

ANALYZE THE CAUSES OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINE WAR WITH WALTZ'S THREE IMAGES (INDIVIDUAL, DOMESTIC POLITICS, INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM)

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ABSTRACT

No one is calling the Russia-Ukraine conflict is considered the commencement of World War III right now. But all analyzes see it as Europe's biggest conflict since World War II as the war dragged on and it assumed a different character as well. The opening weeks of Russia's invasion of Ukraine were a war of military strategy. On the other hand, the Ukrainian troops-built resistance was necessary to stop the enemy's advance. In military strategy, a well-trained and efficient army is necessary to conduct war properly. Over the past six years, with the help of Western allies, Ukraine has been able to build a military capable of such a war. As part of such a war, where resistance is needed (such as in Kyiv), the Ukrainian military has done so. Again, the army has withdrawn from where it is necessary to retreat (Donetsk and Luhansk). The Russian - Ukraine war can be considered a multi-dimensional disaster, which is likely to get much worse in the foreseeable future because while a war is successful, little attention is paid to its causes, but when the outcome is disastrous, understanding how it happened becomes paramount. All in all, this study intends to provide an overview of the Russia-Ukraine war and its causes with Waltz's three Images as Individual, Domestic Politics, and international systems as well. In addition to this, it also has attempted to understand the long-term effect(s) on world politics as well.

INTRODUCTION

The roots of the current crisis in Ukraine are deep and of course, are not confined to Ukraine. From the point of view of the United States and most of Western and Central Europe, Russian President Vladimir Putin has chosen Ukraine as the main strategy for his efforts to rebuild the Soviet Union because of his strategic position in Central Europe. And special influence over the Baltic States, power, and politics is a part of Russia's strategy and plan to influence Ukraine. In this particular connection, Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly made clear statements that he considers Ukraine to be under Russia's thumb.

However, according to different sources president, Putin wants Europe to play a key role in Russia's security because, over the past two decades, the United States and most NATO allies have sought to subdue Russia's influence in Europe. Russia's growing influence in Ukraine is crucial to reviving Russia's status as a superpower, implementing Russia's ambitions in a non-threatening way, and undermining Western efforts to avoid a new Cold War. However, the current Russian - Ukraine crisis is a critical one in the post-Cold War international system. The effect of this war is not only within Russia-Ukraine but also made broader geopolitical impacts embroiling Russia and the west. Before analyzing the causes behind this particular war, an attempt has been made to explore the background of the political, and historical developments within these two countries.

METHOD

This paper has attempted to explore the causes and present status of the Russian-Ukraine war with Waltz's three Images (Individual, Domestic Politics, International System). It also has tried to understand the long-term effect on world politics as well. However, to develop this review study, secondary sources have been taken into account. To develop this review paper an attempt has been at various secondary sources like books, articles, journals, newspapers, movies, and documentaries as well. Thus, to explore the paper with Waltz's three Images it has been attempted to connect the present to the past and analyses how it has gone through a change over time. However, the collected information from secondary sources has been carefully reviewed and scrutinized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Background of the Russian-Ukraine War

When Russia first entered Ukraine in 2014, President Putin-backed rebels took control of a large area in eastern Ukraine. Since then, they have been fighting the Ukrainian army (Fisher, 2014). Moreover, armed conflict in eastern Ukraine erupted in early 2014 following Russia's annexation of Crimea as well (Center for Preventive Action, 2012).

The latest news, however, is that the rebels are not only claiming control of the area, but also the whole of Donetsk and Luhansk. There was an international Minsk peace agreement to end the war, but the fighting did not stop there. And that is why the Russian leader says he is sending so-called peacekeepers to the region (Hernandez, 2022).

The agreement was signed in 2015 in Minsk, the capital of Belarus. Where the main condition was to remove military installations, military equipment, and mercenaries from eastern Ukraine. Apart from this, special status was given to the separatist areas. The agreement also mentions the deployment of its own police force and local judiciary in the regions. However, Kyiv did not implement those agreements (Ghosh, 2022).

According to many sources Russian president Putin has every now and then claimed that Ukraine is a puppet of the West and has never been a real state. Another reason might be that despite Ukraine's recognition as a country, the country has deep social and cultural ties with Russia as a country of the former Soviet Union. Russian is also widely spoken there.

Russia thinks that Ukraine has never been a real state. He has said before that what is now Ukraine is in fact "ancient Russian territory (Knispel, 2022).

Ukraine's desire to join NATO and the European Union is another reason for the attack (Kocho-Williams, 2022). Because Russia has been objecting to that for a long time. Russia has demanded that Western nations assure Ukraine that it will not join NATO. NATO is a military alliance of 30 western nations (Roth, 2021).

