the referent object. The next step is the “declaration of an emergency situation”.¹⁸ This will be followed by undertaking an extraordinary measure to stop the threatening issue. In this process security, securitizing actor, existential threat, referent object and audience are key components of securitization.¹⁹

First, security in this sense is the social construction of a security problem through a securitized speech.²⁰ The securitizing actor frames an issue as a security problem endangering the survival of a particular object.²¹ Through this, a securitizing actor legitimizes the importance of taking an extraordinary measure against the socially constructed threat. Second, a securitizing actor is an actor that moves an issue from mainstream politics to high political issue of survival through a securitized speech.²² Mostly they are key officials and institutions in charge of making decision on extraordinary measure. Kasim, for instance, categorized securitizing actors in to three namely

¹⁶ Stefan Deconinck, *supra* note 5, at 2 ; See also Nassef M. Adiong, *The U.S.' and Israel's Securitization of Iran's Nuclear Energy*, 1, The Quarterly Journal of Political Studies of Islamic World, 95, 105-106 (2012).

¹⁷ Stefan Deconinck, *supra* note 5, at 2

¹⁸ Yandry K. Kasim, *Securitization and Desecuritization in Indonesia's Democratic Transition: A Case Study of Aceh Separatist Movement*, 2-4, A Paper presented at the 8th Pan – European Conference on International Relations, (Warsaw, 18-21 September 2013)

¹⁹ See Melissa G. Curley and Wong Siu-lun, *Introduction and Conceptual Perspectives, In Security and Migration in Asia: The dynamics of securitization* 4-7 (Routledge, London, 2008)

²⁰ *Id.*, at 4

²¹ Nassef M. Adiong, *The U.S.' and Israel's Securitization of Iran's Nuclear Energy*, 1, The Quarterly Journal of Political Studies of Islamic World, 95, 106 (2012).

²² Jack Woodrow Stuart, *Securitization in Africa's River Basin Organizations: Implications for Transboundary Water Governance*, Ch 2, 20-22 (Master Thesis, The Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, 2019).

“political leaders, bureaucracies, and governing bodies”.²³ They have a role of labeling, framing and marketing a problem as an existential threat to a referent object; and convince the audience about the necessity to employ an extraordinary measure.

The success of the securitizing actor, however, depends on gaining of two kinds of support: moral and formal.²⁴ Moral support of the public about the measure to be taken is necessary but not sufficient. While formal support in the form of decision by institutions mandated to vote such as parliament are both necessary and sufficient to take the extraordinary measure against the threat.²⁵ In the case of international issues like transboundary water resources, getting the support of regional and international governmental and non-governmental organization is important at least to make the claim legitimate. For instance, Egypt has been using the Arab League in attempt to frame the GERD as a regional security issue. It has also referred the case to the UNSC.

Existential threat is the third element of securitization theory. Existential threats are threats to the very wellbeing and existence of a particular object. However, the polemical issue is that under what circumstances are problems or issues considered as an existential threat? Are they a socially constructed or real threat? In this regard, scholars have identified three types of threats: actual, perceived and fictitious.²⁶ Actual threat is current existing threat or to use the word of Abdulrahman ‘security in practice’; security that taking place in reality.²⁷ For instance, any actual decrease of the Nile waters can be considered as an actual threat for the watercourse States. However, to the best of my knowledge, there are no reports on the decrease of the Nile water due to the operational hydroelectric power plants on the Abbay and Tekezze River basins such as Tana Beles and Tekezze. Unlike water-consumptive projects like irrigation, GERD is a single purpose hydroelectric power project which is a non-consumptive water use. So that there is no reason to assume that GERD could be an actual threat to downstream countries. This can be evidenced from the first filling and operation of GERD that was completed as per the plan of Ethiopia. The first filling and operation of GERD has not resulted any decrease of the Nile water reaching Egypt. Perceived threat is securitization by perception. It is neither happening at present nor transformed into actual threat but it is assumed that it will happen in the near future.²⁸ Fictitious threat is securitization by imagination. It has no likelihood of occurrence and never exists in a real sense.²⁹ But, the securitizing actor invoked it in order to achieve its intended goals.

Fourth, the referent object of securitization can be things regarded as existentially threatened by the security issues that have a legitimate claim to survive.³⁰ The referent object(s) can be State security particularly military security, political security such as sovereignty or ideology, economic security, social security in terms of collective identities, environmental security such

²³ Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 3

²⁴ Thierry Balzacq, *A theory of securitization: Origins, Core Assumptions, and Variants*, In *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* 9 (Routledge, New York, 2011)

²⁵ *Id.*, at 9

²⁶ Nassef M. Adiong, *Supra Note 21*, at 106

²⁷ Salam A. Abdulrahman, *The River Nile and Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam: challenges to Egypt's security approach*, *International Journal of Environmental Studies*, 3 (2018)

²⁸ *Id.*, at 3

²⁹ Nassef M. Adiong, *Supra Note 21*, at 106.

³⁰ See Buzan, *et.al.* (1998) cited in Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 2

as species and their habitats.³¹ Finally, audience is another key component of securitization theory. The success of securitization is largely determined by the acceptance of the audience such as the wider public, political elites, military and others that a referent object is actually or perceivably threatened.³² For this, the securitizing actor uses language of securitization, *the speech act*, to convince the audience. It is via speech act that a securitizing actor convinces its audience about the existence of existential threat and thereby the necessity of an exceptional measure.

To sum-up, securitization theory is about security transformability. Securitizing actor transmute an issue or a problem into a security issue otherwise in its very nature the issue is part of the normal politics. Security transformability has twin implication: transformed security problems are “turned in to existential threats that require exceptional, emergency measure” and the way of dealing the security problem may also become a metaphoric war.³³ In the Nile river basin, for instance, various leaders of modern Egypt calls for exceptional measures against Ethiopia. Because, they constructed a knowledge system that consider the Nile water as matter of national security issues.

In contrast, de-securitization is a reverse to securitization. It is the process of bringing a securitized problem by securitizing actor back to normal politics. Some author portrayed desecuritization as “back to normality”, the unmaking of an existential threat.³⁴ For others, it is a process of “transforming an issue that had previously been considered a threat to national security into a matter of routine politics”.³⁵ It is the transformation of superficially framed security danger from high politics and exceptional extraordinary measure into a mainstream politics where agreements, position shifting, compromise and win-win outcomes can be gained via principled negotiations.

On the other hand, desecuritization is considered as a counter strategy whereby a desecuritizing actor deconstructs an issue being securitized so far.³⁶ It is the process of bringing out a securitized issue out of a national security domain into normal or mainstream politics.³⁷ In a simple term, the actor no longer accepts the idea that ‘X is an existential threat to Y’.³⁸ For instance, when Egypt referred the GERD issue to the attention of the UNSC as matter of regional

³¹ See Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 2; Nassef M. Adiong, *Supra Note 21*, at 106

³² Christian Kaunert and Sarah Leonard, *Reconceptualizing the audience in securitization theory*, In *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* 59-63 (Routledge, New York, 2011).

³³ Maria Julia Trombetta, *The Securitization of the Environment and the Transformation of Security*, Draft Paper (Jan. 1, 2006, Standing Group on International Relations Conference). Available at: https://www.academia.edu/868265/The_secritization_of_the_environment_and_the_transformation_of_security (Accessed on 10 February 2021).

³⁴ Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 4

³⁵ Fred H. Lawson, *Desecuritization, Domestic Struggles, and Egypt's Conflict with Ethiopia over the Nile River*, 12 *Democracy and Security*, 1, 9 (2016).

³⁶ Juha A. Vuori, *Religion Bites: Falungong, securitization/desecuritization in the People's Republic of China*, In *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* 191 (Routledge, New York, 2011).

