



Implications of Russia- Ukraine War on World Peace and Security

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Abstract

The lingering tension between Ukraine and Russia have been visible since Ukraine gained its independence in 1991 not until 20 February, 2014 following the Ukraine's revolution of dignity, and in February 2022 Russia launched a full scale invasion of Ukraine. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is the most violent interstate conflict in the world since the second invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003 and 2001 respectively by the United States of America. The paper examined the nature and causes of this war, and consequences of the war. The Qualitative method of data analysis through the use of Secondary sources of data was used in achieving the said objectives. The paper adopts the power theory as theoretical framework in investigating the nature of the war, remote and immediate causes of the war. The paper found out that the war is hybrid in nature and there are remote causes such as Ukraine's sense of national identity, idiosyncrasy of the leaders' involved and immediate causes such as Ukraine's sovereignty, and status of Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk, international alliances, that triggered the occupation of Ukraine by Russia in February of 2022. The paper recommends that respect for a state's sovereignty as enshrined in international law and United Nation's charter should be a thing of national concern of both countries, that referendum should be considered especially with issues surrounding the status of Crimea. Also the paper recommends mutual tolerance and respect for international law, to avert plunging the world into avoidable crises of unimaginable proportion.

Keywords: Military invasion; Regional security; World peace; World security World war.

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Introduction

The most violent interstate conflict in the world since the second invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003 & 2001 respectively by the United States of America is the Ukraine's occupation by Russia in February 2022 (Beng, 2022). In all ramifications it is producing



alarming effects to the global economy already destroyed by Covid-19 and climate change (United Nations, 2022). It is a clear signal that we are indeed, witnessing a shift in

concentration of power and a redirection in global politics today. As one of the most important crises of recent times, the war has attracted the attention of many scholars and theorists, regardless of whether they have worked extensively on Ukraine or Ukrainian-Russian relations. The Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February, 2022, is a continuation of the lingering conflict started in 2014, recorded a total number of 2,082 conflicted related civilian deaths, and 26 deaths in the year 2019 (OHCHR HRMMU, 2019). Since then, several attempts of ceasefire was made but is always faced with obstacles as the war is hybrid in nature (Griekzak, 2020). To Griekzak (2020) the Russian national armies do not really directly participate in the war but mostly militant groups supported and directed by the Kremlin. Again, in 2020, UNIAN reported that these series of ceasefire agreement has over time been violated by Russia's hybrid military, with over thirteen attacks on Ukraine's army on March 2, 2020, with five Ukrainian soldiers wounded. This shows that we are living in an increasingly changing international system. The Russian- Ukrainian war has been analyzed and interpreted in different dimensions as researchers have seen it from different perspectives just like Kusa (2022), analyzed the war conventionally in two dimensions- the Crimean occupation and the military activity in Eastern Ukraine.

Similarly, Demedzuik (2022), stressed that the war between Ukraine and Russia could be seen as a power contestation and hybrid war between the two countries with Russia demonstrating its political, economic and military power over Ukraine. While some studies such as (D'anieri, 2018 & Beng, 2022), examined the situation and posit that the war between the two countries as balance of power between Russia and the West, Russian interest in the black sea and lastly the Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration. D'anieri (2018), points out that Russia's actions in 2014 were not responses to specific events such as NATO enlargement, EU policy, promotion of democracy or revolution in Ukraine because; the main drivers of Russian policy were visible prior to those events, answers to questions as why the occupation of Ukraine happened is the main concern of this paper. It is on this background that this paper intends to investigate the nature of the war between Russia and Ukraine, to also investigate the remote and immediate causes of the war, as there are so many misconceptions towards the war in Ukraine today. Also, this paper adopts the theory of power



politics as theoretical framework in investigating the nature, the remote and immediate causes of the war. The study is organized thematically first is the introduction; operational

clarifications, while the second part deals with theoretical framework, background, dimension of the war; consequences of the war; conclusions, recommendations, and references.

