AN ASSESSMENT OF A RE-EMERGING RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS

BY

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LEGON JULY 2015
DECLARATION

I Rachael Antwi, certify that apart from the reference to other works, which have been duly acknowledged, the dissertation is the result of my own research work carried under the supervision of Dr. Boni Yao Gebe and has not been presented, either in part or in whole anywhere else.

I am therefore solely responsible for any short coming that may be found in this research work.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this to the Lord God Almighty and also to the memory of my beloved late brother, PERISE KWABENA AMONKWA CUDJOE. You will forever be part of this work.
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ABSTRACT

Russia’s position in world politics remains an ongoing debate in academic discourse. While the West, especially the United States of America, tries to make the Ukraine crisis seem to the world that it is Russia’s fault, other scholars write in defense of Russia, justifying why the Ukraine crisis is in no way Russia’s fault but the West’s and therefore acknowledge Russia’s current power status as a re-emerged one since the end of the Cold War. While Russia takes a relaxed approach in dealing with the West by finding the slightest opportunity to show its strength, it has used the Crimea annexation as an opportunity to communicate a message to the world that the power that it possessed during the Soviet era is back. This study set out to explore Russia’s power play as it is involved in the Ukraine crisis and how the domestic crisis in Ukraine, Russia’s backyard, could be so significant in showing forth Russia’s re-emerged status in world politics. Putin’s outstanding role is also explored to show how his assertiveness contributes to setting Russia on the world stage as a re-emerged super power. To adequately explore this complex topic, secondary sources of data were used to carry out a pure qualitative research. Falling heavily on published scholarly online journals and books, the findings of the study revealed that using the Ukraine Crisis and particularly Crimea annexation, Russia has successfully proven to the world how strong it is to resist the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) expansions as well as any country which tries to get closer to its borders and pose a threat to its interests. Also, Putin’s leadership style has portrayed Russia’s show of Resilience and Rhetoric in world politics. The implications for Russia’s actions have been positive as it has been evident that sanctions from the West, in fact, have had no effect on Russia. On the contrary, the effect is felt by Europe which depends heavily on Russia’s gas and energy resources. Thus, Russia continues to build alliances with other emerging powers like China and India while building the Eurasia integration as well. The United States of America has, thus, eventually admitted that Russia is today its greatest threat.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.0 Introduction

Russia’s position in the world has become an area of interest to most scholars in contemporary academic discourse. This work assesses Russia’s re-emergence in the light of the Ukrainian crisis. This chapter presents the research design, which consists of the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research questions, scope of the research, the methodology, as well as the arrangement of chapters.

1.1 Background to the Research Problem

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which was also referred to as the Soviet Union was established in 1922 and finally collapsed in 1990. According to Darraj, at the time of its existence, the Soviet Union emerged as the main rivaling power to the United States. The onset of the Cold War from about 1947 led to a bipolar world with the Soviet Union and America as the leading powers. The ability of the Soviet Union to sustain an effective challenge against America during the Cold War underlined the former’s superpower status. Just like America, the Soviet Union also developed a nuclear arsenal and eventually dropped an atomic bomb in 1949 at a test site in modern day Kazakhstan. America’s decision to roll out the ‘Marshall Plan’ to help with the reconstruction of Western European countries devastated by war was met with the Soviet Union’s own ‘Molotov Plan’ to help with the reconstruction of Eastern European economies. Just like America, the Soviet Union had the economic wherewithal to build and sustain alliances around the world. America’s push for the establishment of the North Atlantic
Treaty Organization was met with the Soviet Union’s push for the establishment of the Warsaw Pact.5

However, the Soviet Union’s capacity to match up to America began dwindling in the 1980s, mainly due to economic difficulties. The Berlin Wall, which served as a landmark symbolism for the Cold War, fell in 1989. The Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev’s assumption of power and the introduction of the policies of Perestroika and Glasnost led the Soviet Union to seek closer relations with the West but also gave room for revolutionary movements which eventually led to the weakening of communism, thus ending the Cold War.6 The situation for the Soviet Union worsened particularly as the end of the Cold War and led to its disintegration. Fifteen republics which include: Russia, the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the Western States (Ukraine, Belorussia, Moldova), the Transcaucasia States (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia), Central Asian States (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan) emerged from the former Soviet Union each strongly clinging on to the newly-found sovereignty and independence.7 Russia suddenly had become a pale shadow of the former glorious Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) while America emerged as the world’s sole hegemon. Russia has since the dissolution of the Soviet Union been disappointed by how the powerful Soviet machine could breakup. Russian President, Vladimir Putin’s administration since the year 2000 has sought to deal with the disappointment of the Soviet dissolution by reclaiming its lost sphere of influence and making sure that the West does not expand to its shores. In a speech in the year 2005, President Putin referred to the collapse of the Soviet Union as “the greatest geopolitical tragedy of the century.”8
Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Ukraine gained independence in 1991. Considering its long historical ties with Russia, Ukraine is still of immense significance to modern day Russia. Its population consists of about 29 percent Russian speakers and 17 percent ethnic Russians. Ukraine also harbors Russia’s Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol in Crimea and thus remains a contentious region in contemporary geopolitics. Crimea originally belonged to Russia but in 1954, Nikita Krushchev, the Soviet leader at the time gave it as a gift to Ukraine. President Putin’s speech to the Federation Council in 2004 revealed a great deal of passion that Russia has towards Ukraine’s Crimea. He made reference to the Crimean referendum, in which close to hundred percent of the people of Crimea wanted to be reunified with Russia. The history of Crimea dates back to the period when Prince Vladimir laid the foundation for the principles and values that connect the people of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to each other. The capital of Crimea, Sevastopol, is the home of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet. The population of Crimea is uniquely Russian. According to the Kremlin, the statistics for Crimea’s population reveal that out of a total of about 2.2 million, Ukrainians are about 350,000, while Russians are 1.5 million. Crimean Tatars who identify mostly with Russia are about 290,000-300,000.

According to President Putin, the Bolsheviks (Russian Social-Democratic Workers’ party) added south of Russia to Ukraine just as Nikita Krushchev also gave away Crimea and its city Sevastopol to Ukraine. Today, Putin makes reference to this historical incident and wants to correct it. Russia’s foreign policy directives under Putin have sought to protect native Russians abroad, a desire to protect the Black Sea Fleet and a need to stop NATO from expanding to Russian borders. The Ukrainian crisis of 2014 came about when President Yanukovych refused to sign an economic agreement with the European Union. This sparked off anger in the
Ukrainian populace that highly favored a deal with European Union.\textsuperscript{15} Needing an opportune time to resist NATO and EU expansions closer to Russian borders, Putin took advantage of the crisis in Ukraine to annex Crimea.\textsuperscript{16}

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

In assessing Russia’s quest for superpower status, Michael Rywkin asserts that under the Putin administration, Russia wants to redeem its dominance that it had during the era of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{17} Since the emergence of the unipolar world, Russia has not looked on passively but has sought through many different means to re-emerge as a global power. One of such means particularly has been Russia’s effort to sustain closer ties with the former member-states of the Soviet Union which has proven to be difficult. However, the last two decades have increasingly witnessed the strengthening of relations between many of these former Soviet states and the West. This growing relationship has seen these former Soviet Republics such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania becoming members of NATO. This pro-West outlook has been to the conspicuous displeasure of Russia. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union and loosing almost all Republics, including Crimea, Russia is bent on proving to the West that the many years that it has been antagonized will end. Russia’s interference in the recent political crisis in Ukraine thus provides some reasonable indications of the latter’s desire and efforts to reassert itself in world politics by first consolidating its control and securing its interests in Eastern Europe.

A lot of scholarly works have assessed Russia’s quest for super power status while others have concentrated on the Ukrainian crisis. However, the problem of interest for this study is to analyze
the ways by which Russia is showing its re-emergence in world politics and the implications of Russia’s re-emergence for the peace and stability of the world.

1.3 Research Questions

- What is the history and nature of the Ukraine crisis?
- How is Russia using the Ukraine Crisis to demonstrate its re-emergence in global politics?
- What are the possible implications of Russia’s re-emergence for Europe and international politics?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- Assess the history and the nature of the Ukraine Crisis;
- Assess how Russia’s involvement in the Ukraine Crisis constitutes a quest to regain its’ lost sphere of influence; and,
- Find out the possible implications of Russia’s response to the Ukraine crisis for international politics.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

The purpose of this study is to contribute to existing literature in International Affairs on Russia and Ukraine. “An assessment of a re-emerging Russia and the Ukrainian crisis” will serve as a guide to understanding the relationship that exists between Russia and some of the former republics of the Soviet Union. It will be useful to scholars and students of international relations
to better appreciate Russia’s actions in the international system and use the research as a reference material.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study investigates on the role and activities of Russia in the Ukrainian crisis and how this constitutes an element of re-emergence.

1.7 Hypothesis

Russia’s involvement in the Ukraine crisis is an indication of its re-emergence in the international system.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This work is guided by the theory of offensive realism. Hans Morgenthau’s classical realism posits that states are inherently antagonistic because they have the desire to do so.¹⁸ On the contrary, John J. Mearsheimer’s theory of offensive realism which is a branch of Neorealism claims that the anarchic nature of the international system is what causes states to seek survival.¹⁹ The anarchic system, as he explains, is a system, where there exists no central authority to govern or order the behavior of states.²⁰ To explain why nations struggle for power, Mearsheimer notes that states seek dominance in the international system. ²¹ In the quest to explain this assertion, Mearsheimer propounded the theory of offensive realism as a main critique to Kenneth Waltz’s defensive realism.²² The underpinning notion of Mearsheimer’s offensive realism is that in their quest for dominance, states are mostly in conflict with each other. According to Mearsheimer, this situation is so because of the structure of the international system.²³
explaining states pursuit for global power, offensive realism as a theory is guided by some basic assumptions to explain why states want to gain more power over their rivals.