B. Status of the Russian-Ukraine War

This particular paragraph will try to explore Russian behavior in the course of the Ukrainian crisis. According to [Demedziuk \(2017\)](#), the Russian Federation, as a successor to the former Soviet Union, is nowadays viewed as a world power in the international arena. This is the first time since World War II that Russia's armed forces have launched the largest attack on Ukraine by land, air, and sea. Subsequently, the Russian president Mr. Putin announced a military invasion in order to take care of the territory's security and Russia's ethnicity in Ukraine. Immediately after his official announcement On February 24, 2022, the Russian military commenced the "special military operation" in Ukraine.

According to the United Nations, since Russia launched a full-scale military invasion into Ukraine on February 24, 2022, fighting has caused nearly three thousand civilian deaths and internally displaced more than seven million people ([UNHCR, 2022](#)). In addition to that, the ongoing fighting between these two nations has forced another five million Ukrainians to flee to neighboring countries the majority of whom have arrived in Poland, a NATO country where the United States and other allies are helping to accommodate the influx of refugees as well ([Center for Preventive Action, 2012](#)).

According to BBC news "the Russian forces initially made rapid gains in the south, with their main objective being the creation of a land corridor between Crimea, which it annexed in 2014, and areas held by Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk" ([The Visual Journalism Team, 2022](#)). The situation has been witnessed that for now, Russia is fully in control of the port city of Mariupol, after a siege lasting more than two months came to an end on 20 May. Apart from that as of now, so many events have taken place since the war started between these two countries such as the United Kingdom supplying 6,000 missiles to Ukraine ([Reuters, 2022](#)). British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced the new aid package to the US-led military alliance NATO and the G-7 Ukraine, a Russian journalist has been killed in an attack in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv. Moreover, Anatoly Chubais, an adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin and the country's climate envoy, has resigned. He resigned amid opposition to Russian military operations in Ukraine and the war and disagreements with President Putin over the issue. While starting the invasion of Ukraine, Russia occupied the Chornobyl nuclear power plant on the first day of the military operation in Ukraine. Russian troops have been accused of looting and destroying a laboratory at the historic nuclear plant. Likewise, the Russian military claimed that they occupied the Mariupol region and offered to Ukraine troops to surrender but Ukraine has rejected Russia's offer to surrender to the army and city authorities, acknowledging defeat in Mariupol. Another status that has been made by Ukraine is that Ukraine has demanded about 15,000 Russian troops be killed since the start of the invasion of Ukraine on the orders of President Vladimir Putin ([El-Bar, 2022](#)). Finally, due to the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the US and its allies have imposed economic sanctions against Russia so that the war can be stopped.

C. Causes of the Russian-Ukraine Conflict

It is known from different secondary sources that NATO is the main reason behind the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Firstly, there are different dimensions and causes of the conflict in Ukraine, which include socio-linguistic, economic, cultural, and political aspects that can be traced back into history ([Zeb & Habibullah, 2017](#)). Apart from that, there are 30

countries under NATO. These include the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and Germany. And Ukraine is trying to join this group. With this incident, the tension between the two countries started. On the other hand, US relations with Russia are already at an all-time low on various issues. On the other hand, the United States is on the list of NATO countries. Ukraine, meanwhile, wants to join NATO, along with the United States, France, and Germany. Russia, however, is reluctant to see neighboring Ukraine in the same group as the United States. Meanwhile, NATO has opened its doors to Ukraine. This incident did not bring much relief to Moscow. On the other hand, according to [Van Bergeijk \(2019\)](#), "the 2014 sanctions against Russia illustrate the comparative vulnerability of the European democracies and their weakness in organizing comprehensive sanctions that bite."

D. Important to Analyze the Causes of War

It has been observed from different sources that it is important to analyze the core causes of the ongoing war between these two countries. The causes have been identified that the war is raging between Russia and Ukraine and the Russian troops are advancing slowly in the face of resistance in Kyiv. From the political perspective, however, it has been clear that a number of military and civilian people have been killed in violent clashes, and missile and artillery attacks.

While most people in the world avoid war, some people are prone to war. Psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists have been researching for centuries why this happens. There are some psychological reasons why people get involved in the war. According to evolutionary psychologists, there are certain genes in human DNA that are responsible for humans prone to war. People get involved in wars because of their strength, ego-satisfaction, etc.

To understand the importance of the war, close attention needs to be given to the Middle East and African regions because many countries in the Middle East and Africa have been at war for years, but the world has not felt the heat as much as the recent wars between Russia and Ukraine. One of the reasons for this is that a country like Russia is embroiled in a war that has dragged on the world economy. Economists say the impact could slow world growth by 0.9 percent. Which, of course, made the war an overnight sensation. Not only the economy but also the lives of the people are under threat. International human rights groups have not been able to say exactly how many people were killed in the attack that Russia launched on Thursday morning.