Operational definition

Concept of Peace

Peace simply means absent of violence, chaos or any physical harm.

Concept of War

War is the confrontation of two opposing groups, persons or regions, wars are as a result of clash of interest and are fought to show power, wars are destructive and mostly confrontational.

Concept of Power

Power is the ability to direct, influence and exact control over one another

Background to the Russia-Ukraine War

Ukraine is a relatively young state which gained its independence in 1991 after centuries of being partitioned between Poland and Muscovy and then Soviet rule. It is divided based on ethnicity with Ukrainian majority and Russian minority, Russian and Ukrainian language, and religion. Ukraine is ethnically, religiously, and linguistically divided with some regions, e.g., the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces and the Crimean peninsula, strongly identifying them as belonging to Russia (Kusa, 2022). Ukraine was the second-most powerful Soviet republic after Russia, and was crucial strategically, economically and culturally. Russian military intervention in Crimea in 2014 initiated the international war between the two states. To Kusa (2022), the interests of the foreign international actors such as the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations demonstrate the difficulty in resolving the conflict due to a firm neo-foreign policy conducted by Vladimir Putin the President of Russia. According to Lakomy (2016), the long lasting dichotomy, the Ukrainian sense of national identity is still developing, and intensifying the problem.

Again, Ukraine as a region that has varying degrees of differences inherited from difficult historical processes, and partly developed during the post-Cold War era (Lakomy 2016). It



has become a country characterized by conflicting interests and long lasting divisions. Due to its dependence, first on the Soviet Union and, now, the Russian federation, several issues have emerged and complicated the relations between Russia and Ukraine. While almost the entire Ukraine was controlled by the Russian, there was an important entity that marked its influence on the existing conflict in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions (Lakomy, 2016). This gave the Russians the assertion that the historical region ought to be under their control. Furthermore, having a status of a Post-Soviet satellite state, even after official recognition of independence, further deepened the conflicting positions regarding whether Ukraine should align more towards the West or Russian federation in sum, it is obvious that both Russia and Ukraine have a long lasting political, economic and cultural relationship, this relationship tends to shape the war today making it have a unique nature and different phases, and dimensions.

Russia-Ukraine war has been traditionally analyzed in three dimensions: The Crimean occupation by Russian forces; The military activity in Eastern Ukraine by massing military camps; maritime operations is another dimension of the war in Ukraine where by Russian military have engaged Ukraine over the years in show of power and military capacity (Kusa, 2022 ; Giezkak, 2020)

Theoretical framework

It is unethical in any academic study to explain relationship causal or normative without a theory, as theory explains reality; theory establishes relationship between the variables. It is on this background that this paper utilizes the theory of power politics to explain the nature and causes of Russia-Ukraine war.

Power politics is a theory of power in international relations which contends that distribution of power and national interests, or changes to those distributions, are fundamental causes of war and of system stability. The concept of power politics as propounded in the works of Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) and Hans Morgenthau (1948) provides a way of understanding systems of international relations: in this view, states compete for the world's limited resources, and it is to an individual state's advantage to be manifestly able to harm others.



Assumptions of the Theory of Power Politics as propagated in the works of Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) and Hans Morgenthau (1948) The theory contends that distributions of power and national interests, or changes to those distributions, are fundamental causes of war.

- i. That states compete for the world's limited resources, and it is to an individual state's advantage to be manifestly able to harm others in order to secure these resources.
- ii. Power politics prioritizes national self-interest over the interests of other nations or the international community and thus may include threatening one another with military, economic, or political aggression to protect one nation's own national interest.