The first assumption of Mearsheimer’s offensive realism states that the international system is anarchic in nature and so there exists no central authority to hold states accountable for their actions.24 The second assumption posits that strong nations, which Mearsheimer refers to as great powers, have military power to embark on offensive attack on other states that they find threatening to their interest.25 This military capability and the weapons that a state possesses are the basic determinants of a state’s power status in the international system. According to the third assumption, states do not trust the intentions of other states and so are, at any point, not certain if other powers will attack them and so this insecurity results in fear among states concerning other states.26 The fourth assumption also notes that the basic goal of every state is survival by which great powers would want to keep their territory and domestic politics free from the intrusion of other states.27 The last assumption of offensive realism asserts that states are rational actors by which before they embark on any action, they think through the possible implications of their actions before they act.

By these assumptions, Mearsheimer postulates that because of the absence of a central authority to regulate the behavior of states and hold states accountable for their actions in the international system, states indulge in a condition of self-help to build their individual military capacities to protect themselves. For this reason, states can threaten the peace and security of other states by their military might. This therefore leaves states in constant suspicion of other states in the
international system. Regardless of this uncertainty, the primary goal of each state is survival and therefore states seek to safeguard their territorial integrity and domestic political order.\textsuperscript{28}

The relevance of Mearsheimer’s theory of offensive realism to this study is that it better explains Russia’s actions vis-à-vis other powers in the international system. By ensuring its survival, Russia seeks to use every power possible to protect its territory in Crimea, its citizens, the Black Sea Fleet and most importantly, its security from powers such as NATO. That is to say that because of the absence of a central authority in the international system, states, such as Russia, will indulge in a condition of self-help by which they protect themselves from external attacks.

Mearsheimer also explains the concept of hegemony. He defines a hegemon as a state that has so much power that enables it to have dominion over other states. His work describes a regional hegemon as a state which is so powerful to control a specific regional area whiles a global hegemon seeks to control the whole world.\textsuperscript{29} Whiles Russia under the administration of Vladimir Putin refuses to acknowledge the U.S as a global hegemon; it nonetheless fights so hard to have ample sphere of influence in its region. Thus to offensive realists, power is a means to an end, which is survival.\textsuperscript{30} In the case of Ukraine, Russia is using every possible means to protect its interest in Ukraine and consequently oppose Western expansion to Ukraine.

1.9 Literature Review
1.9.1 The Ukrainian Crisis

Robert McMahan’s analysis of the Ukraine crisis gives a vivid trajectory of the Ukraine crisis from beginning to end. Following the Ukrainian government’s refusal to sign an association agreement which would have enabled Ukraine to become a member of the European Union, a
populace wanting the opportunity to protest against many years of political inefficiency began to protest.\textsuperscript{31} According to McMahan, the underlying factor that sparked off the mayhem was diverging difference between Western Ukrainians and Eastern Ukrainians who are heavily populated ethnic Russians.\textsuperscript{32} He attributes the crisis to other reasons such as corruption among government officials and Ukraine’s dysfunctional economy that is heavily dependent on Russia. Following the uprising, the Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovych, whose administration rejected Ukraine’s association with the EU, was eventually ousted by the Ukrainian citizens in February 2014.\textsuperscript{33} Russia’s response to the ousting was an annexation of the Crimea Peninsula. Similarly, Dmitri Trenin also attributes the underlying cause of the crisis to the Russia-Georgian war that happened in 2008 which stopped NATO expansion to Georgia and Ukraine.\textsuperscript{34} The 2014 Ukraine crisis and the Russian annexation are therefore interpreted by analysts as an attempt to stop NATO and EU eastward expansion.

\subsection*{1.9.2 Blaming the Ukrainian Crisis on EU and NATO Expansion}

John J. Mearsheimer’s work on ‘Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s Fault’ blames the entire Ukraine Crisis on the West and the European Union.\textsuperscript{35} Mearsheimer posits that till the West makes a conscious effort to see Ukraine as a neutral sovereign state, efforts to try to westernize Ukraine or get Ukraine on the side of the West would only lead to geopolitical clashes between Russia and the West. His concerns regard NATO and EU expansions and efforts by these institutions to get former Soviet States to be members, while utterly disregarding how that antagonizes Russia.\textsuperscript{36}
Mearsheimer’s ideas are very relevant to this work in that they give a better understanding of Russia’s involvement in the Ukraine crisis. For instance, by focusing on the U.S and the E.U involvement, this supports the theory of Offensive Realism where Russia has a problem with any attempt by the West to Westernize Ukraine.

1.9.3 Blaming the Ukrainian Crisis on Russia

Russia’s actions to deter NATO and EU from expanding into former Soviet territories have been interpreted as instilling fear and intimidation. In Dunn Elizabeth Cullen and Michael S. Bobick’s work, the authors use the cases of Georgia and Moldova to prove Russia as the main antagonist in the Ukraine crisis. By their analysis, Russia is hiding behind the auspices of protecting native Russians in Ukraine to annex the country. Their work is relevant to this study in the sense that Russia’s involvement in Georgia and Moldova are very similar to its involvement in Ukraine. The commonalities lie in Russia’s military occupation of these territories, the presence of pro-Russians in all three states and the issue of Russian irredentism where Russia attempts to protect all the twenty-five million Russians living in non-Russian successor states. Elizabeth Cullen and Bobick, therefore, help to give a better understanding of Russia’s involvement in the Ukrainian crisis. While their work may be highly relevant in adding to the enormous work of literature on Russia, it is notwithstanding the intense bias it carries. Their work, however, fails to appreciate the woes of Ukraine as being the fault of the West but utterly blames the whole ordeal on Putin and Russia. Again, the writers’ concept of ‘Putinism’ is highly flawed as it fails to acknowledge that Putin’s defense of Russia’s territorial integrity is an indication of the president’s thoughtfulness about his country. A vital question to ask is, if Putin’s action in defending his country’s national interest is considered as a mere show off, then would America’s
annexation of Iraq be considered as such? According to Kolsto, Russia’s military presence in Georgia and Moldova has been misinterpreted as attempts to cause panic.\textsuperscript{39}

1.9.4 Foreign Policy Formulation: Russia and the West

In assessing ‘Russia’s Foreign Policy Alternatives,’ Alexei G. Arbatov notes the effects of Russia’s domestic crisis on its foreign policy formation, as well as why Russia’s relations with Ukraine and other former Soviet states have always failed. Arbatov tries to analyze the foreign policy of Russia from four main perspectives. He first considers that the foreign policy of Russia is influenced by the breakup of the Soviet Union, which took away the military power that Russia possessed.\textsuperscript{40} Russia’s military power at the time of the Soviet Union was the Warsaw Pact that was a counter power to NATO. However with the breakup of the Soviet Union, the member states to the Warsaw Pact have become NATO members in present times.\textsuperscript{41} According to Arbatov, a major element in the formulation of foreign policy for Russia is leadership. He sees the need for Russia to have an assertive leader who would be able to carry through its foreign policy. He also believes that the structure of the international system after the Cold War is a unipolar one, dominated by America as a superpower with many more rising powers such as China, Japan and the EU. For this reason, Russia’s power can be maintained, if Russia manages to put an end to its internal problems and properly describe its place in the international system. His work is relevant to this study as it draws attention to the importance of Russia’s choice of a leader to its foreign policy formation. It is by this fact that the unique quality of Putin’s strong willed personality becomes relevant and much appreciated to Russia’s re-emergence.
Also, in writing about “Russia: In quest of Superpower Status,” Michael Rywkin considers Russia’s position in world politics as one that in the Cold War era could equate itself to America as a superpower, the European Union (EU) or the United Nations (UN). Unfortunately, Russia lost that position since the end of the Cold War. However, under the Putin administration, Russia’s foreign policy seeks to put Russia back in the position of a superpower that it enjoyed during the era of the Cold War. His argument is backed by the number of separatist groups that sprang up in Russia calling for a leader strong enough to put Russia back on track as a major power. Rywkin therefore presents Putin as an answer to the Russian demands of a strong leader. Putin’s unique personality, coupled with the boost in Russian economy as a result of increased oil prices, allowed Russia enough strength to pursue its foes. As Rywkin argues, Russia’s intentions of thwarting America is by reason of the fact that not only does Russia view America as a threat to Russia’s core interest but also it is Moscow’s desire to recover the position it lost with the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Rywkin’s work is relevant to this work in that it gives a better appreciation of Russia’s superpower tendencies. A critical analysis of Rywkin’s view reveals that while he may be right on Russia’s desire to regain its lost status, he may be wrong to say that America does not pose a danger to Russia’s interest. Russia’s vital interest in Ukraine and specifically Crimea is the Black Sea Fleet and native Russians who live in Crimea. Obviously, NATO expansion eastwards and the attempt to get lost Soviet states to be members of NATO poses a great threat to Russia. His work is again flawed with bias towards the West in that it refuses to recognize Russia’s actions towards the US, since Russia does not depend on the US to act. It is appropriate to note that just as Russia should be capable of acting in its own interest, without considering the US, so should
the US act in its own capacity regardless of Russia. If indeed America acts with no regard to Russia, then NATO expansion to Eastern Europe and attempts to make old Soviet states members of NATO would mean nothing to Russia. Unfortunately, it is not the case so Russia has reacted in many ways to prove to America that it (Russia) is affected by the actions of the West.

Dmitri Trenin also presents Russia’s former intentions of joining the West after the breakup of the Soviet Union. These intentions, however, changed under the administration of Vladimir Putin who was driven by a unique character to lead Russia to become a great power. Trenin presents Russia’s inability to follow through the foreign policy intended to lead Russia to become a major power because of over reliance on the country’s oil resources. Trenin, therefore, advocates a completely new form of policy for Russia. He advocates Russia accepting ‘development, democracy and acceptance of international appeal’.43 By showing the economic crisis that has hit Russia and its neighboring countries between the periods of 2008 to 2009, Trenin demonstrates how Russia is taking advantage of the crisis to give financial assistance to its neighboring post-Soviet countries as a way to enable her dominate them. According to Trenin, Russia’s use of energy in its political rise has been a catastrophe. He openly declares that Russia does not have any area of influence in its post-Soviet states. Trenin’s work contributes to this current research by explaining how Russia is gradually regaining its lost sphere of influence.