On the other hand, the ongoing war may also be thought on the fuel oil which is considered one of the reasons why the effects of the Ukraine-Russia war are being felt around the world. Russia is the world's second-largest exporter of fuel oil. As a result, oil prices have risen to 110 a barrel in the last seven years. The low-income countries are in danger of losing more than the thunder signal for the rich countries. Rising fuel prices have had an impact on the overall transport sector. As a result, prices of food and other necessities are skyrocketing. In addition, the stock market has fallen in most countries of the world. Bangladesh is no exception.

But the question is, is the West as vocal in the Ukraine war as it is in the Middle East? Muslims from generation to generation, are in the role of spectators even though they are beaten there. Especially on the Israel-Palestine issue. Which reminds them of dualism.

E. Theoretical Background: Waltz's 3 Images to Explain War

To understand and critically analyze the ongoing war happening between these countries Waltz's 3 Images is important to Explain. Because through *Man, the State, and*

War, Waltz became famous for his tripartite division of the levels of analysis regarding the causes of war (Pechlivanis, 2012). Moreover, particularly, it was introduced by him the term 'image' for each level. 'The first image' finds the major cause of war in the first level of analysis; 'within man'. 'The second image' in the second level; 'within the structure of separate states' and 'the third image' in the third; 'within the state system' (Waltz, 2001). Waltz's core subject, however, is a range of positions taken on the causes of war and the conditions of peace. He aimed to illustrate the assumptions underlying the various positions taken and critically analyze their implications of the war which is particularly pivotal to the analysis of the war in world politics.

On the other hand, it has been argued in *Theory of International Politics*, that Waltz turned from destruction to construction and tried to do two things. First, it was argued by him that the behavior of states was best explained by the third 'image'. The structure of the international system, he argued, conditioned and thus explained state behavior (Institute, 2012). In addition to this, according to Darrington and Doherty (2014), "in *Man, the State, and War*, Waltz has pioneered the application of levels of analysis in explaining the causes of war and international relations more generally." Moreover, Waltz posited that explanations of war could be grouped at three distinct levels or "images," as he called them. However, as the first image" explanations of war focus on human nature and individual psychology, second image theories look instead to the internal structure of states to explain war. For example, wars may be caused by despotic or imperialist states looking to expand their territory, by states attempting to overcome internal strife by uniting against an external enemy, or by domestic political pressures that may make it costly for states to pursue peaceful diplomatic solutions and finally the third images talk about the internationals of many theorists (Wheeler, 2018).

F. Individual level

From an individual perspective, the ongoing war between these two countries can lead to a longer effect on world politics. Basically, due to this war happening, Ukraine has become the center of contention between the USA and Russia. On one hand, Moscow would like the West to remain in Ukraine and other former Soviet countries not joining NATO and listen to Russian words in order to avoid NATO and Western countries' policies. However, Ukraine would like to join NATO which has been considered negatively by Moscow resulting which the conflict has taken place Russia has been observing that having joined NATO, provided that Ukraine will allow NATO to get closer to the Russian border. Apart from that, if Ukraine gets attacked by outside countries other than NATO members, it will be eligible to receive backing from the group's members. It is also assumed by Russia that once Ukraine has joined NATO, it may attempt to take back Crimea which has been revealed by Russian President Putin. On the other hand, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia lost control of other 14 former republics including Ukraine s well. That's why Putin considers this as tragic as both countries shared a single "historic and spiritual space". The Russian president demands guarantees from the West and Ukraine that it will not join and that Ukraine demilitarizes and become a neutral state (Staffer, 2022).

G. Domestic Politics, National Level

From the domestic politics and national level perspectives, there are many arguments have been developed in order to explain the ongoing war. It has been observed from different sources that before the invasion of Ukraine, Russia probably hoped that it could easily capture the capital Kyiv without any obstacles. The attack was probably planned out

of that hope. The same is true of Russia's use of light weapons and warships. The resistance that Russia has faced in Ukraine has not only come from the country's armed forces but also from the people of Ukraine who have put up a courageous resistance. The resistance has intensified with the way Ukrainian President Zelensky has been leading the resistance from the front lines (Gómez, 2022).

Another scenario has been noticed on this battlefield that no other country has joined forces directly to save Ukraine. However, they are using all means of multidimensional resistance. In addition to tough economic sanctions, especially from the European Union, the United States, and its allies, various sanctions are building resistance against Russia (Consilium, 2022). As U.S. airspace has been banned from flying to Russia, they have been temporarily expelled from various international sports organizations. In addition, investments are being withdrawn from other companies, including Russian oil companies, which had large investments in Western companies. Investment has been withdrawn from institutions like Gazprom. In response, the value of the Russian ruble has plummeted. The price of one ruble has dropped below one American cent. They probably did not anticipate such a massive response before the attack. That is why in the face of so much resistance they are trying to take immediate action. As Russia has announced, no foreign institution will be able to withdraw its investment, or from now on, no one outside Russia will be allowed to accept more than ten thousand. Eventually, it is clear that the consequences of this economic embargo could be even direr.