³⁷ Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 9

³⁸ Juha A. Vuori, *Supra Note 36*, at 191

security,³⁹ Ethiopia has desecuritized it by asserting that GERD is not a political or security issue so that an agreement is within reach if there is both a political will and commitment to negotiate the GERD issue in a good faith.⁴⁰ Moreover, instead of securitizing the Nile water, the former minister of Water, Energy and Irrigation raised a question of justice before the UNSC: “Do Ethiopians have the right to drink from the Nile”.⁴¹ Nevertheless, desecuritization through speech act alone does not signify a real security transformation from exceptional politics to normal political realm. Scholars like Behnke, for instance, regarded desecuritization as ‘withering away’ and termination of the institutional fact of a securitized issue in which the issue is no longer a threat.⁴² On the other hand, Hansen also noted that “one cannot desecuritize through speech acts such as, I hereby declare this issue to no longer be a threat”.⁴³ From this, it can be argued that both speech act and lack of speech can be instrument of desecuritization. But a game changer in desecuritization discourse is if the actor successfully moves the securitized issue from the securitized realm into the public sphere with a focus on win-win.

At this juncture, Lane Hansen identified four analytical frameworks considered as outcomes of desecuritization when formerly securitized issues transformed into mainstream politics: stabilization, replacement, rearticulation and silencing.⁴⁴ Desecuritization through stabilization is a state of affairs characterized by a gradual explicit change in the security discourse.⁴⁵ Less militaristic and violent approaches in apparent form are manifestation of desecuritization via stabilization.⁴⁶ Replacement is the process of excluding previously securitized issue from security sphere but a new securitized issue will replace it. In the security discourse, there is no change both in theory and practice. The change is just a shift from one securitized issue to other kind of security threatened by another.⁴⁷

Desecuritization through rearticulation is an ideal form of desecuritization. Lawson asserted that rearticulation is a situation where the actors successfully move the problem or issue being securitized out of the security box through political solution.⁴⁸ In rearticulation, competing actors come to realize that their interest and survival is better served not by mutual antagonism and securitization but only through the trinity of win-win approach: collaboration, accommodation

³⁹ See Letter From Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, to the United Nations Security Council (June 11, 2021), Security Council Report (19 Jun 2020) Available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2020_566%20Egypt%20letter%20of%2019%20June.pdf (Accessed on 12 March 2021).

⁴⁰ UNSC, *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Agreement within Reach, Under-Secretary-General Tells Security Council, as Trilateral Talks Proceed to Settle Remaining Differences*, Press Release, SC/14232 (29 June, 2020), <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sc14232.doc.htm>

⁴¹ Remarks by H.E Dr (Eng) Sileshi, Ethiopia’s Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy before UNSC on GERD. Available at: <https://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/the-brief-09-07-21-insights-on-ethiopian-current-affairs/> (Accessed on 10 July. 2021).

⁴² Behnke (2006) cited in Juha A. Vuori *Supra Note 36*, at 191

⁴³ Hansen cited in Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 9

⁴⁴ Lane Hansen cited in Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 9; Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 5

⁴⁵ Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 5

⁴⁶ *Id.*, at 5

⁴⁷ *Id.*, at 5

⁴⁸ Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 9

and negotiation.⁴⁹ Unlike stabilization and replacement which faces problem of conservatism and new securitized problem respectively, rearticulation claims a desirable final solution for all conflicting parties. Nevertheless, the stability and durability of the solution on normative and political level, the impossibility of a complete final solution, and the bitter bargaining process in the context of power dynamics are seen as challenges of rearticulation approach. Desecuritization through silencing is a situation “in which an existing threat ends up being quashed”⁵⁰ and disappears in a security discourse.⁵¹

In the water sector, desecuritization is calling for water negotiation not in a high political setting but in the context of normal politics where all major actors become major player in the resolution of the problem. In desecuritization, “a political community downgrades or ceases to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and reduces or stops its calls for exceptional measures to deal with the threat”.⁵² In this process, there is a steadily removal of previously legitimized use of extraordinary measure and thereby use of force is not a legitimate option. According to some writers, the verified assumption of desecuritization in the water sector is that it contributes for institutional development, bring a shift from zero-sum-game politics to win-win and benefit sharing regime, and bring economic growth and positive peace.⁵³ It is argued that desecuritization will bring a desecuritize decision-making process, data sharing, establishment of river basin organization, and virtual water trade.⁵⁴

In desecuritization process, actors may include governments, political elites, civil society, individuals and a more emphasis is given to negotiation, interdependence and cooperation. With respect of GERD, Ethiopia is a desecuritizing actor while Egypt is a securitizing actor. The position of Sudan is gradually shifted from a securitizing actor to middle ground and desecuritizing actor sometimes in between the two. For instance, at a time when the government of Ethiopia announced the construction of GERD in April 2011, Sudan opposed the project claiming that the dam will have a devastating impact as a result of dam collapse and reduction of the amount of water reaching Sudan.⁵⁵ However, Sudan gradually shifted its position towards supporting the construction of the project. It has also declined from signing the Arab League March 2020 resolution on GERD on the ground that the involvement of Arab League could escalate the issue.⁵⁶ But, later on the same country has declared the already recognized beneficiary project as a regional and international security threat.⁵⁷ This implies that Sudan is

⁴⁹Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 9; Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 5

⁵⁰ Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 9

⁵¹ Yandry K. Kasim, *Supra Note 18*, at 5

⁵² Buzan and Wæver cited in Itay Fischhendler, *The securitization of water discourse: theoretical foundations, research gaps and objectives of the special issue*, 15 *International Environmental Agreements*, 8 (2015).

⁵³ *Id.*, at 8-9

⁵⁴ *Id.*, at 8

⁵⁵ Salman M. A. Salman, *The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: the road to the declaration of principles and the Khartoum document*, Water International, 5(2016)

⁵⁶ Addis standard, *News: Ethiopia Condemns Arab League's "Blind Support" To Egypt*, Commends Sudan's "Principled Position", March 2020. Available at: <https://addisstandard.com/news-ethiopia-condemns-arab-leagues-blind-support-to-egypt-commends-sudans-principled-position/> (Accessed on 10 March 2021).

⁵⁷ Egypt Today, *Sudan's irrigation minister: GERD issue became threat to regional security, peace*, Egypt Today (01 Jul 2021). Available at: <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/105716/Sudan%E2%80%99s-irrigation-minister-GERD-issue-became-threat-to-regional-security> (Accessed on 10 July 2021).

still in a hydro-political dilemma due to political instability and third party intervention in Sudanese internal politics.

3. EGYPT SECURITIZATION APPROACH OVER GERD

Egypt's Nile policy is solely guided by securitization of Nile water. From Gamal Abdel Nasser to the incumbent president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, all regimes in Cairo have used water war rhetoric as an instrument of securitization to maintain the inequitable status quo established by the 1929 and 1959 bilateral agreements. Water security for Egypt is non-alteration of its current use and claimed historic rights.⁵⁸ Thus, the consideration of GERD as a national security threat to Egypt is not a new policy approach. It is part of Egypt's Nile securitization policy.

However, there was a desecuritization move during the transition period headed by Prime Minister Issam Sharaf from March to December 2012.⁵⁹ Instead of making a securitized speech, the transitional government sent a public diplomacy delegates to Ethiopia which was followed by Sharaf official visit.⁶⁰ This shows the temporary shift of Egypt's policy towards Ethiopia. Nonetheless, the absence of a securitized speech during the transitional government does not signify the abandonment of Egypt's securitization policy. Rather Egypt notion of water security remains unchanged.