1.9.5 Russia and Ukraine

Following tensions that arose between Russia and the West, Europe wanted to divert its gas suppliers from Russia to elsewhere. This decision by Europe caused Anna Aseeva to assess the situation. She notes that Russian pipelines are laid through Ukraine which is used as the main
transit route to supply gas to Europe. In her analysis, Anna Aseeva identifies that if Europe decides to reconsider its decision of importing gas from Russia, then the other alternatives will be very costly. According to her, “44 percent of all imported gas comes from Russia.” In discussing Russia being the main supplier of gas to Europe, Aseeva identifies two main reasons for Russia’s actions in Ukraine. Her first reason analyzes the Russia-Ukrainian crisis from a commercial point of view, whereas the second analyzes it from a political perspective. From the commercial view point, the Russia-Ukrainian crisis is analyzed from the cut in supply to Ukraine, while the political view sees the Russian Ukraine crisis from Russia’s continual resistance of Ukraine to join NATO and form an alliance with the West.

On the contrary, Reiter Dan rejects the stance by pundits who think that NATO’s conscious effort to expand into Eastern Europe will spread democracy. His assertion is based on the Cold War experience. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which is a defense counterpart of the former USSR Warsaw Pact, is made up of North American and European countries. According to Reiter, NATO’s quest to expand to include former Soviet states is perceived by some scholars as the West’s decision to spread democracy. He, however, thinks that this is an error to consider in academic discourse. He opines that NATO’s expansion will lead to destruction in the relationship that exists between Russia and the West.

Although several attempts had been made by Russia to prevent NATO’s expansion to its Eastern borders, NATO embarked on its decision to expand and include some of the former Warsaw Pact members. President Boris Yeltsin’s letter, which expressed utter displeasure to granting membership to Eastern European countries, raised massive argument in the U.S regarding
whether Russia should be granted membership to NATO as well.\textsuperscript{47} Arguments against Russia’s membership revealed that Russia could at any time go against democratic principles and employ its imperialist ideologies.\textsuperscript{48} According to Erlanger, Yeltsin’s displeasure to NATO expansion to the borders of Russia was made clear when he said that “it will mean a conflagration of war throughout Europe for sure.”\textsuperscript{49} Consistently, Anatol Lievan’s work on “Restraining NATO, Ukraine, Russia and the West” presents Russia’s persistent resistance to NATO’s expansion due to Russia’s own interests in Ukraine, specifically in the Crimea, where its Black Sea Fleet is stationed.\textsuperscript{50} It is against this backdrop that Russia’s actions in its annexation of Crimea is much appreciated and better understood.

1.9.6 Criteria for Statehood among Soviet Republics

Andrei P. Tsygankov and Bunce show the criteria for statehood for former Soviet states after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{51} Bunce’s work articulates that former Soviet states are faced with three main challenges. First, the challenge associated with wanting to be democratic. Secondly, the challenge associated with forming statehood and finally, the challenge with their economies (a shift from centralized economies of the Soviet period to individual market systems after their breakup from the Soviet Union).\textsuperscript{52} According to Tsygankov, a state gains recognition having fulfilled all three requirements, the ability to withstand all sorts of threats and keep one’s territory from foreign attacks. He further opines that recognized and viable political positions increase development, where the masses back the political leadership of the state.

The relevance of Tsygankov’s work to this study is that it contributes a better appreciation of Ukraine’s situation. Ukraine as a former Soviet Republic is still in the process of attaining
viability as a state. It nevertheless faces challenges regarding constant interference of Russia in its internal affairs since its economy depends, to a greater extent, on Russia. It is in an attempt to associate with the European Union that has attracted the fierce displeasure of Russia and the subsequent Crimean annexation. Regardless of its relevance, Tsygankov’s work can be criticized for some inaccuracies. To say that sustainable political positions increase development has not been all the case in some of these post-Soviet states. Ukraine, for instance, had a viable government but the state was battling with issues of corruption among government officials and this hindered development.

1.9.7 Assessing Russia’s Super Power status in Global Politics

In Roger E. Kanet’s “Russia: Emerging Great Power,” he writes about Russia’s former Soviet power which was lost at the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, as he opines, Russia’s role in world politics was lost as it was no longer considered as powerful as it used to be. Its existence was almost neglected by other powerful states such as the United States. In the late 1990s when NATO began its expansion towards Russia’s borders by granting post-Soviet independent states membership, Russia’s obvious displeasure was totally ignored. Putin’s administration however, introduced a new dimension in Russia’s Foreign policy objectives. These policies aim to set Russia back on the world stage as a Super Power. Not being certain as to whether Russia attain her policy objectives, Robert Kanet nonetheless acknowledges Russia’s nuclear might that is capable of setting Russia on the stage of a Super power. He also acknowledges revenue from Russia’s oil, which could be a booster in helping Russia to fulfill her goals of becoming a Super power. Kanet, however, interprets Putin’s actions
as an authoritarian one. While some scholars argue that Russia is on the way to achieving a super power status, others believe that Russia is already a superpower.

The relevance of Kanet’s work to this research, which aims at assessing Russia’s re-emergence in the light of the Ukrainian crisis, is that his ideas serve as valid basis to help measure Russia’s actions in Ukraine. Unfortunately, Kanet’s interpretation of Putin’s leadership as authoritarian is regarded as being biased as Putin’s assertiveness is often than not misinterpreted.

1.10 Sources of Data

The sources of data for this research are largely secondary sources and only one interview which constitute a primary source. A lecturer from the Russian Department at the University of Ghana was interviewed. The secondary sources include books, journal articles, reviewed articles, as well as news articles on current affairs relevant to the study.

1.11 Research Methodology

The research method employed for this study is the qualitative method, using mainly content analysis. Qualitative research seeks to reveal a particular group’s behavior on specific issues. The use of in-depth studies in qualitative research helps to support the building of hypothesis. A major strength of the qualitative research is its ability to provide multifaceted descriptions on certain topical issues. Thus, in explaining the ways in which Russia is showing its re-emergence using the Ukraine Crisis, the qualitative method proofs to be the best method to help produce findings which are applicable beyond the boundaries of this research.
1.12 Limitations of the Study

The main limitations that the researcher faced in conducting the study were time constraints and difficulty in gathering data using planned interview. To enrich the research findings, the researcher sought to conduct interviews with the Russian Embassy in Ghana as well as the Embassy of the United States in Ghana in order to have an objective view of what Russia and the United states think of Russia’s re-emergence and the Ukraine crisis. Unfortunately, none of these embassies was willing to grant the researcher the opportunity to interview them. The researcher was able to get access to only one expect on Russian studies to interview.

The researcher also sought to assess the position of Russian authors and Ukrainian authors on the Ukraine crisis. Unfortunately materials which were published were written in Russian or Ukrainian and so the researcher relied mostly on Western published articles.

1.13 Arrangement of Chapters

The research is divided into four main parts with the components of each as follows:

**Chapter one** focuses on the Research Design, consisting of the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research questions, scope, the methodology as well as the arrangement of chapters.

**Chapter two** traces the history of Russia-Ukraine relations, from the time of Kievan Rus through to the days of Ukraine as a Soviet Socialist Republic to the breakup of the Soviet Union. It highlights the relationship that exists between Russia and Ukraine since the breakup of the Soviet Union when both Russia and Ukraine became independent states.
Chapter three- This chapter traces the Ukraine crisis and analyzes the ways in which Russia is showing its re-emergence using the Ukraine crisis. This chapter further concentrates on the implication of the crisis to international politics in general.

Chapter four presents the Summary of Findings, Conclusions and relevant Recommendations.
ENDNOTES

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3 Ibid., p. 50
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid. p. 51
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
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CHAPTER TWO
HISTORY OF UKRAINE-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

2.1.0 Section I- Ukraine as a geopolitical Entity

2.1.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a vivid historical account of the relationship that existed in the past between Russians and Ukrainians, specifically focusing on the history of the Old Russian Empire which started from Kievan Rus. The chapter also focuses on Ukraine under Imperial Russia, the Soviet Union and its strategic importance till it dissolved.

2.1.2 Kievan Rus

The sour relationship which exists between Ukraine and Russia today has its roots from ancient historical times. Any attempts to decouple the relations that existed between the two states will be inaccurate in judging the present day relations that exist between Russia and Ukraine. The origin of Russia and Ukraine is situated in the historical events of Kievan Rus.¹ Kiev, was established by the Oleg in 882 during the time when his rule stretched to include East Slavic territories. Kiev was a major trade city which traded with great cities like Byzantium and Constantinople.² After the death of Oleg, Vladimir who is popularly known as Vladimir the Great took over the kingship in about 980 until 1015 as one of the Princes of Kiev. It was during the reign of Vladimir the Great that Kiev grew to its apex. To bring Kiev to the heights of greatness, Vladimir established much stronger ties with Constantinople, which enabled Kiev to increase its trade and economic ties using its busy trading route, the Dnieper River.³ Accounts by Nicholas Riasanovsky and Steinberg reveal that Vladimir’s authority was key in setting Kiev as a strong state, regardless of the past experience of civil wars. He regained Kievan towns that were
captured by Poland and embarked on other conquests to the Baltic Sea in his attempt to expand Kiev. Accounts connect his successes to his relations with Byzantium and the adoption of Christianity, which he took from Byzantium. Kiev’s association with Byzantium altered most of its cultures. In most cases, Byzantium had a positive influence on Kievan culture spiritually, culturally and politically.