Techniques of Power Politics

- i. Deterrence and suppression theory; here a weaker state is being discouraged by the actions of the powerful state by military operations and show power by the strong.
- ii. Asymmetric and symmetric warfare, here a state uses unconventional warfare methods in order to exploit another's weaknesses.
- iii. The massing of military units on a border, whether for stationing or for exercises this is also technique expounded by power politics.
- iv. The imposition of tariffs or economic sanctions possibly to initiate a trade war or suppress the country with a weaker economy.
- v. Propaganda, here a state or its agencies or institution use adverse inaccurate information to weaken another's reputation and international imagine (Eagleno 2017, p 349).

Also, Morgenthau (1965, p. 192), asserts, 'men and women are by nature political animals; they are born to pursue power and to enjoy the fruits of power'. Again, He speaks of "animus dominandi" i.e. the human 'lust' for power. The quest for 'power dictates a search not only for relative advantage, but also for a secure political space within to maintain oneself and exert considerable influence, free from the dictates of others'.



The human “animus dominandi” inevitably brings men and women into conflict with each other, that ultimately creates conditions of power politics.

Methodology

The Qualitative method of data analysis through the use of Secondary sources of data ,the study utilized documentary methods of data collection such as journals, magazines, internet sources, text books was used in achieving the objectives of this study.

Remote and Immediate Causes of the Russia-Ukraine War

The socio-economic, political and cultural background shared by the two former members of the defunct Soviet Union has theoretically and empirically shaped the nature, techniques, and causes of the war resulting in two cause phases i.e. remote and immediate causes. It is a complex interrelation of ethnic, religious, political, and economic interests that resulted in the deadly war going on between Ukraine and Russia. To understand the conflict as a whole it is imperative to explore the conflicting ideologies and issues, which can be categorized into six (6) strata: (a) Maintenance of post-Soviet states by Russia (b) Ukraine’s Sovereignty, (c) Status of the Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk, (d) Ukraine’s sense of national identity, and (e) International alliances with Ukraine being at the Centre of conflicting ideologies between Russia and the Western hemisphere consisting of mostly liberal ideologies and agenda with progenitors such as USA, NATO, EU etc. and (f) Idiosyncrasy of the leaders involved (Kusa, 2022; Giezkak, 2020).

Remote Causes of Russia-Ukraine War

i. The annexation of Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions

In February and March 2014, Russia invaded and subsequently annexed the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine in what was the first time a European country annexed territory from another country since the World War II. The occupation of Crimea has given Russia a maritime upper hand in the region which serves as another dimension of the war. The series of events that directly led to the annexation of Crimea were initiated on February 22th and 23th 2014, when pro-Russians seized important buildings in the Crimean capital, Simferopol; this event



took place in the aftermath of the revolution of dignity, (Blidaru, 2018). Here, Ukraine and many other countries condemned the annexation and consider it to be a violation of international law and Russian agreements to safeguard the territorial integrity of Ukraine. On the other hand Russia-backed separatists declared independence from Kyiv in 2014. Since then Russian control over parts of the Donbas region has grown significantly. Donetsk and Luhansk are both unrecognized republics of Russia in the occupied parts of Eastern Ukraine's Donetsk Oblast and Luhansk which initially operated as breakaway states until their annexation by Russia which serves as an immediate cause of the war.

ii. Ukraine's sense of national identity

The need to strengthen the sense of national identity was recognized among the Ukrainians as the interferences of the Russian government increases. At the same time, this sense of national identity is quite complicated as Ukraine is a multi-ethnic state with relatively large minorities, especially the Russians in the Eastern part of the country. This Eastern part of Ukraine has been a target of many spheres of influence (Lakomy, 2016 & Zwolski, 2018), suggested that one can only understand the formation of Ukrainian national identity through the complexity of its position vis-à-vis Russia, the European Union, and also the resistance posted by Ukraine over the years.