With the coming to power of President Morsi (June 2012–July 2013), GERD was framed as an existential threat of national security, sovereignty, and economic security (the referent objects). From this period onwards, the major securitizing actors are presidents of the Arab republic of Egypt, military leaders, radical Islamist party, and parliament members. These actors asserted that any actual or perceived threat to the existing water use of Egypt constitutes a red line for legitimate use of force. The first securitizing actor was President Muhammad Mursi who marketed his policy of a drop of Nile water with our blood.⁶¹ The securitization of GERD as an existential threat had reached its climax level when the government of Ethiopia announced to divert Abbay River. While the spokesperson of the president and Egypt Ambassador to Addis Ababa regarded the diversion as a realm of normal politics, opposition political parties particularly the radical Islamist Party of Light, radical Islamist Party of Construction and Development, and Parliamentary representatives moved GERD from mainstream politics to exceptional high politics calling an emergency situation and extraordinary measure.⁶² Leaders of

⁵⁸ Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw, *Open Letter to Egypt: A Response to The Spokesman of Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Regarding GERDP from An Ethiopian Perspective*, Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw's Views on Transboundary Watercourses and Related Issues Blog. Available at: <https://zenileabbay.wordpress.com/2014/03/28/open-letter-to-egypt-a-response-to-the-spokes-man-of-egypts-ministry-of-foreign-affairs-regarding-gerdp-from-an-ethiopian-perspective/> (Accessed on 10 March 2021).

⁵⁹ Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 3-6 and 17

⁶⁰ *Id.*, at 2; See also Shaul Shay, *The "Renaissance Dam" crisis*, Herzliya Conference Papers (April 2018, at 3). Available at: <https://www.runi.ac.il/en/research/ips/2018/documents/shaulshayrenaissance%20damen22.4.2018a.pdf> (Accessed on 10 February 2021).

⁶¹ BBC, *Egyptian warning over Ethiopia Nile dam*, BBC News (10 June 2013), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22850124>

⁶² Fred H. Lawson, *Supra Note 35*, at 4-5

opposition political parties make the issue an absolutely urgent by declaring that president Mursi would be responsible for any shortage of water Egypt might face as a result of GERD.

Apart from his political rivals, President Morsi had also made a securitized speech act to legitimize extraordinary measures to be used against GERD including proxy war. Morsi and his foreign minister proclaimed that Egypt will not give a single drop of water; water security would be ensured by any means including use of force.⁶³ In his June 2013 televised speech, President Morsi had not only reaffirmed the identity of inseparability between Egypt and the Nile saying that "If Egypt is the Nile's gift, then the Nile is a gift to Egypt"⁶⁴ but also made a securitized speech:

The lives of the Egyptians are connected around it [Nile]... Egypt's water security cannot be violated at all... As president of the state, I confirm to you that all options are open... If it diminishes by one drop then our blood is the alternative.

The regime also invoked indefensible claimed historic right, associate water with bread rights, identity, national security and geopolitical issue.⁶⁵ According to Nasr and Andreas, "the securitisation of water poverty was again asserted through a narrative constructing Ethiopia as having 'evil' motives to endanger and destabilise Egypt, emphasizing particularly the relationship between Ethiopia and Israel".⁶⁶ This implies that Nile water is treated in terms of national security, identity and geopolitical consideration.

However, the tone of speech act, if not the securitization of GERD, was changed with the coming to power of Abdel Fatah al Sisi (from 2014 onwards). The inauguration of Abdel Fatah al Sisi as the president of the Arab Republic of Egypt was seen by many as a shift of Egypt policy over GERD: a shift from possible use of force to peaceful resolution of the dispute over GERD.⁶⁷ Despite his initially desecuritization move, Egypt official policy of securitization over GERD remains unchanged. What changed was the rhetoric he made about the importance of solving the GERD dispute through negotiation and cooperation than use of force.⁶⁸ The reason for his deviation from the historic trend and position of his predecessors of modern Egypt is to buy a time. Because since the very day of his election campaign to the recent GERD stalemate, he has made several speech act stressing Nile water as a matter of life and death.⁶⁹ For instance, in the 2021 news conference in Ismailia, Abdel Fatah al Sisi had made a securitized speech

⁶³ BBC, *Egyptian warning over Ethiopia Nile dam*, BBC News (10 June 2013), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22850124>

⁶⁴ *Id.*

⁶⁵ Andreas Neef and Hala Nasr, *Ethiopia's Challenge to Egyptian Hegemony in the Nile River Basin: The Case of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam*, 21 *Geopolitics*, 1, 8(2016)

⁶⁶ *Id.*, at 9

⁶⁷ Endalcachew Bayeh, *New Development in the Ethio-Egypt Relations over the Hydro-Politics of Nile: Questioning its True Prospects*, 3 *International Journal of Political Science development*, 159, 161(2015)

⁶⁸ *Id.*, at 161

⁶⁹ Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw, *Al-Sisi's Nile Policy: What is New and What is Not?*, Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw's Views on Transboundary Watercourses and Related Issues Blog, <https://zenileabbay.wordpress.com/category/dams/>

saying that “...no one can take a drop from Egypt’s water, and if it happens there will be inconceivable instability in the region”.⁷⁰

In sum, the government of Mursi and al Sisi has used securitization as an instrument of maintaining the inequitable status quo. Conservative religious leaders have also attempted to give a moral legitimacy for any action to be undertaken by the regimes in Cairo in defending the claimed Islamic principle of no harm through water/green jihad.⁷¹ From this it can be argued that, the securitizing actors not only securitized the water of Nile through their speech act but also attempted to change the Nile identity. By invoking history of prior use, they also denied the transboundary nature of Nile River. In the eye of the country’s politician and statesmen, GERD is a threat not only to their self-claimed 55.5 billion cubic meters of water as per the unbinding 1959 bilateral agreement but also to their identity of inseparability between Nile and Egypt. This is the author’s point of departure arguing that Egyptian view of GERD as a water security threat of Egypt is a hyperbolically constructed myth that is neither actual nor perceived threat. Rather the securitization of GERD by Egypt is an invented fictions threat. The following sub-sections provide further discussions on the myth and reality of each of the securitization mechanisms used by Egypt.

3.1. Absolute Water Dependency

One of the securitization mechanisms of Egypt against GERD is based on an invented discourse of absolute water dependency. Egypt viewed itself as a country whose life is absolutely dependent on the Nile waters and thus water is taken as a national security issue.⁷² Al Rasheedy and Hamdy described the dependency discourse as follows:

“as compared to the other riparian states, Egypt is the only country that is heavily dependent on the Nile River waters, making Cairo vulnerable to any actions that would jeopardize the flow of the Nile. The Nile River will always be the parameter that influences Egyptian foreign policy vis-à-vis the states in the basin region.”⁷³

While maintaining absolute dependency discourse and any decrease of Nile water as an existential threat, Egypt maintain that Ethiopia has alternative sources other than the main Nile

⁷⁰ Aljazeera, *Egypt’s Sisi warns Ethiopia dam risks ‘unimaginable instability’*, Aljazeera News (30 March 2021). Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/30/egypts-sisi-warns-ethiopia-dam-risks-unimaginable-instability> (Accessed on 10 April 2021).

⁷¹ Green Jihad is an emerging concept denoting the duty to comply with Islamic principles by fighting climate change, environmental degradation and pollution. It comes from the calls of Muslim leaders for ‘Green Jihad’ to save our plant at different global climate change movement and conferences. On the one hand, Green Jihad is the duty of doing the right thing which includes protection of the physical environment and water bodies. On the other hand, it denotes the duty of not doing harm to nature as well as the duty to fight any threats to the nature. However, the Egyptians notion of Green Jihad specifically water Jihad mainly focus on the ‘do no harm’ Islamic principle. Andreas Neef and Hala Nasr, *Supra Note 65*, at 9; See also Janot Mendler de Suarez, *Achieving equitable water use in the Nile Basin: time to refocus the discourse on collective human security?*, 38 *Review of African Political Economy*, 455, 462-464 (2011).

⁷² Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation Planning Sector, *National Water Resources Plan for Egypt-2017*, 1 (2015)

⁷³ Ahmad Al Rasheedy and Hamdy A. Hassan, *The Nile River and Egyptian Foreign Policy Interests*, 11 *African Sociological Review*, 25, 36(2007)

for whom water is not an existential threat. In this discourse, taking a drop of water from the Nile is taken as a red-line for calling extraordinary measure against the threat. GERD is thus securitized by Egypt based on absolute water dependency discourse. This securitization narrative of Egypt is, however, an artificially manufactured myth on the following grounds.