After his death in 1015, Vladimir’s sons fought amongst themselves for kingship. Iaroslav who succeeded in becoming the next ruler took Kiev to its highest success in the history of Kievan Rus. Among the major successes of Kiev under Iaroslav’s reign was the establishment of greater ties with Europe by giving out his sons in marriage to daughters of European Kings notably in France, Hungary and Norway. In Kiev, Iaroslav is well noted for his contribution in Kievan law, when he formed the first law code known as the Russian Justice. In education, he established the school system. In architecture, he built many churches and monasteries. He also established a big library in Kiev to complement the educational system. Economically, Kiev traded in furs, wax, honey, and slaves and entered into various international agreements to strengthen its economic position.

After Iaroslav’s death, a number of events led to the collapse of Kievan Rus. First, the division of the Kingdom among his sons caused fragmented units of the territory which weakened its strength and therefore made Kiev susceptible to attacks. Turkic invaders from Asia invaded Kiev in 1061 and Kiev was completely devastated by the Mongols in 1240. These invasions which eventually weakened the economic strength of Kiev, accounted for the decline of Kievan Rus. Kiev was well noted for its trade from the Varangians to the Baltic Sea and this gave Kiev the
economic might it possessed to be a strong nation. According to Riasanovsky and Steinberg, the
decline in Kievan trade was the major reason for the fall of Kiev. Another reason that is noted to
have accounted for the fall of Kievan Rus was the collapse of Constantinople. Other Scholars
attribute the decline of Kievan Rus to ineffective political systems.\textsuperscript{6} The Kievan political system
placed the Prince at the highest ladder. As a Monarchical system of government, the Prince was
the head of the military and administration. Conflicts amongst the Princes, therefore, weakened
the administrative and military might of small territories. Although these events led to the
decline of Kiev, it remains substantial to note that the early inhabitants of Kiev are ancestors of
modern day Ukrainians. Any assessment of the people of Ukraine therefore requires that this
vital history is revisited to help better appreciate events.

\textbf{2.1.3 Moscow’s Rise as the Centre of Russian Civilization}

Following the Mongol invasion of Kiev and its subsequent decline, Russia came under the
influence of the Mongols. Unlike Kiev and AppanageRussia, Moscow was a small state with
immense power not comparable to that of Kiev. Early accounts of Moscow’s establishment can
be attributed to Iurii Dolgorukii, the Prince of Novgorod who established Moscow as a
commercial center.\textsuperscript{7} After successfully establishing Moscow, subsequent princes who took over
from Iurii Dolgorukii such as Daniel, who became ruler of Moscow in 1263, also expanded
Moscow. His son who succeeded him also conquered Eastern Towns such as Mozhaisk.\textsuperscript{8}
Another remarkable feature of Moscow’s expansion was its strategic geographical location
which facilitated trade. As Charles E. Ziegler accounts, “after 1350, Moscow willed so much
might to oppose Mongol power”.\textsuperscript{9} With the help of Theognostius, Ivan was able to gain Russian
lost lands and placed it under Moscow stretching Moscow’s authority.\textsuperscript{10} In 1380, a battle
between Russians and Mongols, known as the battle of KuliKovo, led to the fall of the Mongols. By the middle of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, Mongolia was completely devastated into small towns.

Following the fall of Constantinople under the Ottoman Turkic rule and rise of Ivan III, Moscow grew stronger. Ivan redeemed some conquered territories such as Novgorod and Tver and joined them to Moscow. He put in place measures to reward military officials to motivate them and strengthen the military strength of Moscow. He established a governing system and a powerful army. Fellow successors to Ivan III, such as Vasilii III, continued the strong ruling and kept Moscow as a powerful nation. Ivan IV, who was also known as Ivan the Terrible, enforced Christianity which was already embraced by Vladimir in the 10\textsuperscript{th} Century.

Under the reign of Ivan IV, Moscow was invaded by Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden in the Livonian War. The war, which lasted for more than two and half decades, completely devastated Moscow and destroyed the great architectural developments that had been done by Ivan IV’s predecessors.

The history of Russia in International Relations remains incomplete without the history of Ukraine. Russia’s relations with Ukraine began as far back in centuries past, narrating from the history of the Kievan Rus to the Moscow Civilization. By recounting this long trajectory of the Kievan Rus, the relationship that existed between Russia and Ukraine is shown. Thus Kievan Rus was the beginning of the Russian Empire and early inhabitants of Moscow are the ancestors of modern day Russians. The history of Moscow and Kievan Rus, therefore, remains a remarkable event in the history of both Russia and Ukraine.
2.1.4 Ukraine in Imperial Russia

Ukrainian territory came under the rule of many greater states in history. In the nineteenth century, the Western part of Ukraine was captured by Austria-Hungary and therefore was under Austria-Hungarian rule till the Polish defeated Austria-Hungary and made Ukraine its colony. Western Ukraine was however under Russian rule.\textsuperscript{11} In 1686, the Treaty of Andrusovo brought Ukraine into division between Poland and Russia, where Poland had control over the West, while Russia had control over the Eastern parts.\textsuperscript{12} It was not until the 1930’s when Poland was conquered by the Soviet Union that Western Ukraine was joined to Eastern Ukraine.\textsuperscript{13} Ukrainian lands were eventually invaded by Russians and joined to the Russian empire.\textsuperscript{14} Due to the shared identity of culture, language, and people, Russians have always seen Ukraine as part of Russia. The area of the Black Sea Coast and the Right bank Ukraine all became Russian lands. According to Paul Kubicek:

\begin{quote}
“By the end of 1700’s roughly 90 percent of Ukrainian-inhabited territory was under Russian control.”\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

2.2.0 The Soviet Union, Russia, and Ukraine
2.2.1 Establishment of Soviet Authority

The Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, also known as the Soviet Union which was established as a result of the Russian Civil War lasted from the period of 1922 to 1991, when it finally collapsed. It was made up of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. During it’s over sixty years of existence, the Soviet Union was strongly driven by communism. Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov also known as Vladimir Lenin, who was the first Soviet leader, strongly employed Marxism which was the main opposing ideology to Capitalism.
Marxist theory saw capitalism was an exploitation system, by which wealth was unevenly distributed. Lenin’s adoption of Marxist Communism became the main ideology of the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Lenin was succeeded by Joseph Stalin who pursued the communist ideology that Lenin had started and developed the “First five-year Plan” for economic development. Stalin ruled for a quarter of a century and became “the most totalitarian, powerful and feared dictator of all time.” It is this quality of his leadership style that would put the Soviet Union at par with the United States during the Cold War, where communism and capitalism were in competition. Stalin’s First five-year plan brought a great industrial transformation to the Soviet republics in less than five years. Building more than 1500 new factories and industries, the USSR became a powerful industrial nation. Its production moved from agricultural machinery to aviation, chemical, automobile and electrical machinery. The subsequent five-year plan and third five-year plan moved the Soviet Union second to the United States in machine building, tractors and trucks. Stalin’s power grew strong enough to oppose capitalism in the West. Constant friction with the West included issues of not reaching an agreement with the West on atomic energy. Stalin seized Eastern European countries such as Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland. By the time of his death, Stalin had brought great success to the Soviet Union and made it a powerful nation.

Nikita Khrushchev took over the Soviet Union after Stalin died. He publicly castigated and condemned all of Stalin’s policies and ruled the Soviet Union with complete disdain to whatever Stalin stood for. He changed cities that bore Stalin’s name and removed Stalin’s statues wherever they were found. He pursued a principle of De-Stalinization by which he removed majority of Stalin’s ruling institutions. Stalin’s monument in many socialist countries were destroyed,
popular amongst them is the Yerevan Monument. Over emphasis on his De-Stalinization principle perhaps led the Soviet leader ignoring production. The resulting effect was unstable economic order of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless the Soviet Union continued to be a major power with its remarkable achievements in space technology. Khrushchev’s administration also launched the Cuban Missiles, which became the highest confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States during the period of the Cold War. The economy of the Soviet Union remained strong following the five-year plans that were initiated under Stalin.

Soviet history is of immense relevance to Russia-Ukraine relations today. A vivid account of the economic strength that the Soviet Union had under leaders such as Stalin, Lenin and Krushchev is important in understanding the position that Russia has had in world politics from the past. Thus, from the period of the Cold War to the end of the Cold War, states have been careful in dealing with Russia due to Russia’s geopolitical strength in world politics. For this reason, an account of Soviet history is very relevant to a study on a re-emerging Russia and the Ukraine Crisis.

### 2.2.2 Ukraine’s Strategic Importance in the Soviet Union

The early form of historical relationship that existed between Russia and Ukraine was eventually continued when Ukraine was incorporated into the Soviet Union. Becoming one of the fifteen member Soviet republics, Ukraine remained a remarkable aspect of the Soviet Union. In assessing Ukraine’s strategic importance in the Soviet Union, Roman Olynyk mentions how Ukraine received unequivocal opportunity to enter into foreign relations with other states as well as international organizations which eventually added to the economy of the Soviet Union.
Together with Belarus and Russia, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic played a substantial role in the Soviet Union. By the introduction of Vladimir Lenin’s New Economic Policy (NEP) which encouraged agricultural production among the Soviet States, Ukraine’s agricultural production increased and it became a great contributor of grain to the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian language became very useful in the running of economic affairs of the Soviet Union. As Paul Kubicek opines, “by 1992, seventy percent of the Soviet’s business was conducted in Ukrainian”. Under Stalin’s era, Ukraine’s important role was equally seen in the Soviet Union. In the area of industrialization, more than three hundred plants were established in Ukraine. Notable among them was the Dniprohes hydroelectric dam and the giant Kharkiv tractor. Ukraine became the largest supplier of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic’s (USSR) iron and coal as well as an outstanding urbanized and industrialized Soviet State.