iii. Idiosyncrasy of leaders involved

In Russia, Vladimir Putin is a supreme leader of both domestic and foreign politics. For decades, he served in the Soviet army before delving into politics. Putin is currently serving his fourth term in office as the president of Russia after his acting period as a president and a prime minister twice. For over thirty (30) years Putin has been governing Russia, as such Putin sees himself as a continuator of the USSR with expansionist ambitions. This pushed him to want Crimea, Luhansk, and Donetsk to be recognized as Russian Territories and, perhaps, that he himself is recognized as the savior of the Russian minority oppressed on the Ukrainian territory (Giezkak, 2020). i.e. Putin wants to maintain the status quo, the position of Russia of being a great power in the international arena, and his position as the great leader of the Russian citizenry; this is seen in the constitutional amendments in 2008 which introduces an extension of period for



presidential term in office (Giezkak, 2020). On the other hand, President Zelensky lacks political and diplomatic experience before he ran for the office of the President. He was a comedian and a television celebrity in Ukraine. Nonetheless, he has shown his clear aspirations in cutting the oligarchic influence on the government and state institutions, Ukraine's membership in NATO and the EU gives hope and pulled support for him from majority of Ukraine's citizens (Giezkak, 2020), adding to this is observed in 2020 by Giezkak, that before the war Russia used to supply gas to Ukraine, beginning in 2015, Ukraine has significantly reduced its direct import of Russian natural gas and instead has received natural shipments from Europe.

Immediate Causes of the Russia-Ukraine War

iv. Maintenance of Post-Soviet States by Russia

The Russian federation has a long imperial history over the states under the defunct Soviet-Union. Russia's sense of superiority and the need to prove it impermeable nature has been its core national interest. In issues surrounding balance of power, ever since Ukraine split from the Soviet Union, Russia and the West have fought for greater influence in the country in order to keep the balance of power in the region in their favor. Umland (2019) emphasized the importance of Ukraine for Russia, US, and European Union, this has led to wide and yet nevertheless widespread common agreement within large parts of Russia's population about the rightfulness, justice and legitimacy of Russia's various territorial, political, cultural and economic claims towards Ukraine. This expression was seen during the Truth Justice Media forum where President Putin expresses his regrets over the collapse of the USSR in 2018, reflects the general mood of the Russian federation (TASS, 2018). The Russian government's efforts to maintain spheres of influence in the Post-Soviet states therefore seem to be an attempt to reimburse this nostalgia by having control over these former members of the USSR. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the maintenance of these post-Soviet states, i.e. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Ukraine by Russia is an effort to unite the nation-states.



Moreover, it is a response to the eastward expansion of the Western European ideologies, with the recent democratization of Ukraine and show of interest in joining NATO.

v. Ukraine's sovereignty

Russia has constantly been interrupting Ukraine's sovereignty since 1991 through continuous military operations either as patrol operations or exercises (Lakomy, 2016). The unique geography of the black sea region confers several geopolitical advantages to Russia; the black sea is bordered by Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine and all these countries are NATO countries as such makes the black sea a region of strategic importance and maritime flash point. As it is an important crossroads and strategic intersection for the complete region and it is an important region for goods and energy generation. Again, the causes of the Orange revolution which took place in November of 2004- January of 2005 such as that of special press conference made by Vladimir Putin, the Russia's President in 2004 known as the propaganda of the Russia-Ukraine merger and the underlying causes of Euromaidan revolution which took place in February 2014 which the Ukraine government see as an invention of the Russian government to fight against the Ukraine government are just examples of the Russian interference in its satellite states which also led to the war between Ukraine and Russia. The procedural events that led to the orange and Euromaidan revolutions serve as remote causes of the war.