First, Egypt is a country endowed with groundwater source⁷⁴ and infinite sea water while Ethiopia depends on surface water. Any decrease of annual rainfall is a national security threat to Ethiopia. Factors such as climate change and El Nino has been exposing the country for drought. From this it can be understood that, if rainfall stops reaching Ethiopia due to natural reason it would mean that there will be no water, no food and ultimately no life. However, any absence of rainfall in upstream Nile could not jeopardize lives in Egypt like that of Ethiopia. Because, they have alternative water such as sea and ground water. This is the reality denied by Egyptians for millennia.

If one looks at the hydrologic water budget of the Nile riparian countries, then it will be clear to know more water stressed country. With the exception of Sudan and Egypt, the rest of Nile riparian countries have insignificant groundwater reserves. According to the British Geological Survey, in Africa the largest groundwater reserve is found in five countries of North Africa: Libya, Algeria, Sudan, Egypt and Chad.⁷⁵ Of these countries, Egypt is ranked the 4th huge groundwater reserve country in Africa.⁷⁶ It has eight hydrological units for storing groundwater namely the Nile Valley and Delta aquifers, Coastal aquifers, Nubian Sandstone aquifer, Moghra aquifer, Tertiary aquifer, Carbonate rocks complex aquifers, Fissured basement complex aquifers and Aquiclude rocks.⁷⁷ The Nubian Sandstone and Nile aquifer are the two significantly important groundwater aquifers. Some of these systems, for instance, the Nile Valley and Delta, are renewable water resources both extractable and fresh with low pumping cost. Egypt has an estimated total groundwater storage of 55, 200-63,200 BCM.⁷⁸

Table-1: Estimated Groundwater resources of Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia in Decreasing Order

Country	Groundwater storage (km ³)	
	Rang	Best estimate
Sudan*	37,100–151,000	63,200
Egypt	36,000–130,000	55, 200
Ethiopia	4,340–39,300	12,700

Source: Extracted from Bonsor *et al.*⁷⁹

* The estimation includes the share of South Sudan

⁷⁴ Tekleab Shibu, *Debunking Ethiopia's Plentiful Water Resources vis-à-vis Egypt: A Closer Look at Basins' Water Budget*, 4. Available at: <https://eastafrikanistcom.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/egypt-has-more-water-resources-than-ethiopia-a-closer-look-by-dr.-tekleab-shibiru-gala.pdf> (Accessed on 10 March 2021).

⁷⁵ H. C. Bonsor, A.M. MacDonald, B'E'O. Dochartaigh and R G Taylor, *Quantitative maps of groundwater resources in Africa*, 7Environmental Research Letters, 1, 5 (2012).

⁷⁶ Tekleab Shibu, *Supra Note 74*, at 7

⁷⁷ S.S. Ahmed, M. R. El Tahlawi, and A. A. Farrag, *Groundwater of Egypt: an environmental overview*, *Environ Geology*, 1, 3, (2007).

⁷⁸ See. H.C. Bonsor, A.M. MacDonald, B'E'O. Dochartaigh and R G Taylor, *Supra note 75*, at 5; Tekleab Shibu, *Supra Note 74*, at 7-8

⁷⁹ See H.C. Bonsor, A.M. MacDonald, B'E'O. Dochartaigh and R G Taylor, *Supra note 75*, at 5;

As indicated in the above table, Sudan has high groundwater reserves followed by Egypt while the groundwater reserve of Ethiopia is insignificant as compared with the two downstream countries. When we make a comparison there is a big difference. Ethiopia has approximately 12,700 BCM groundwater storage. Whereas Egypt has close to 55, 200. Other studies, however, estimated Egypt's groundwater reserve as 63,200 BCM.⁸⁰ If we take, for instance, the estimation by Tekleab, Egypt's groundwater reserve is "50,500 BCM more and 400% higher than the groundwater reserve of Ethiopia".⁸¹ By comparing available groundwater resources with that of the annual flows of Nile, Habtamu noted that "if one compares it with the 1959 bilateral Nile water quota of Egypt and Sudan, i.e., 55 and 18.5bm³ per annum respectively, their groundwater potentials correspondingly equate to the sum of flow of Nile water share of 1,000 and 3,400 years".⁸²

Moreover, Egypt has more surface water reserve than Ethiopia. The study of Tekleab reveals that Ethiopia and Egypt have 30 and 108 BCM surface water reserve in the Nile Basin, respectively.⁸³ Egypt has also unlimited access to sea water whereas Ethiopia has no access to sea water due to its landlocked status. From this one can concluded that Egypt will not be threatened due to the water resources development of Ethiopia like GERD. Thus, Egypt discourse of absolute dependency on the Nile water is a socially constructed myth used as an instrument of denying the right of Ethiopia. Its claim of GERD as a threat to its water security based on the notion of absolute dependency is a myth and 'misplaced opposition'.⁸⁴ In reality, for instance if one take criteria's like per capital water availability and storage capacity, and spatial variability, it come to clear that Ethiopia is more water stressed than Egypt. Habtamu noted that "...if Nile water flow dries up by some inexplicable natural and/or manmade factors, the two nations [Egypt and Sudan] can lead life for millennia without change to present water usage".⁸⁵ No rain in upstream Ethiopia literally means no life. But Egypt can sustain life without Nile with its groundwater resources and infinite sea water. Thus, age-old Egypt Nile policy of 'there is no Egypt without Nile' as well as interpretation of Egypt civilization as the result of "fortune geographical marriage between Egypt and Nile"⁸⁶ is also a fabricated myth.

3.2. Nationalization and Politicization of the Nile Water

The securitization of GERD emanates out of Egypt politicization/nationalization of Nile water that has legal, institutional and mythological grounds. Legally, the 2014 constitution of the Arab

⁸⁰ Tekleab Shibru, *Supra Note 74*, at 8

⁸¹ *Id.*, at 8

⁸² Habtamu Abay, *Egypt's Groundwater Resources*, Aiga Forum (April 10, 2014). Available at: <http://www.aigaforum.com/articles/Egypt-groundwater.pdf> (Accessed on 20 February 2021).

⁸³ Tekleab Shibru, *Exposing an Infinite Water Resources Advantage of Egypt over Ethiopia*, 1 (2020). Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342354234_Exposing_an_Infinite_Water_Resource_Advantage_of_Egypt_over_Ethiopia (Accessed on 1 April 2021).

⁸⁴ Mammo Muchie, Minga Negash and Seid Hassan, *Misplaced Opposition to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam*, Aiga Forum (April 30, 2014). Available at: <http://www.aigaforum.com/articles/Misplaced-opposition-to-the-Grand-Ethiopian-Renaissance-Dam.pdf> (Accessed on 20 February 2021).

⁸⁵ Habtamu Abay, *Supra Note 82*, at 3

⁸⁶ Himdan (1987: 782) cited in Ahmad Al Rasheedy and Hamdy, *Supra Note 73*, at 25

Republic of Egypt fallaciously legalized Egypt's monopolistic ownership of the Nile water. The preamble of the constitution denied the transboundary nature of the river as it recognized an identity of inseparableness between Nile and Egypt: "Egypt is the gift of the Nile for Egyptians and the gift of Egyptians to humanity".⁸⁷ The constitution also obliged the government to "...protect the River Nile and preserve Egypt's historical rights".⁸⁸ This kind of constitutional securitization as well as legalization of the monopolization claim of Egypt is a major hurdle in the decade of CFA and also the ongoing GERD negotiation. Because, the government in Cairo has been negotiating the Nile water with co-riparian to safeguard not only Egypt's historical right but also to preserve the constitution. It is obvious that negotiations with an external party always require a simultaneous negotiation with domestic groups such as citizens, parliament, political parties and pressure groups. For instance, Robert Putnam argued that "at the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments".⁸⁹ From this perspective, it can be argued that if Al Sisi fails to preserve constitutionally enshrined rights of Egypt over the Nile water, the regime may face a legitimacy crisis. Thus, GERD is a threat to the regime in power, being a driving factor forcing the regimes in Cairo to tend to securitize the Nile water.