H. International System Level

From the beginning, Russia has been opposed to the expansion of NATO's eastern border. Russia has accused the West of failing to honor its promises. Latvia and Moldova have joined NATO. Russia fears that NATO will include Ukraine. In that case, NATO's presence would be on Russia's doorstep. However, an analysis of President Putin's speech before the invasion of Ukraine suggests that this is not the only reason for the attack. He considers Ukraine historically part of Russia and considers the birth of Ukraine as an independent state to be wrong. In addition to Russia's security, Putin may have felt that there was something wrong with the past. All in all, this attack starts from a complex psychological situation.

On the other hand, prior to the attack, various diplomatic initiatives were taken by Europe and the United States. Talks have been held at the highest level, and even the heads of state from NATO member France or Turkey went to Moscow to meet with Putin (France, 2022). However, these diplomatic initiatives did not solve the problem. They did not take any military action as they did not consider it appropriate to take any other step outside of diplomacy. It should be kept in mind that if a third state gets involved in this conflict, it may take a global form, which is not desirable.

Apart from that, a number of tough sanctions have already been imposed by the United States and the European Union, and their coverage could increase. In today's world, if a country is economically and otherwise isolated from the world, that is what creates the biggest pressure on the country. As it turns out, Russia is already under severe pressure. If the United States, NATO, or other countries were to engage in direct conflict without following the path of sanctions, the conflict would quickly spread to Europe and the world. To avoid this situation, no other country has been directly involved in this conflict.

Another important thing is that the main pillar of state power is economic power. Without it, it is impossible for any country in the world today to plan anything. Due to the economic sanctions and other sanctions that have been imposed, the Russian economy and

other sectors are already experiencing severe adverse reactions. I have already said that the ruble will fall. Food prices are rising. The international movement of Russian citizens is being restricted. Financial transactions with foreign countries will be stopped due to sanctions on various Russian banks and the exclusion of many banks from the Swift system. Its effects on Russia's foreign exchange situation are beginning to be felt. Moreover, Russia's 650 billion foreign exchange reserves have already been blocked by the West (Gordon, 2022). Likewise, Russia's central bank sanctions have cut them off from the world economy. In addition, all bank accounts of President Putin, Foreign Minister Lavrov and many of Russia's richest people abroad have been closed. Russia may not yet realize where the sanctions could extend, and where they will ultimately go (Current Time, 2022). However, there is no doubt that this will upset Russia's economy and state system.

Eventually, the crucial matter is that from the international perspective, Ukraine has taken a bold stand against Russian aggression. Ukraine has been promised military aid, weapons, and ammunition from various countries in the Western world and has already begun to arrive. At some point, Russia may take over the whole of Ukraine, though not very quickly. However, it appears that Ukraine's armed forces may merge with the people to form a mass resistance against Russia. If the conflict turns into a civil war, the conflict will be prolonged and Russia will not be able to take full control of Ukraine. We know that it is very difficult to maintain control over an invaded territory.

CONCLUSION

US relations with Russia are already at an all-time low on various issues. On the other hand, the United States is on the list of NATO countries. Ukraine, meanwhile, wants to join NATO, along with the United States, France, and Germany. Russia, however, is reluctant to see neighboring Ukraine in the same group as the United States. Meanwhile, NATO has opened its doors to Ukraine. This incident did not bring much relief to Moscow.

In the event of a foreign attack on any of the NATO member states, the country concerned receives the assistance of that member country. And if Russia's neighbor Ukraine joins NATO, member states will come to its aid. And Russia was angry at this. Moreover, in 2014, Russia entered Ukraine for the first time. President Putin-backed rebels then took control of a large area in eastern Ukraine. Since then, they have been fighting the Ukrainian army. There was an international Minsk peace agreement to end the war, but the fighting did not stop there. And that is why the Russian leader says he is sending so-called peacekeepers to the region.

On the other hand, the current ongoing conflict is not only remained between these two countries but also has severely strained U.S.-Russia relations and increased the risk of a wider European conflict as well. Moreover, severe tensions are supposed to develop between Russia and neighboring NATO member countries as well which may lead to involve the United States, due to alliance security commitments. In addition to that, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine may bring broader ramifications for future cooperation on critical issues like arms control, cybersecurity, nuclear nonproliferation, energy security, counter-terrorism, and political solutions in Syria, Libya, and elsewhere in the long run which might be watched as a result of this ongoing war between these two countries.

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