vi. International alliances

The War can be considered as a clash of two opposing ideologies represented by the West on one side (EU, the UN, NATO), and Russia on the other side. The European Union along with the NATO, the UN, many non-governmental organizations, as well as the United States represents the liberal democratic stance that is perceived by Russia as a threat to its existence. The European Union is interested in Polish attempt initiative and attempt to tie Ukraine closer to the Western Europe, or perhaps, to cut the Russo-Ukraine relationship by pushing for the adoption of Eastern partnership initiative (Giezkak, 2020). Similarly, Mearsheimer (2014), pointed out that the West's final technique for separating Kiev away from Moscow has been its efforts to spread Western values and



promote democracy in Ukraine and other Post-Soviet states, a plan that often entails funding Pro-Western individuals, organizations and ideas. Similarly, Ukraine has called on North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to speed up the country's membership in the alliance this move made Russia to declare such a gesture as a threat. Again, the EU and NATO are not necessarily interested in the accession of Ukraine to the Unions, but both recognize the strategic importance of Ukraine economically, politically and in aiding it in transmitting its liberal ideas. While on the other hand Russia, after succeeding in Crimea, knows that the international community currently lacks means of stopping it (Lakomy, 2016). In 2020 Giekzak argued that, the closeness of Ukraine to the EU's member states allows for the financial and technical support provided by EU to Ukraine which Russia finds unattractive and as a threat to its national security and threat to its impenetrable status.

CASUALTIES	RUSSIA	UKRAINE
Deaths	492,579	101,372
Injured	673,400	148,343
Infrastructure destroyed	1	149,300
Industries/ factories destroyed	Nil	108
Schools / Universities destroyed	Nil	3,021
Health Care facilities	Nil	1,131

Source: OHCHR, 2022.

Implications on the World Peace and Security

The consequences of the war between Ukraine and Russia cannot be overemphasized as it is dimensional and also has diverse consequences on national economies, national security, inter-state relations, global finance, food, and humanitarian activities etc. In 2020, Ukraine Ministry of Social policy stated that at the state level the issue seems even more pressing as the number of casualties recorded in the Donbas region of Ukraine hits 510,764 and that the



registered number of internally displaced persons has reached 280,437 in Donestsk and Luhanks Provinces. This event has a negative effect on the economy of Ukraine as both

provinces had a negative contribution to Ukraine's national growth with -18.1% and -45.5%, accordingly (Giekzak, 2020). On the other hand, Russia's economy is also faced with a lot of sanctions by different international actors such as U.S. and EU, its GDP fell from 2060 billion US dollars (USD) in 2014 to 1282.7 USD in 2016 (Giekzak, 2020).

Another economic consequence of this war is redistribution of energy markets, especially in Europe; the EU has already decided to cut Russia's share in gas and oil imports (Kusa, 2022). The implications of this is that other countries will take a more prominent position in energy exports to Europe and they may include for example the USA, Qatar, turkey, Egypt and Algeria, while to Ukraine it's the invasion accelerated the process of switching off Russia's energy grid system and integrating into the European energy network in March 2020.

Also, Oil market globally got hit by the invasion of Ukraine by Russia which resulted to a rise in oil prices even before the war. Kusa in 2022 stressed that this reason also made countries to find ways to push Russia out of oil export chain to Europe; this is evident in decision taken by US, Britain and Canada to impose a full embargo on Russia oil imports. Although, debates on how to implement the policy with caution on its impact on national economies is the great concern to the actors, to some extent, it is evident that this reason pushed for the resumption of US-Iran nuclear talks in Vienna after they reached no agreement in January 2022 (Kusa, 2022).

Notwithstanding, trading economic report shows that it increased since then to 1750 USD in 2019, UNIAN in 2019 states that Russia spends almost 4 billion USD for the cost of maintaining Crimea and the Donbas region. In April of 2022, Russian forces kept to destroy military and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine, particularly aimed at destroying strategic and crucial infrastructures such as thermal plants, power plants, railroad junctions, warehouses, petrol stations, oil depots, gas and water pipelines, airports, bridges that connect Western and

Eastern Ukraine. This according to Kusa (2022) also had a devastating effect and long lasting effect on the humanitarian situation in the country. Again, an invited informal boycott by



foreign companies preceded by Western-led economic sanctions and financial restrictions once again raised the question of the legitimacy and effectiveness of sanctions as coercive measures in modern international relations. It has become an issue of concern for many countries as sanctions have disrupted supply chains, delayed trade, complicated bank transactions, and made the international economic cooperation difficult and uncomfortable while triggering another global dispute between the West and the East on the integrity of the global financial system.