In this regard, for the regime in Cairo, the regionalization and internationalization of the GERD as a security issue by Egyptian statesmen might be considered as a success. Saving the regime in Cairo is also a driving force behind the blind US support of Egypt's position on GERD to the extent of forcing Ethiopia to sign US drafted deal under the Trump administration. For US, letting the Al Sisi regime to lose power would mean selling Egypt for the Muslim brotherhood or any anti-American forces. This is the strategic calculation of U.S. policy towards the Middle East, because, the Egypt-Saudi Arabia-United Arab Emirates axis power is considered as a key for US interest in the Red Sea. This axis power counters the Turkey-Qatar axis. Thus, one of the reason for US in supporting Egypt over GERD is because of the geopolitical leverage Egypt have for the purpose of western countries.

The politicization and securitization of Nile is also institutional. For Egypt, the Nile is a security and political issue. Because of this, issues related with Nile are dealt by the Supreme Committee for the Nile Water (SCNW) consisting of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, the Ministry of Defense, General Intelligence Service, and the Prime Minister and President.⁹⁰ Zerihun noted that in all riparian except Egypt, the Ministry of Water Resources Affairs has a mandate to deal issues related with Nile while Ministry of foreign affairs have a supportive role. Whereas in Egypt, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation has nominal power especially when it comes to issues of negotiation.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Preamble of The Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt (2014)

⁸⁸ *Id.*, article 44

⁸⁹ Robert D. Putnam, *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games*, 45International Organization, 427, 434(1988)

⁹⁰ Zerihun Abebe, *Blue Nile/Abbay and Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam*, Power Point Presentation Given at 2020 International Conference on the Nile and GERD. Available at: <https://environment.fiu.edu/events/all/2020-international-conference-on-the-nile-and-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam/assets/zerihun-abebe---zerihun-abebe-21-august-2020-fiu-1.pptx> (Accessed on 5 February 2021).

⁹¹ Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw, *Supra Note 69*

3.3. Water Security

Water security is another Egypt securitization mechanism over the GERD in canonizing the iniquitous status quo established by the 1929 and 1959 bilateral agreements. However, Egypt's notion of water security is different from the concept of water security as defined by literature and legal instruments. As noted by a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, water security for Egypt denotes its current use and historic rights as per the 1959 bilateral agreement.⁹² Taking a drop of water from the 55.5 BCM allocated by the 1959 agreement is considered a security threat. This implies that Egypt notion of water security has taken the three element as inseparable: national security, the Nile water, and 1959 agreement. It is rested upon the assumption that the water security of Egypt will be ensured if and only if Egypt sustain its monopolization of the Nile water as per the 1959 agreement. According to Yacob, safeguarding ones water security at the expense of other co-riparian is a dangerous misconception that should be challenged.⁹³ Thus, Egypt notion of water security is non-accommodative. It has been used as a cover to shield the status quo.

Moreover, Egypt notion of water security is beyond the scientific domain of water security. In literature, water security is about the nexus between water availability, accessibility and use.⁹⁴ It is defined as both the availability and accessibility of water in sufficient manner qualitatively and quantitatively for people.⁹⁵ Egypt notion of water security has also contradiction with legal instruments. Under CFA water security is defined as "...the right of all Nile Basin States to reliable access to and use of the Nile River system for health, agriculture, livelihoods, production and environment".⁹⁶ Under this article, it has made clear that the water security of all riparian countries can be ensured when there is equal access to and equitable use of the Nile water. As opposed to the Egypt notion of water security which is a win-lose, CFA enshrined a win-win conception of water security. Because, Egypt insisted that its water security will be ensured if and only if it safeguarded the allocated water (55.5 BCM) as per the 1959 agreement. This is, however, at the expense of other riparian.

This shows that Egypt notion of water security is neither supported by CFA nor by scientific evidence. Rather water is mistakenly entangled with national security and treated as high political issue. Calow and Nathaniel noted that "...the word 'security' will always carry militaristic overtones, or will imply that solutions to water problems will be achieved by force, rather than negotiation and cooperation".⁹⁷ It is this kind of water security conception that

⁹² Zerihun Abebe Yigzaw, *Supra Note 58*

⁹³ Yacob Arsano, *Negotiations for a Nile-Cooperative Framework Agreement*, 222 ISS Paper, 1, 2 ((2011)

⁹⁴ Valerie Ndaruzaniye, *Water Security in Ethiopia: Risks and Vulnerabilities' Assessment*, Global Water Institute for Africa Climate change, environment, Security, 1, 2 (2011)

⁹⁵ *Id.*, at 2; See also Christina Leb and Patricia Wouters, *The Water Security Paradox and International Law: Securitisation as an Obstacle to Achieving Water Security and the Role of Law in Desecuritisng the World's Most Precious Resource*, In *Water Security: Principles, Perspectives, and Practices*, 28 (Routledge, London, 2013)

⁹⁶ Agreement on The Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, article 2(f)

⁹⁷ Nathaniel Mason and Roger Calow, *Water security: from abstract concept to meaningful metrics: An initial overview of options*, Working Paper 357, 2 (2012).

hindered the ongoing GERD negotiation. Because, from the very beginning Egypt has decided that it will not give any drop of water from its share as per the 1959 agreement. Egypt has not dropped its notion of special entitlements to the Nile water when it comes to the GERD negotiation.

3.4.Egypt as Extravagant and Abusive User of Nile Water and GERD

Despite Egypt's alleged fear of water scarcity as a result of GERD, it is an extravagant and most abusive user of Nile water. Current water scarcity in Egypt is neither due to shortage of physical water nor upstream dam projects but because of poor water management of Egypt. A scholar argued that "...Egypt not only refuses to share benefits but also utilizes the Nile abusively".⁹⁸

First, an extensively high amount of water losses due to evaporation at the Aswan High Dam have been inducing water scarcity and more water demand in Egypt. Studies show that seepage and evaporation at the Aswan High Dam has been increased tremendously.⁹⁹ The evaporation rate has been increased tremendously (18 BCM per year)¹⁰⁰ due to climate change and sediment deposition; nearly 6.6 BCM sediments are deposited in the High Aswan Dam reservoir since its operation.¹⁰¹ Another study also revealed that due to evaporation and artificial fertilizer¹⁰², Nile River loses 25% of its water in Lake Nasser.¹⁰³ While water loss due to evaporation has induced more water demand on the part of various water users and sectors, artificial fertilizers have also been cited as a source of water pollution and affects water quality.¹⁰⁴

Second, Egypt poor water management is a primary cause of water scarcity. Egypt is responsible for wasting high amount of water due to its poor water management. For instance, agriculture is totally dependent on irrigation¹⁰⁵ and consumes more than 86% of the total water use.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁸ Jack Kalpakian, *Ethiopia and the Blue Nile Development Plans and Their Implications Downstream*, ASPJAfrica & Francophone- 2nd Quarter, 40, 49 (2015).

⁹⁹ *Id.*, at 49

¹⁰⁰ Emad Elba, Dalia Farghaly, Brigitte Urban, *Modeling High Aswan Dam Reservoir Morphology Using Remote Sensing to Reduce Evaporation*, 5 International Journal of Geosciences, 157, 156-169 (2014)

¹⁰¹ Emad Elba, Brigitte Urban, Bernd Ettmer, Dalia Farghaly, *Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change by Reducing Evaporation Losses: Sediment Removal from the High Aswan Dam Reservoir*, 6 American Journal of Climate Change, 230, 230-246 (2017).