2.2.3 Russia’s role in the Soviet Union

Lyman Miller defines a super power as a State’s ability to will power and extend its control and influence at different parts of the world at the same time. Superpower status is often measured on the tenets of political, economic, cultural and military might of a state. Like Great Britain which is considered in the nineteenth century to be a major power in Europe. During the time of the Russian Empire, Russia’s superpower status was prominent under different Princes such as Ivan III (Ivan the Great), Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, and even Ivan IV. Peter the Great’s ideas set Russia on the path for superpower status. His reforms made Russia’s might a major power in Europe. In the war with the Turkish people in 1877, Russia’s might was seen when its territory stretched as far as Asia. As Theodore R. Weeks accounts, Russia’s power in the nineteenth century overextended to include Central Asian lands. Russia’s control moved
further from Asia to the Caucasus Mountains during which majority of Muslims, who feared the fast growing stretch of Russia, sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire. Britain which was a rivaling power to the Russian power in the whole of the nineteenth century sought to protect the Ottomans from the Russians. In sum, Russia remained a superpower in the nineteenth century.

Russia attracted a lot of threats to its fast growing economic and military expansion. Its major enemies included Germany, Japan and Great Britain. In order to be able to stand these forces, which were themselves not weak states, Russia put measures in place to invest heavily in its military by building weapons. According to Allen, by 1908, Russia’s military expenditure on machine guns and weapons amounted to about 709 million Rubles, an amount which remained the highest among the whole of Europe.

Russia’s major superpower status in the politics of the world was seen in the Cold War period when its military might and ideological position rivaled the power of the United States from the period of 1948 to 1991.

The Warsaw Pact was formed by the Soviet Union in 1955, six years after the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as NATO’s main rival power. After the Second World War, the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Albania, the German Democratic Republic and Poland all signed unto the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Its basic principle was for all members to defend each member which would be attacked by another state. The Warsaw Pact began to break up after the collapse of the Soviet Union when the Berlin wall collapsed and Germany was reunited. East Germany was reunified with West Germany and later the whole Germany became part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Subsequently
after the end of Communist Soviet rule, different leaders in countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia precipitated the end of the Pact in July 1991.\textsuperscript{34}

\subsection*{2.2.4 The Sinking economy of the Soviet Union under different leaders}

Stalin’s introduction of the five-year plans which led to heavy industrialization and an economic boom eventually saw gradual decline under different administrations. First, Krushchev’s policies also strengthened the economy of the USSR as its people had better conditions of living. On the contrary, the successor to Nikita Krushchev, Leonid Brezhnev’s policies focused on building nuclear weapons rather than focus on the economy as Krushchev did. Under Breznev’s administration, the USSR extended its power to the Middle East with the aim of extending communism to both Asia and the Middle East. His administration was characterized by corruption and serious economic hiccups. The economy of the Soviet Union saw gradual decline as it spent billions of rubles in its attempt to spread communism and keep communist allies. By measuring with nuclear stockpile, the USSR was equal to the United States, but its economy remained weak.\textsuperscript{35}

Unlike his predecessors, Mikhail Gorbachev took over the ruling of the Soviet Union, bearing in mind that the USSR needed great transformation in policies. He acknowledged the weakness of the economy and needed to make changes. Just as Nikita Krushchev publicly condemned and criticized Stalin’s policies, Gorbachev also publicly condemned Leonid Brezhnev’s stagnant economy. Unlike his colleague past leaders who were in serious contention with the West in the era of the Cold War, Gorbachev maintained a healthy relationship with his West counterparts. He
met with the Prime Minister of Britain and the President of the United States at the time, Ronald Reagan.

2.2.5 Gorbachev’s Policies of Perestroika and Glasnost and the collapse of the Soviet Union

In order to save the sinking economy of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the policies of Perestroika and Glasnost. The Soviet economy which was driven by communism in the 1980’s was a conventional society that was totalitarian, strict and discouraged openness among the people.\(^{36}\) His policies were intended to encourage democracy and openness. Perestroika as a reform policy means restructuring of the Soviet economy, while Glasnost means the promotion of democratic ideas (freedom of speech and pluralistic political system).\(^ {37}\) Perestroika is a system that makes room for democracy and freedom of speech. As a means to allow openness and allow the reform of the Soviet Union, it empowered people to freely voice out their grievances about the communist system without fear. The system of Glasnost, on the other hand, made room for the unusual to happen in the Soviet Union under the reign of Gorbachev. Glasnost made it possible for proper accountability to be made to the general public, it fostered a sense of identity between those who were non-Russians who had different languages, cultures and origins to come together to pursue a common course of fighting the communist government for independence. In Lithuania for instance, independent groups arose to rebel and break away from the Soviet Union. Attempts by Gorbachev to prevent this break away led to a rippling reaction in other Soviet states to also break away. These policies were in complete opposition to Capitalism which encouraged and enhanced capitalist ideas such as delegation in decision-making and privately owned businesses. Glasnost, which intended to cause more openness in the people, eventually empowered them to criticize the Soviet
government for inefficiencies in the Soviet economy. These policies eventually gave the Soviet populace the opportunity to embark on protests against the Soviet system. Under President Boris Yeltsin in 1985-1990, the policies of Perestroika and Glasnost eventually brought an end to the Brezhnev doctrine, disintegrated the Warsaw Pact and contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The empire that Joseph Stalin fought strongly to put together finally came to an end. These individual events were followed by a collective and massive rejection of communism till the final collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the rise of fifteen independent republics.

2.2.6 Russia’s Power Loss

The major power play and the administration of the Soviet power were carried out by Russia which was the Soviet Union’s major power. The Soviet leaders who drove the Union on the communist ideology that rivaled Capitalism were mostly Russians. Russia’s power was seen mostly in its gigantic land size, its massive population, its strong leadership to carry out the ideology of communism, its language as a hegemon among the other languages of the Soviet States, the strength of its currency (the ruble), and, most importantly, being the point where majority of Soviet assets (arms and weapons) were stationed.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia lost its power status mainly after the individual states withdrew their resources and contributions to the Soviet Union that had strengthened Russia at the time. First, Russia was strong financially because the Central Bank of Russia, which was situated in Moscow, distributed the Rubles to all the 15 states. However, upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the IMF advised the newly independent states to have their own currencies which later reduced the strength that the ruble had. Again, Russia’s economy had
been boosted by the economies of other Soviet states such as that of Ukraine. Nevertheless, with the breakup of the Soviet Union, Ukraine left with all of its wealth and assets. Ukraine, for instance, exported military and industrial goods to Russia which it later stopped after it broke away to become an independent state. Ukraine’s nuclear weapons were the second to Russia’s among the Soviet states. The Baltic Sea countries, which were members of the Soviet Union, possessed good market economies which were added to the Russian economy to make it stronger. Unfortunately, after the crumbling of the Soviet Union, the Baltic countries joined the European Union.

2.2.7 Ukraine as an independent State

Following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1990, Ukraine’s independence was declared in 1991. Ukraine’s independence remains a long awaited and much called for event in the history of Ukraine. Citizen’s reaction proved that they expected nothing less than independence from the long negotiations that went on between leaders of the two countries. In an agreement that was reached between Ukraine’s leaders and Soviet leaders, Ukraine stated its independence from Soviet authority on the 24 August 1991. The independence of Ukraine was finalized when the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United Nations eventually made the UN aware of the change in his representative status in the UN, Where he declared that from the 24th August 1991 he represents Ukraine as a state in the United Nations. Validating her independence, Hungary set the pace by establishing the initial diplomatic relations with Ukraine after her independence in 1991. Subsequently, monuments that were built during the Soviet era in Western Ukraine were removed and replaced with symbols of independence. Ukraine eventually gained statehood on 1
December 1991 and severed every connection with the collapsed Soviet Union and its independent states of which Russia is a part.

2.2.8 Post-Cold War Ukraine-Russian Relations

The end of the Cold War and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union did not bring a complete end in the long relationship that existed between Russia and Ukraine. The two independent Soviet States are connected in the Post-Cold War era, although the nature of their relationship remains complex. The shared history between the two makes it impossible for a complete separation. Ukraine’s history is usually embedded in the history of Russia and so, according to some scholars, Ukraine is almost considered as a nation without a history. Linguistically, Ukraine and Russia share commonalities regarding language. There exists a greater connection between the two independent states in that at one point, some Ukraine languages are spoken as dialects in Russia. Thus, according to Kappeler, people of Russian origin who are situated in Ukraine account for about seventeen percent of the Ukrainian population and they speak Russian as their first language, whereas in the East and in the South of Ukraine, native Russians are the majority and in Russia, Ukrainians are found to be part of the Russian population. Many Russians still consider Ukraine as a sub-Russian state and not an independent state. Ukraine’s relationship with Russia is strongly fostered by her reliance on Russia for energy supply. Not only is Ukraine gas supplied by Russia but it also remains a transport route to supply Russian gas to Europe. Ukraine, therefore, remains critical to Russia’s national interest. Of most importance to Russia is the Crimea, which was ceded off to Ukraine in 1954 under the leadership of the Russian president, Nikita Krushchev, and till today has remained an important complex issue between the Ukraine and Russian relations. A unique
feature of the Crimean peninsula as a part of independent Ukraine is its unique Russian population, which influences Russia’s decision to exercise considerable control over this autonomous region in Ukraine.\textsuperscript{51}

\subsection*{2.2.9 Russia under Yeltsin and NATO Expansion}

Boris Yeltsin assumed power as the president of the Soviet Union before its final disintegration in 1990 and was democratically elected as the Russian president of the Russian Federation after the breakup of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{52} His presidency paved the way for a more open society but corruption, crime, and economic hardships were on the increase. He allowed western cultures to be accepted in Russia. He also accepted to comply by nuclear arms reduction and also withdrew soldiers from Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{53} Yeltsin inherited the transition years of the Soviet collapse and eventually became the first president of the Russian Federation. The Federation, under his ruling as the first president, experienced massive economic hiccups due to his economic reforms which changed the communist ideology of the Soviet era to a Capitalist society. These reforms liberalized the market and privatized national assets which eventually led to an increase in corruption and a breakdown of the Russian economy. His Vice President, Alexander Rutskoy, referred to the state of the economy as an “economic genocide.”\textsuperscript{54} In 1993, there arose a constitutional reform in Russia, when Boris Yeltsin ordered the Supreme Soviet Parliament to be dissolved. Instead of focusing on how to resuscitate the collapsed economy that he had inherited from Gorbachev, he rather resorted to authoritarian rule. Following the dissolution of the Parliament, he was joined by his team to rewrite the constitution, which gave the president more power and suspended the constitutional court.\textsuperscript{55} This sparked off various protests in opposition to the dissolved parliament but which were intervened by soldiers and eventually, the constitution
was neglected. A more intense opposition arose among the Russians and so Yeltsin eventually resigned and handed over to Putin who was then his Prime Minister. All these events under Yeltsin and the reforms under Mikhail Gorbachev rather aggravated the plight of the collapsed power and so in the 1990’s Russia’s power in global politics was a pale shadow of itself. According to Jonathan Steele, Russia did not only loose power but it lost its wealth too.