On food substances, Wheat and Sunflower exports were also badly damaged by Russia's invasion as Ukraine and Russia are among the leading exporters of Wheat, which is a vital resource as both serve as food for dozens of countries and a life-saving product with regard to food security. Countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Algeria import from 50% to more than 80% of their Wheat from Russia or Ukraine (Kusa, 2022). With world food prices going up and the war in Ukraine delaying and blocking of export, this resulted in significant global consequences on food security and supply chain. Security wise this war has altered European security architecture, the situation in Ukraine has made a lot of countries to rearm themselves such as Poland, Slovakia and Germany.

In sum, the study found out that the nature of the war between Ukraine and Russia is hybrid and symmetrical in nature as both states essentially look the same since they formed the defunct USSR and also both rely on similar tactics such as propaganda, military operations, cyber warfare etc. second, it is offensive, also as military warfare has since been the tactics used in land and maritime borders. Again, the paper found out that the long lasting socio-political and historical relationship shared by the two opposing countries has aided the stronger country Russia to deter the weaker one Ukraine, and that International organizations such as UN, EU, and NATO are not really interested in Ukraine's accession as a member state rather the importance Ukraine will and plays in helping them sell their liberal ideology and also breaking Russia's control and regulate the New world order. Lastly, despite having a one-time same political and economic ideology under the defunct USSR, now Ukraine has borrowed a different ideology which is liberal democratic ideology from the West which Russia finds unattractive and a threat, as such the only weapon to regulate this fast growing Western expansion for Russia is to stamp its authority in its satellite states with Ukraine serving as an example to others.



Generally, both countries are in a war to maintain their national interest, balance of power, to maintain relevance in the international political arena, economic interest and influence in the New world order, with Russia trying to maintain Ukraine under its constant supervision and other Post-Soviet states. While on the other hand, Ukraine trying to protect its sovereignty and national identity as an independent nation has brought about a lot of disagreement which eventually pushed the two countries into war, another issue that aided in triggering the war is the idiosyncrasy of the leaders involved.

Conclusions

The complexity of the underlying causes of the war makes it difficult to address it. The precedent set by the annexation of Crimea in 2014 gave rise to the ongoing hybrid war in the East of Ukraine and this concerns European states regarding future steps of Russia. Russian maintenance of Post-Soviet states and Putin's quest for uniting the nation seem to legitimize their claims through military warfare. At the same time, Ukraine's lack of a strong national identity and growing pro-Russian movements further complicate the resolution, and since the West is not sincerely interested in the accession of Ukraine in joining EU or NATO it serves as a hindrance in ending the War as no adequate military support is being provided by the West with devastating consequences faced by Ukraine in Russia is bombardments through land, air and maritime borders.

Recommendations

The Russo-Ukraine war, as seen in the above discussion is spatial and complex, different interrelated issues and causes; remote and immediate, long socio-cultural historical relations that ties and separates the two countries, idiosyncrasy of some leaders in both states, all the interrelated issues makes the conflict a very difficult one to solve but notwithstanding the study provides the following recommendations in resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine today.



- i. Respect and non-interference in the sovereignty of states: here, it is recommended that both states should have respect for international law and order and also respect territorial sovereignty of each other.
- ii. Ukraine as a former USSR state should respect that and maintain a cordial relationship with Russia as it has before the breakout of the war, because the security of your neighbor is also your security.
- iii. The rising food insecurity of wheat among others is a testificandum of a threat to world peace and security. Thus, parties in this war should thread carefully to consider first world interest than the heightened interest of self over whole. By so doing, brings a relief to all in the comity of nations.

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