¹⁰² The construction of the High Aswan Dam has increased the demand for artificial fertilizer. Before the construction of the dam, the agriculture sector in Egypt was largely depends on the annual flooding of the Nile River that brings Egypt both the water and nutrient rich sediments. However, the sediments has been reduced with the construction of the dam. This has increased the demand for artificial fertilizers. The growing use of artificial fertilizer, however, affected the water quality of both the Nile River and Egypt groundwater resources such as the Nile water aquifer. It has also increased salinity. This may further exacerbate the water security problem. Moreover, it may also increase the demand of different water users for clean water. *For more see* Mohamed Shamrukh, M. Yavuz Corapcioglu and Fayek A.A. Hassona, *Modeling the effect of chemical fertilizers on ground water quality in the Nile Valley Aquifer, Egypt*, 39 Groundwater, 59-67 (2001).

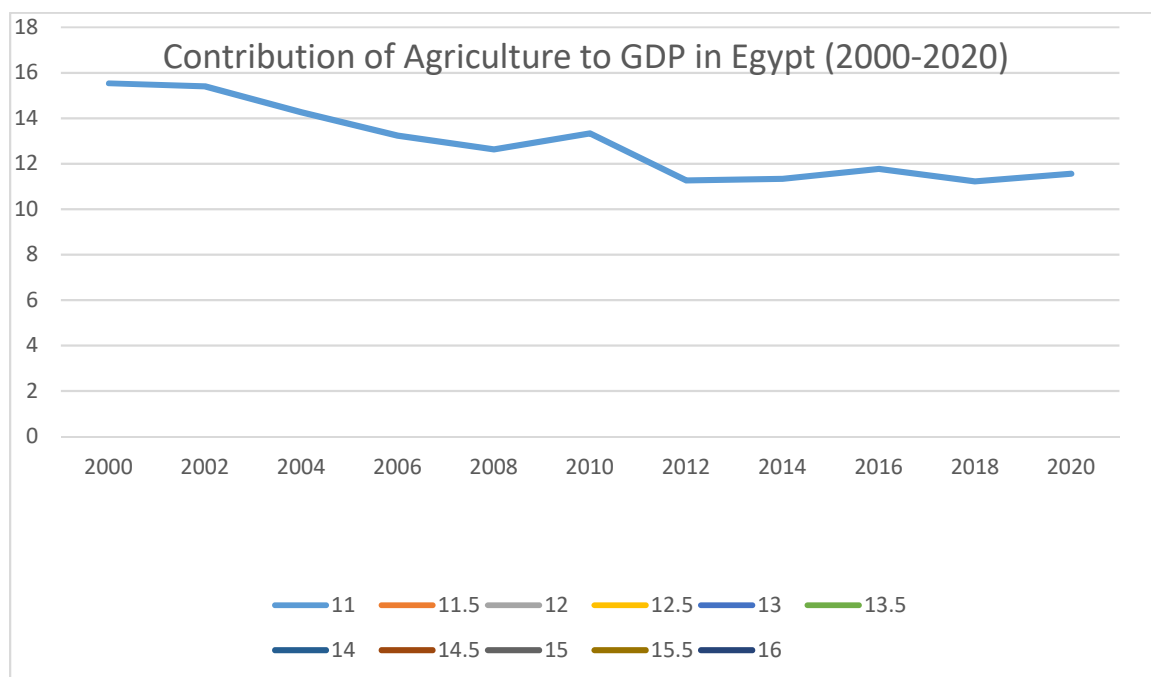
¹⁰³ Stefan Deconinck, *Supra note 5*, at 7

¹⁰⁴ El-Sayed Ewis Omran and Abdelazim Negm, *Environmental Impacts of AHD on Egypt Between the Last and the Following 50 Years*, in GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM VERSUS ASWAN HIGH DAM A VIEW FROM EGYPT, 22, 40, (Abdelazim M. Negm and Sommer Abdel-Fattah, eds., 2019)

¹⁰⁵ Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation Planning Sector, *Supra Note 72*, at 29

¹⁰⁶ Stefan Deconinck, *Supra note 5*, at 6

However, the agriculture sector has minimal contribution to the GDP of the country which is decreased from 15.5 percent in 2000 to 11.5 in 2020.¹⁰⁷ From the economic point of view, it will be to the advantage of Egypt to focus on the industry sector that uses 6 % of water.¹⁰⁸ Because, Egypt has a comparative advantage in industry than agriculture sector. Likewise, Sudan and Ethiopia have a comparative advantage in agricultural production and hydroelectric power production respectively.



Sources: Based on World Bank Online Database¹⁰⁹

Moreover, the production of water intensive crops such as rice, wheat, cotton and sugarcane on fragmented farmland has also contributed for water scarcity. In the 2017 National Water Resources Plan of Egypt, rice is regarded as the most water consuming crop.¹¹⁰ The irrigation water needed per *feddan* is 75 and 126 % higher than that of cotton and maize respectively.¹¹¹ On this ground, one may question that why the Egyptians official discourse is dominated by water scarcity and thereof probability of water war given the fact that Egypt is wasting the precious Nile water in the desert because of its poor water management.

Third, primitive irrigation system of Egypt and its intensive agriculture are wasting more water causing water scarcity and more water demand on the part of Egypt. In this regard, Abdrabbo noted that;

¹⁰⁷ *Id.*, at 6

¹⁰⁸ *Id.*, at 6

¹⁰⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?end=2020&locations=EG&start=2000&view=chart> (Accessed on 5 May 2021).

¹¹⁰ Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation Planning Sector, *Supra Note 72*, at 34

¹¹¹ *Id.*, at 34

“about 2.52, ha (6 million feddans) are old lands irrigated by surface irrigation methods with low on-farm water application efficiency (40–60%). Waterlogging, salinization, and low application efficiency are the main problems inherent with surface irrigation. Replacing the surface irrigation method with precise irrigation systems became the main interest of the decision makers and policy planners in Egypt”.¹¹²

Instead of changing its traditional water extravagant irrigation system by an efficient water saving methods of irrigation, Egypt regards GERD as potential causes of water scarcity. In reality, however, GERD has positive implication for downstream countries in terms of sediment reduction and regulation of water flow.

In general, more water is wasted at High Aswan dam and Egyptian irrigation system. The cumulative wasted water is about 20 to 50 % of the water that flowed into Egyptian irrigation system.¹¹³ Sadly, Egypt is not yet changed its water consumption habit which is both extravagant and abusive. Instead, it is following a policy of no dam in upstream Ethiopia due to Egypt's alleged fear that the construction of dams in Ethiopia may cause water scarcity in downstream Egypt. However, the existing water resources development in Ethiopia is largely hydropower which is non-water consumptive. Moreover, as showed above the current water scarcity in Egypt is not due to Ethiopia's water resources development. But, because of Egypt's poor water management.

3.5. GERD as an Invented Existential Threat and Foreshadower of Egypt's *Ethiophobia*

As reiterated above, Egypt's securitization of GERD as a threat of water security is a false allegation neither supported by scientific evidence nor moral grounds. The concern of Egypt, to use Mahmoud Salem's word, is *hysteria*.¹¹⁴ Zerihun also used the term *Ethiophobia*¹¹⁵ to explain Egypt opposition of GERD. The reason behind the Egypt securitization of GERD is also polemical. Because, GERD is not a multi-purpose and water consuming project. It is a hydroelectric project. More importantly, the advantage of storing water in upstream Ethiopia as well as the several benefits of GERD to downstream countries has been also verified by the international experts.¹¹⁶ Because of this reason, Mahmoud Salem questioned the real motive of

¹¹² Abdrabbo Abou Kheira cited in Jack Kalpakian, *Supra Note 98*, at 49

¹¹³ Jack Kalpakian, *Supra Note 98*, at 49

¹¹⁴ Jack Kalpakian, *Supra Note 98*, at 50

¹¹⁵ Ethiopian Press Agency, *Egypt is sailing against the wind, squandering its opportunity*, Interview with Diplomat Zerihun Abebe (March 26, 2020). Available at: <https://www.press.et/english/?p=20054#> (Accessed on 6 April 2021).