The loss of the Russian power attracted a lot of provocation from the part of the West. Joseph Laurence Black gives an account of how “Capitalist encirclement”, the West’s growing attempt to expand to absorb former Soviet States into NATO and EU, offends Russia. Right from the German reunification of 1990, Western European countries have sought to isolate Russia after they successfully got almost all Warsaw Pact countries to be part of NATO. Karl Heinz Kamp makes reference to NATO’s “Partnership for Peace” movement which intends to grant all former U.S.S.R member states membership into NATO and also requires their armies to be restructured to meet NATO standards as requirement for NATO membership.

2.3 Conclusion
It is against this background of Western provocation that Putin has sought to raise the image of Russia and further protect Russia’s National interest which chapter three discusses in detail. Until this point, chapter two has mainly focused on the long historical relationship that has existed between the Russian and the Ukrainians.
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CHAPTER THREE
WAYS IN WHICH RUSSIA IS SHOWING ITS RE-EMERGENCE

3.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses the steps that Russia is taking to show forth her assertiveness. Factors such as using the Ukrainian crisis and the role of Putin in the re-emergence of Russia are analyzed as elements contributing to how Russia is showing her re-emergence. This chapter further concentrates on the implications of the Ukraine crisis for International politics.

3.1 Russia’s resurgence since Putin (show of resilience and rhetoric)

Since the year 2000 when Vladimir Putin assumed power as the new president of Russia, there have been remarkable changes in the foreign policy of Russia. Putin’s assertiveness is aimed at correcting the weaknesses of Boris Yeltsin and setting Russia on the path of Superpower status.\(^1\) To set Russia on the world plane as a Superpower, Putin is determined to regain back the economic, political and military clout that Russia lost through the breakup of the Soviet Union.\(^2\) His foreign policy objective is therefore aimed at keeping Russia as a nuclear power which is able to use its Veto power on the UN Security Council to counter NATO and EU expansions as already discussed above.\(^3\) Although Russia’s economy since the breakup of the Soviet Union is suffering, under the Yeltsin administration and likewise under Putin’s administration, the two Russian leaders have led themselves into thinking that Russia is still a super power. Putin’s view of Russia as a Superpower is mostly seen in his speeches as well as the views of most of its political leaders. In a press conference which followed a G-8 summit, Vladimir Putin admitted that Russia continues to be a nuclear power which has to be considered in all decisions regarding
nuclear weapons worldwide. As Jeremy Reuters reports the words of Vladimir Putin concerning Russia’s military as his justification for taking over Crimea during the Ukrainian Unrest;

“No one should have the illusion that they can gain military superiority over Russia; put any kind of pressure on it. We will always have an adequate answer for any such adventures, our soldiers and officers have proven that they are ready to act decisively smoothly, professionally and courageously, to perform the most difficult non-standard tasks, as befits a modern hardened combat-ready army that protects their traditions and military duty.”

In general Russia’s great power status has been viewed in the foreign policy objectives under Putin and its ability to use what it has to influence the world one way or the other. As Roger E. Kanet rightfully admits, factors such as Russia’s vast land, its nuclear weapons which is the next to that of the United States, its economic might due to its oil and gas as well as its ability to have maintained its place as a permanent member in the UN security council all attest to its prowess.

Russia has been very resistant to Western democratic policies and maintained its own ideological principles right from the Cold War era to the administration of Putin who is making sure that Western democratic values do not come close it its borders. Putin’s commitment in setting Russia on the center stage of Superpower status is seen in its assertive role in the international plane. For instance in his response and contribution to fighting terrorism, Putin showed great concern in 2011 when America experienced the attack on the World Trade towers.

Adding to his assertiveness and Russia’s re-emerging power is Putin’s opposition to America in 2012 on America’s decision to allow NATO to carry out a humanitarian intervention in Syria to overthrow President Bashar al-Assad and in 2011. Russia again abstained on the UN Security Council’s decision to allow NATO to carry out a humanitarian intervention in Libya. Thus according to Dmitri Trenin;

“In discussions in Geneva, Switzerland, Russia essentially won back the diplomatic parity with the United States that it had lost in the early 1990s. This was stunning; Russia’s...
resources were a fraction of America’s, and its influence in Syria—not to speak of anywhere else in the Middle East—was hardly dominant. And yet, Moscow was able to perform a spectacular feat by both preventing a U.S. attack against another country and making a notoriously closed regime give up its sole deterrent in the form of weapons of mass destruction.”

NATO obviously ignored Russia, this time again as it did in Kosovo, and launched attacks on Libya leaving grave atrocities as the aftermath. Putin’s assertiveness in bringing Russia to the world stage as a re-emerging Superpower is again seen on the case of Edward Snowden, America’s Security Agency Contractor who revealed America’s spying strategies and was wanted by America. No country was able to stand up and grant Snowden asylum except Russia. As Dmitri Trenin accounts, China, Latin America and the allied countries of U.S in Europe were all not able to challenge America on Snowden’s case by granting him asylum. Russia was nonetheless the only country that granted Snowden asylum being fully aware of the implications of this action regarding relations between Russia, America and its allies. Obama’s response to Russia was to cancel attending a summit in Russia. According to Dmitri Trenin, Russia’s assertiveness began long ago during the presidency of Vladimir Putin but was only authenticated by Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014. This assertiveness demonstrated by President Putin brings Russia in the limelight of its power and strength.

### 3.2 The Ukraine Unrest

The Valdai Discussion Club Report attributes the causes of the crisis to a number of political and economic inefficiencies in Ukraine. According to the Report, Viktor Yanukovych’s policies which promoted Russian interests in Ukraine as opposed to enhancing Ukraine’s own interests accounted for the upheaval among the people. The policies, which were found to be awkward to Ukrainians included, making Russian an official language in Ukraine instead of Ukrainian
language and subsequently overlooking the corruptions of the previous government. According to reports, corruption is an indispensable systemic imbalance accounting, for the most part, the inefficiencies in the economy of Ukraine. For most transactions, one has to bribe his way in and out at a variety of sectors from health to education.

Fueling the crisis were issues of grave economic turmoil, which made the Ukrainian economy suffer serious drop in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the year 2013 for instance, GDP fell to about Zero percent. Ukraine’s economy at this point survived on Debt from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Russia which had increased under the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich to about fifty percent between 2010 and 2013. The high debts, coupled with increased imports and low exports resulted in a stagnant trend of Balance of Payment Disequilibria in the Ukrainian economy. With Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) dropping to about fifty percent according to the records of the Ukrainian National Bank, taxes increased incredibly on products and yet did not reflect in the domestic revenue of the country. Ukraine, in the long run reduced trade with Russia, which had in the past absorbed much of Ukraine’s imports especially various machines. These reasons which would finally cause Ukraine to lag behind its competition with other international economies resulted in an eventual systemic breakdown in its domestic economy.

Following this economic turmoil, the European Union began discussions with Ukraine to establish an association agreement with Ukraine in 2007. At the initial stages of the agreement, Russia looked on unconcerned till mid-2013 when Russia showed interest in the ongoing negotiations. Russia’s reaction was seen in the introduction of trade wars on a number of
commodities which ultimately worsened the state of Ukraine’s economy. President Viktor Yanukovych’s refusal to sign an agreement which would allow Ukraine the opportunity to be part of the European Union, was the last straw that broke the Carmel’s back and finally sparked off the massive outbreak of Euromaidan protest among the citizens. The aftermath of the protests was the overthrow of President Yanukovych, which rippling effect sparked off a concomitant protest from Russians who live in the Eastern and Southern parts of Ukraine. The clash of protests, which would later lead to a crisis in Ukraine, resulted in Russia’s invasion of Crimea.