¹¹⁶ The major benefits of GERD to downstream countries as outlined in the final report of IPoE and international researchers includes evaporation reduction, flood control, improved water supply in dry season, sediment reduction and regulation of water flow. See Dale Whittington, Marc Jeuland and John Waterbury, *The Grand Renaissance Dam and prospects for cooperation on the Eastern Nile*, 16 *Water Policy*, 595, 600 (2014); Rawia Tawfik, *The Declaration of Principles on Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam: A Breakthrough or another Unfair Deal?*, *The Current Column*, 26 (2015); International Panel of Experts, *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project Final Report*, 31st May 2013

Egypt anxiety that; “believe it or not, storing the water in Ethiopia before it reaches Egypt will actually lead to an increase in our water supply. So why the hysteria?”¹¹⁷

Some scholars have been also surprised by Egypt securitization approach. Some argue that Egypt opposed the GERD project based on unconstructed ‘exclusionary nationalism than is hydrological matter’.¹¹⁸ Others also argue that “the expected loss of water due to evaporation for the new project [GERD] is not worse than what Egypt is currently losing from its environmentally unfriendly projects and poor water management”.¹¹⁹ In the same way, Stefan Deconinck also attempted to answer the question that why Egypt overemphasized water scarcity through its discourse of water security while it is wasting high amount of water due to its water mismanagement practice.¹²⁰ The author of this article also argues that Egypt contestation of GERD is not due to the negative impact posed by the project but to counter the broader geopolitical implication of GERD for Ethiopia and the region at large. First, the completion of the GERD project will help Ethiopia to meet the growing energy demand at home and its neighboring countries. Even though Ethiopia is providing Sudan and Djibouti hydroelectric power energy at affordable price, the country has not yet provided the two countries energy demand satisfactorily. As a result, Ethiopia has planned to increase the power export to Sudan and Djibouti. In the latter case, the second Ethio-Djibouti power interconnection system has been under construction.¹²¹ There was also a negotiation between Ethiopia and Sudan to construct additional power transmission line to increase the power supply to 100MW from the under construction GERD.¹²² There is also energy demand from Kenya and South Sudan. Ethiopia and South Sudan had also signed a Memorandum of Understanding and they agreed that Ethiopia will export 100MW to South Sudan in the first phase and will increase into 400MW in the next phase.¹²³ Furthermore, the power transmission line from Ethiopia to Kenya was also completed. All these regional demands will not be met without a huge investment in the hydropower sector. In this case, GERD will increase the country’s power export. Second, power export has multiple benefits. For Ethiopia, power export is an important source of foreign currency. The country has been generating an average of seventy million US dollar per annual from the power sale to Sudan and Djibouti. For the power importers, access to reliable and affordable energy may boost their economy. Furthermore, the power export may contribute to the creation of an interdependent grid community. Thus, for Ethiopia hydroelectric power projects like GERD may boost the countries geopolitical power.

Furthermore, the GERD has also an emancipatory potential. It showed the possibility of building a mega-hydroelectric power project with domestic resource mobilizations. This may emancipate

¹¹⁷ Jack Kalpakian, *Supra Note 98*, at 50

¹¹⁸ Jack Kalpakian, *Supra Note 98*, at 67

¹¹⁹ Mammo Muchie, Minga Negash and Seid Hassan, *Supra Note 84*

¹²⁰ Stefan Deconinck, *Supra note 5*, at 2

¹²¹ Africa Development Bank Group, *Multinational - Ethiopia Djibouti Second Power Interconnection Project, Phase II*, June 09 2022, <https://projectsportal.afdb.org/dataportal/VProject/show/P-Z1-FA0-180>

¹²² Fana Broadcasting Corporation, *Ethiopia, Sudan Striving to Increase Current Amount of Power Supply To 1000MW*, 11 March 2022, <https://www.fanabc.com/english/ethiopia-sudan-striving-to-increase-current-amount-of-power-supply-to-1000mw/>

¹²³ Fana Broadcasting Corporation, *Ethiopia Plans to Export 100 MW Electric Power to South Sudan in Three Years*, May 6, 2022, <https://www.fanabc.com/english/ethiopia-plans-to-export-100-mw-electric-power-to-south-sudan-in-three-years/>

other riparian to construct infrastructure to harnesses their untapped hydroelectric and irrigation potential with their own resources. From this, it can be argued that GERD has not only the potential in enhancing the power of Ethiopia but also have an impact on the regional balance of power. Because of this, Egypt has been using securitization to counter the geopolitical implication of GERD. Thus, the concern of Egypt is not the GERD alone but its geopolitical implication.

4. ETHIOPIA'S TACTICAL SECURITIZATION-CUMD ESECURITIZATION APPROACH

While Egypt securitizes the GERD as a security threat, Ethiopia has been desecuritizing the issue. Ethiopia has also used tactical securitization which is manifested in the GERD narrative that consider it an existential project. However, Ethiopia's approach over GERD is largely desecuritization. The bedrock of Ethiopia desecuritization approach rests upon the recognition of Nile as transboundary resource and its utilization based on principle of equitable and reasonable use, and cooperation. Its desecuritization approach over GERD is manifested through its altruistic invitation of downstream countries to establish a tripartite committee to review the design and study documents, establishment of IPoE, accept the recommendation of IPoE, hired consultants to implement the recommendation of IPoE, signing of DoP, establishment of Tripartite National Committee, and establishment National Independent Scientific Research Group. The approach of Ethiopia is an exceptional not only in the history of Nile but also in international transboundary watercourses. In an article published on the official website of Ethiopian Ministry foreign Affairs (MoFA), it is stated that:

“We don't know of any single country in the Nile basin that has ever previously invited other riparian countries to study the impact of a dam on riparian countries. Definitely this has never been the experience of Egypt, at least in regards to Ethiopia. If Ethiopia had chosen to follow historical precedent and indeed the example set by Egypt, there would never have been any consultations on GERD in the first place.”¹²⁴

Egypt has built macro and micro dams on Nile but neither notified nor consulted Ethiopia. Why Ethiopia did this is just for the sake of hydro-cooperation, confidence building and to forge a benefit sharing regime. In view of that, the following are the desecuritization discourses of Ethiopia.

4.1. GERD as a Benefit Sharing Project

¹²⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Egyptian “Experts”: unjustified statement on GERD*. Available at: http://www.mfa.gov.et/web/guest/articles/-/asset_publisher/TiDZpSUe5oS6/content/egyptian-experts-unjustified-statement-on-gerd?_101_INSTANCE_TiDZpSUe5oS6_redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mfa.gov.et%2Fweb%2Fguest%2Farticles%2F-%2Fasset_publisher%2FTiDZpSUe5oS6%2Fcontent%2Fegyptian-experts-unjustified-statement-on-gerd&_101_INSTANCE_TiDZpSUe5oS6_cur=0&_101_INSTANCE_TiDZpSUe5oS6_page=1 (Accessed on 10 April 2021).

In the Nile basin, both water sharing and benefit sharing approaches has been applied at different degree. The 1929 and 1959 bilateral agreement and the CFA can be considered as a water sharing frameworks whereas the NBI is a benefit sharing arrangement.¹²⁵ However, upstream and downstream countries have contradictory position on water sharing and benefit sharing. For Egypt and Sudan, water sharing means the 1959 agreement that allocates the Nile water only for themselves. Egypt objection of GERD is based on this inequitable bilateral agreement as it pursued a policy of not to give a drop of water for upstream countries. Against this back drop, however, GERD is presented by Ethiopia as a benefit sharing project.

While the speech of all Egyptian statesmen is securitization of GERD, in their speech act on GERD successive Ethiopian leaders have used a consistent desecuritized, transformative and win-win narratives. For example, during the inauguration of the project the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi announced that GERD is a benefit sharing project having a role of inducing cooperation among countries that share the Nile River.¹²⁶ The desecuritization policy of Ethiopia is also manifested in its altruistic invitation of downstream countries to establish tripartite committees.

Moreover, the GERD project has also cross-border benefits. In this regard, Sudan is an immediate beneficiary of the project: increases the hydropower generation capacity of its seasonal storage dams, reduce damages as a result of seasonal flooding, increase potential of irrigated agriculture, reduce the cost used to cope with the destruction and for maintenance due to flooding, saving of more water and reduce evaporation, sediment control, navigation opportunity and power purchasing form the project.¹²⁷

Despite the strong assertion that Egypt will be affected negatively, the benefits accrued form GERD for Egypt includes water saving and enhanced water management, flood control, controlled and uniform flow of water, reduction of evaporation loss to 9.5 BCM/year from 10.8 BCM/year at High Aswan Dam, sediment control and hence GERD will extend High Aswan Dam design life, enhanced navigation as a result of regulated and increased water flows.¹²⁸ The report of IPoE similarly confirmed that the benefit of GERD for Egypt includes "...an increase in irrigated area, a decrease in sedimentation in Lake Nasser, and a reduction in flooding".¹²⁹ Of these benefits, the major one is drought mitigation. As Egypt faces irrigation failure due to drought and high evaporation, this will be decreased as a result of GERD. According to several studies and the report of IPoE, the negative impact of the project on Egypt is the reduction in power generation at High Aswan Dam which is very minimal and largely determined by the type and duration of reservoir filling strategy of GERD.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Zerihun Abebe, *Eastern Nile Basin: The Nexus Between Water Sharing And Benefit Sharing Arrangements*, Chap3 (Master Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Department of Political Science and International relations, 2011)

¹²⁶ Meles Zenawi Memorial, *Ethiopian Pm Meles Zenawi Speech on Launching GERD (Text and Videos)*, April 02, 2011, Guba, Benishangul Gumuz. Available at: <http://www.meleszenawi.com/ethiopian-pm-meles-zenawi-speech-on-launching-gerd-text-and-videos/> (Accessed on 10 April 2021).

¹²⁷ Office of National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation on the Construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, *Grand Renaissance Dam*, 4 Special Magazine Publication, 9 (2017).

¹²⁸ *Id.*, at 9

¹²⁹ International Panel of Experts, *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project Final Report*, 31st May 2013, at 41

¹³⁰ See Rawia Tawfik, *The Declaration of Principles on Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam: A Breakthrough or another Unfair Deal?*, The Current Column, 26 (2015); Esam Helal and Abdelhaleem Fahmy, *Impacts of Grand Ethiopian*

4.2. Principle of Equitable and Reasonable Utilization

In contrast to the downstream countries claim of acquired and historical rights of the Nile waters, Ethiopia asserts an international water law principle such as equitable and reasonable utilization with a duty of not to cause significant harm. This can be found in the agreements signed by Ethiopia such as CFA¹³¹ and DoP.¹³² Both legal instruments codified principles such as equitable and reasonable utilization and not to cause significant harm. These principles have also got wider international acceptance. They have been also codified in the 1977 Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses.¹³³ Throughout the GERD negotiation, Ethiopia has adopted and adhered to the principle of equitable and reasonable use as enshrined in regional and international water related legal instruments.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study questioned the myth and reality of securitization and desecuritization discourse over the negotiation of GERD. By making the criticism against the realist and liberalist variant of 'water war' and 'water peace' perspectives as point of departure, the study grounded on the constructivist theory of securitization and desecuritization theoretical perspectives. Using securitization theory as an analytical framework, the author argues that Egypt securitization of GERD as an existential water security threat is neither an actual nor perceived threat. Rather Egypt view of GERD as a water security threat is an invented fictitious threat neither scientifically verified nor legally supported. Thus, Egypt securitization of GERD is part of the historicism strategy of Egypt as it considers Nile water matter of life and death, a security and geopolitical issue.

In contrast to Egypt's strategic geopolitical securitization approach, Ethiopia has used a combination of tactical securitization and desecuritization approach. It is tactical because Ethiopia consider the GERD and Nile water as matter of survival and an existential issue. However, for Ethiopia the issue of GERD as well as the Nile water is more of technical than political. Because of this, Ethiopia has been in the process of depoliticizing and de-securitizing the GERD and Nile water issue. Moreover, it has to be understood that even though Ethiopia has used tactical securitization, its overarching approach is largely desecuritization. Its desecuritization approach is grounded upon the recognition of Nile as a transboundary resource and its utilization based on principle of equitable and reasonable use, and hydro cooperation and solidarity.

Renaissance Dam on Different Water Uses in Upper Egypt, 8British Journal of Applied Science & Technology, 461, 462 and (2015); Asegdew G.Mulat and Semu A. Moges, *Assessment of the Impact of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Performance of the High Aswan Dam*, 6Journal of Water Resource and Protection, 583, 583 (2014).

¹³¹ Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, Article 4 and 5

¹³² Agreement on the Declaration of Principles between the Arab republic of Egypt, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and The Republic of the Sudan on The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project, March 23, 2015, Article 3 and 4

¹³³ Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses, General Assembly of the United Nations on 21 May 1997; Article 5 and 7

Through this, Ethiopia presented GERD as a benefit sharing project having scientifically verified domestic, regional and international benefits. Against this backdrop, Egypt negotiation approach is based on securitization of GERD under the notion of water security, discourse of absolute dependency and claimed historic rights. They come to negotiation table to pressurize Ethiopia to recognize Egypt's claimed historic right under the cover of ill-defined and amorous concept of water security. Its strategy of negotiation is not based on scientific knowledge, data and principled politics of give and take. Rather it is based on distorted image and securitization of GERD. Egypt approach of negotiation is based on win-lose as the negotiator always comes to negotiation table 'not to give a drop of water based on the notion of water security'.

The study also identified the myths and realities in the securitization discourse of Egypt. The myths of the securitization of GERD by Egypt as a security threat include the following. First, securitizing GERD based on the discourse of Egypt absolute dependency on the Nile water is scientifically unverified invented myth. Contrary to Ethiopia, Egypt is groundwater endowed State. Estimated groundwater resources of Egypt and Ethiopia is 55, 200 km³ and 12,700km³ respectively. In Ethiopia, if there is no rain then there will be no agriculture, no food and no life at all. However, life in Egypt can sustain in the absence of Nile waters with groundwater. Second, Egypt securitization of GERD based on its policy of politicization and nationalization of Nile waters is a myth. By politicizing the Nile waters, Egypt brings the political GERD rather than the technical GERD in to the negotiation table. Egypt also securitized GERD based on unscientific syllogism of 'Egypt is a gift of Nile then Nile is a gift of Egypt'. Third, the securitization of GERD based on Egypt notion of water security is unscientific, non-accommodative, and destructive. Why Egypt use ill-defined, amorphous and destructive concept of water security is to stop the construction of GERD and thereby canonizing the inequitable status quo. Fourth, GERD is an invented existential threat and foreshadower of Egypt's hysteria and *Ethiophobia*.

In conclusion, two kind of transformation is needed. On the part of Egypt, it should renounce its unscientifically supported securitization discourses and recognize Nile as a transboundary shared resources. Instead of maintaining indefensible historical rights, Egypt should accept international water law principles such as the principle of equitable and reasonable use, and not to cause significant harm as codified in CFA and DoP. Moreover, Egypt must revisit its notion of water security which is a win-lose. On the part of Ethiopia, it should deconstruct the unwarranted myth of Egypt on GERD in particular and Nile in general.