3.3 Crimea’s annexation by Russia

Early accounts reveal that Crimea was a self-governing state in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) during the time of the Soviet Union but it was later changed to a region in 1945. It has for a long time, since the Soviet era been a base for Russia’s military. About sixty years ago, Nikita Krushchev, the Ukrainian who became the Soviet leader, ceded off Crimea which belonged to Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1990 and Ukraine subsequently gaining independence in 1992, Crimea then gets to be part of Sovereign Ukraine. In the 1991 referendum that intended to make Ukraine an independent state, the Crimean people accounted for the most part a majority in the votes to make Ukraine a sovereign state. In 1992, a pronouncement by Russia espoused that the 1954 transfer of Crimea to Ukraine by the then Soviet leader Nikita Krushchev, was unlawful and unrecognized. In 1994, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia signed unto the Budapest Memorandum which intends to recognize Ukraine’s sovereignty and avoid using force against it.
Below is a map serving as a guide to the crisis in Ukraine, specifically how the Russian annexation occurred.\textsuperscript{30}

Source: Mirror

Crimea, since historical times, has been of very great importance to the Russian Federation. Primarily regarding its importance militarily, Crimea serves as a place of strategic value where Russia position’s her Black Sea Fleet.\textsuperscript{31} The Black Sea Fleet contains substantial warfare Vessels and its importance relating to its functioning capability cannot be underestimated. For instance in the 2008 war with Georgia, the fleet was vital in serving as barricade against the Georgian faction in the war.\textsuperscript{32} Also of strategic importance is Sevastopol in Crimea which helps the Russian navy gain access to the Mediterranean Sea and other Oceans as well as serves as a
strategic head point to harbor Russia’s army group.\textsuperscript{33} Regarding its security abilities, Crimea as a point addresses naval threats to Russia from perceived enemies.

Considering Crimea’s vital interest to Russia and following the Crisis, Russia’s president got support from its parliament to use force against Ukraine over Crimea.\textsuperscript{34} Russia’s annexation of Crimea which took place in March 2014 was much expected considering its strategic importance to Russia. Russia’s military was physically present on Crimean land taking hold of vital sectors of Crimea such as some government sectors, transport sectors, some hospitality industries as well as the airspace above the land.\textsuperscript{35} Thus, the annexation of Crimea by Russia is one of geopolitics and geostrategic interest.

3.4 Arms Build-up
Regarding its nuclear might, Russia possesses a substantial amount of nuclear weapons which automatically grants it some form of recognition in world affairs, especially in matters having to do with nuclear treaties. According to Motyl and Menon, Russia’s nuclear arsenal is adequate to cause fear and panic.\textsuperscript{36} Possessing nuclear might alone has a lot of importance for Russia and its quest to re-emerge. Among the importance of possessing nuclear weapons Dmitri Trenin espouses the psychological factor of always reminding the world of its nuclear power which eventually grants it much freedom from America’s superpower status and NATO.\textsuperscript{37} The deterrence value of keeping nuclear weapons is enough to protect Russia’s national interest from interference from NATO just as it wants to make Ukraine a member against Russia’s will. France and Britain which possess nuclear weapons as NATO members are deterred by Russia’s nuclear might too.\textsuperscript{38}
Also, Russia’s confidence is in her military capability is thus supported by Steven Rosefielde in his work that Russia is an emerging super power with an enormous military might. Jonathan Marcus’ News report in the BBC espoused Russia’s current military strength. It revealed the transformations that Russia has made to its military by buying new weapons, having improved equipment and mentioning NATO’s acknowledgment that Russia now uses modern and sophisticated machinery in its army. Russia’s new strategy declared early in 2015 outlined its approach to counter NATO’s dire enlargement where Russia would establish missiles on its borders and establishing closer relationship with other emerging powers such as China and India. Braun Thomas’ work on Russia’s military, came to a conclusion that the enormous transformation that Russia is embarking upon to transform Russia will help Russia to achieve its national interest. Although there has been growing concerns and debates about spending on the military and its effects on the Russian economy, almost half of the Russian population supports the idea of investing money in the military to increase its strength.

Thirdly, Russia’s effort to set the nation on the international plane is seen in its foreign policy directives that intend to establish important economic relations with other emerging powers, specifically the Brazil, India, and China in the BRICs association. As Huntington describes in his work, “The Lonely Superpower”, he opines that the current international system does not suffice to be called a uni-polar one or a multi-polar one but a uni-multipolar system which has only one superpower and a number of other powers.
3.5 Energy Concerns

From the economic standpoint, the European Union’s partnership initiative with Ukraine attracted Russia’s anger. The objective of the initiative was to grow the Ukrainian economy. Nevertheless, it was considered by Russia as a threat to cripple Russia’s economic benefits in Ukraine and therefore served as another opportunity through which Russia has shown forth its displeasure to the EU. Ukraine’s reason however for a greater desire to be part of the EU reveals huge economic benefits which Ukraine stands to gain from the EU. According to Ariel Kohen, the EU remains in the most part, the biggest trading partner of Ukraine with trading returns of about 28 billion Euros in 2006.\(^{45}\) By Kohen’s analysis, Ukraine’s membership with EU will serve as a double benefit to Ukraine in that it will benefit from both a single market and a customs union in which, in both instances, tariffs will reduce drastically for Ukraine.\(^{46}\) The resulting effect of such a trading opportunity will mean a better bargaining power against Russia. However, considering Ukraine’s strategic importance to Russia as being the principal way through which Russian gas is exported to other parts of Europe, Russia would not look on passively as EU takes Ukraine away and hinder her economic benefits from Ukraine. Ukraine depends on Russia so much to betray Russia for the West. With respect to its gas dependency, Ukraine for a long time enjoyed the opportunity of being the sole transit route for distributing Russian gas.\(^{47}\) When Russia considered having Belarus as a second route, it was found that Ukraine lost millions of dollars yearly.\(^{48}\) The Russian gas has proven to be of immense importance to the economy of Ukraine as a transit country and other client countries. Ukraine’s opportunity as the sole transit for exporting Russian gas has improved its economy through charges of transit fees and buying gas on credit and at a cheaper price.\(^{49}\) According to Chollet, Andreas, et al., in 2001, Ukraine’s debt to Russia amounted to 1.4 billion dollars. With the
establishment of the Yamal-Europe gas pipeline which would connect from Belarus to Slovakia passing through Poland. This alternative to Russian gas transit would mean that Ukraine stands a chance of being affected economically.

Also buttressing Ukraine’s overreliance on Russia is the scholarly work of Balmaceda which reveals that every year, Ukraine imports about 15 billion dollars’ worth of gas from Russia and so making it the highest importer of gas in the world. Although the black sea shelf in Crimea remains a repository of large reserves of oil, since it remains a contentious area regarding its ownership between Russia and Ukraine, Ukraine is not able to develop and extract the oil for its use. If Ukraine’s economy depends this way on Russia, then it means that, encouraging the Western expansion antagonizes Russia. A situation which is not healthy to Ukraine itself and therefore, this study’s argument maintains that NATO and EU expansion remain a threat to Russia’s national interest and so the fact remains that Russia will stand to protect her interests any time.

3.6 Activism in Global Affairs
As some experts and scholars argue and side with Russia, Russia for a long time has employed preventive diplomacy in her international relations. In 1999, following the upsurge of crisis in Kosovo and NATO’s desire to intervene militarily, the UN resolution on possibly using force to remove Yugoslavia armed men in Kosovo who were causing many atrocities was vetoed by Russia. While Russia considers NATO’s intervention in Kosovo as a complete violation of international law and explicitly reveals that the Security Council’s resolution did not grant NATO the power to intervene militarily, Russia interpreted NATO’s action as a complete neglect of its veto power. According to Alexander Klinton, in many years in the history of sovereign
states, a country is invaded by another, disrespecting the rules of territorial and national integrity.\textsuperscript{54} As Francis Clines writes, “the Kosovo attack was the first uninvited offensive against a sovereign nation by NATO in its fifty year history.”\textsuperscript{55}

After a feeling of being taken for granted for quite a long time, this study perceives Russia’s annexation of Crimea as an opportunity to prove her strength not only to the West but to the whole of the world. Annexing Ukraine has portrayed Russia as a threat not only to Eastern European countries but the world regarding Russia’s abilities. A survey by Pew Research Center reveals that about 70 percent of Poles and 59 percent of Americans perceive Russia as a threat.\textsuperscript{56} Although to the outside world Russia’s image may be tarnished, on the contrary about the entire Russian population at home praises Putin for this outlook.\textsuperscript{57} Following the annexation of Ukraine, majority of Ukrainians consider the option of negotiating with Russia rather than using military means to match up to Russian power. This study perceives this view as indirectly admitting Russia’s re-emerging power and therefore gives full regard to its military strength.

While supporting Russia for the annexation of Crimea as a prove to the West of her re-emergence, John J. Mearsheimer agrees that NATO and EU expansions as well as the propagation of democratic ideologies by the West in Eastern Europe account for reasons why Russia is angered.\textsuperscript{58} By Mearsheimer’s argument, whiles it seems that the West are forgetting the core tenets of realism in international relations, he reminds that the state still remains the Unitary actor in international relations and so will embark on any means to ensure its safety through a self-help system. The role that is given to international institutions such as the UN will not reduce the power of the state. It is no news that after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia
lost a lot to the emerging victor of the Cold War. Russia lost almost all its countries in the Warsaw Pact to NATO as well as the states that contributed to its economic might to other Western institutions. It is evident therefore that while NATO prides in its growth and expansion which has long provoked Russia who from 1991 to 2004 lost about nine countries NATO, Russia uses the Ukraine annexation as a warning to NATO and a reminder of her strength. As Mearsheimer argues, disregarding realpolitik which remains vital in contemporary international politics is deadly and dangerous to any state. Putin’s annexation of Crimea and specifically Crimea in 2014 therefore endorsed what Boris Yeltsin said in 1995 after NATO bombed Bosnia Serbs:

“This is the first sign of what could happen when NATO comes right up to the Russian Federation’s borders. ... The flame of war could burst out across the whole of Europe.”

It is obvious that NATO and EU have tested Russia when they neglected all the past Russian displeasures of attempts to try to make Georgia and Ukraine members of NATO. Putin has indeed proven to show to the West that Ukraine will refuse to exist at any attempt by the West to incorporate Ukraine into EU or NATO.

Russia has gradually gained grounds and been able to show forth its re-emergence by threatening America. According to November 2014 News reports by the CNN, Russian planes unequivocally entered U.S airspace and were intercepted by U.S jets. This unprecedented threat in modern times is indeed a proof of Russia’s re-emergence and re-assumption into power again after the power it willed during the Soviet era. This resumption to great power rivalry with the U.S has fully been acknowledged by Gen. Dunford, America’s top military adviser to President Obama who affirmed that the utmost danger to America’s National Interest today is Russia.
3.7 Irredentism and Russia’s re-emergence

While analyzing Russia’s annexation of Crimea from the point of view of irredentism, Ayres, R. William, and Stephen Saideman argue that unlike the 2008 Russia-Georgian war which was seen as a typical example of irredentism, the recent Ukraine crisis does not qualify to constitute an element of irredentism and so could not be referred to as such. Their justification is based on the fact that Crimea is made up of more Ukrainians and Tatars than ethnic Russians.

Contrary to this view, Steve Saideman, an International Affairs expert believes that Russia’s involvement in the Ukraine crisis is a typical example of irredentism. According to Saideman:

"Countries do not give up pieces of themselves all that willingly and when they do, it is to create new countries, not give hunks of territory to their neighbors."

He acknowledges NATO’s Eastward expansion and nonetheless affirms that Russia’s power as the biggest threat to Eastern Europe cannot be overlooked. Affirming this study’s position on Russia’s re-emerging power status vis-à-vis the Ukraine crisis, Saideman acknowledges that so long as NATO continues to expand, Russia’s power will be felt in continual annexation of its irredentist states particularly the case of Crimea of which the West can do nothing about since they can barely punish Russia.

3.8 Analysis of Russia’s re-emergence

Regardless of its desire for re-emergence by various post-Soviet leaders and the attempt to remind the whole world of its nuclear ability and its military strength, there exist a considerable number of scholars who firmly argue that Russia is nowhere near re-emergence. Neil Macfarlane, in his assessment of Russia’s current super power status, opines that, no matter how
much Russia relies on its nuclear arsenal and military might, the current global system is faced with new dimensions of threats that require “soft power” rather than hard military and nuclear power to address.\(^6\) He describes soft power to mean a nation’s ability to make its concepts and opinions attractive to a wide range of others in the international system without using coercive means. It is unfortunate how some scholars view Russia’s leaders as not having been good at using soft power. They interpret Russia’s assertiveness as being authoritarianism or imperialism. Putin’s assumption into office as the president of Russia has since been ruled with such coerciveness and lack of tact lacking such vital attribute of soft power skills relevant to control the world.

However this study disagrees with the position above about Russia’s assertiveness and rather views Russia’s re-emerging position vis-à-vis her annexation of Crimea is better analyzed in a framework of a number of issues. First, from all indications it is clear that Russia’s diplomatic role in international politics has been overlooked, taking into consideration the fact that Russia has looked on passively since the breakup of the Soviet Union as the West (the United States and Europe) have their way. Russia’s displeasure with NATO’s expansion Eastward has attracted varying attention amongst scholars and analysts in trying to explain the behavior of Russia. During the presidency of Dmitri Medvedev, Russia constantly expressed displeasure at NATO expansion and interpreted it as a breach of trust towards Russia and a threat to Russia’s territorial integrity.\(^7\) Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia as the leading republic lost former Warsaw pact members as well as Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) to NATO and EU expansions.\(^8\) Russia’s long historical, cultural and ethnic ties with these Baltic States is enough justification for her displeasure of their inclusion into NATO and regarded as an encroachment

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on Russia’s interest in its near abroad states, majority of whose citizens are native Russians.\textsuperscript{72} When Hungary joined Poland as the first batch of Eastern European countries to join NATO, Russia again felt that it was losing out on economic gains especially from Poland’s rich functioning economy.\textsuperscript{73} Bilinsky interprets NATO expansion to include Baltic States and even Ukraine as disloyalty to Russia.\textsuperscript{74} Consistently with these views, an interview with a lecturer who lectures in Russian at the University of Ghana regarding his views on NATO’s expansion to Eastern Europe vis-à-vis Russia’s annexation of Crimea as a counter response and a bid for re-emergence, responded that:

“Russia is right to show forth her anger using the annexation of Crimea in opposition to NATO’s further attempt to make Ukraine a NATO member. In his opinion, Russia is long embittered by NATO’s constant break of promise and disrespecting Russia’s interest and taking Russia for granted. According to Mr. X, Russia’s past Super power status is not to be taken for granted because Russia still keeps nuclear weapons as well as its war heads which it could use at any time that it is pushed beyond its limits.”\textsuperscript{75}

It is against this background of NATO expansion and Russia’s frustration that President Vladimir Putin brings Russia to the position of re-emergence using the Ukraine annexation as an evidence of its strength. On the contrary, NATO’s argument against Russia in an attempt to justify its expansion shows a number of issues. According to Michael Rühle, the head of NATO’s energy security section and also the speechwriter to the NATO Secretary General, NATO regards Russia’s frustration from a purely psychological point of view and a sort of defense mechanism of Russia’s inability to deal with her internal problems rather than being frustrated by NATO expansion.\textsuperscript{76} In tracing these inefficiencies in Russian domestic policies from the time of the Soviet Union, Michael Rühle states that Gorbachev’s policies of Perestroika and Glasnost gave the Baltic States the inclination to seek independence from Soviet rule and eventually seek to join NATO. Also, following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent reunification of Germany, unified Germany sought membership with NATO without NATO
doing much to get Germany’s membership. Again, towards the end of the Cold War, Warsaw pact member countries were mostly interested in seeing the Soviet Union collapse rather than join NATO. It is against the backdrop of these losses that Russia shows forth her discontentment through the annexation of Crimea. From NATO’s point of view, as Michael Rühle reports, “there has never been political or legally binding commitment of the West not to extend NATO beyond the borders of a reunified Germany.” Another justification for NATO is the Helsinki Declaration of 1975 which permits former republics of the Soviet Union to be party to any alliance of their choice without violating international law. NATO on that note blames Russia per the Helsinki declaration on the prohibition from threat or the use of force when Russia annexed Crimea;

“The participating States will refrain in their mutual relations, as well as in their international relations in general, from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations and with the present Declaration. No consideration may be invoked to serve to warrant resort to the threat or use of force in contravention of this principle.”

NATO admits therefore not to have completely ignored Russia’s interests. Some of the efforts NATO embarked on to prove having complete regard for Russia is the signing unto the Founding Act with Russia. The main aim of the Act was to foster NATO’s assurance to Russia never to set nuclear armaments or troops in the territories of former Soviet Republics especially those who are close to Russia’s borders.

3.9 Implications of the Ukrainian Crisis for Contemporary International Politics

The Ukraine crisis has proven to be uniquely different with respect to its implications. Although it is a domestic crisis with its near abroad partner Russia, the implication of the crisis transcends just domestic issues to the international community. Russia’s annexation of Crimea has had
larger effect on other emerging powers such as China in strengthening China’s assertiveness on claiming lost territories, America’s decision regarding Russia, the security of Europe, efforts by the international community to end the ongoing war in Syria, as well as efforts by the international community to reach a decision on Iran nuclear weapons of which Russia’s collaboration would strongly be needed.

Discussing but a few, with Russia being a permanent member of the UN Security Council and therefore being a key player in resolutions regarding the Syrian Crisis, it has been proven that the attention of some major players in settling the Syrian crisis such as the United States, Europe and Russia is likely to be shifted off the Syrian crisis. This then leaves the Syrian war unlikely to be resolved anytime soon. However the annexation of Crimea has left Ukraine politically unstable as citizens are left in fear and panic following Russia’s military interference. According to Eugene Rumer, individuals in Ukraine are procuring personal arms leaving Ukraine very vulnerable for subsequent armed conflicts.

The turn for Russia has been proven to be positive than negative. Thus for Russia, whiles the crisis sets Russia in international politics as a power not to be taken for granted it is an opportunity for a more strengthened relation with Russia’s allied countries in Central Europe (Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan) on the whole, while on the contrary, the Ukraine crisis will increase Russia’s enemies especially among former Soviet Republics who are now members of NATO and the EU.
Sanctions that were imposed on Russia by the U.S and the EU are likely to affect Europe in particular due to its over reliance on Russia for energy needs. Barrick Nathan’s analysis concludes by seeing Russia as the victor in the Ukraine crisis, fully successful as a “re-emerged” Super Power. Making reference to the G7 declaration annulling the G8 Summit programmed for Sochi,

“We commit ourselves to support Ukraine in its efforts to restore unity, stability, and political and economic health to the country. To that end, we will support Ukraine’s work with the International Monetary Fund to negotiate a new program and to implement needed reforms. IMF support will be critical in unlocking additional assistance from the World Bank, other international financial institutions, the EU, and bilateral sources.”

Nathan’s interpretation of the inclusion of the “bilateral sources” is that the west has fully acknowledged Russia’s emerged power in global politics.
ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

Russia’s power play under President Putin has become paramount in contemporary academic discourse. Different scholars have differing views on the Ukrainian crisis and how Russia’s annexation of Crimea could be analyzed as an opportunity for Russia to resurge in international politics. Relying mostly on secondary data, this study sought to investigate Russia’s power play and analyze in what way the annexation of Crimea could be interpreted as Russia’s quest for re-emergence in global politics. In order to be able to better explain the events and give a better analysis of issues, John J. Mearsheimer’s theory of offensive realism was found to be appropriate to give a basis for the explanation of Russia’s re-emergence. The theory explained that in an anarchic world of no central authority, states will do everything possible to ensure their survival in a self-help international system. For this reason, Russia’s desire to be a resurging power is a good explanation for assertiveness which aims at setting Russia on the world plane as a power not to contend with. Using the context of the Ukrainian unrest to explain Russia’s action, this chapter presents the summary of research findings, conclusions based on the findings and some recommendations.

4.1 Summary of Findings

The findings that were scooped from the work include the following:

➢ First, Russia’s re-emergence is an inevitable process because of post-Cold-War realities, including EU and NATO’s eastward expansion.
Russia’s position that it occupied as a major power in the Cold War era gradually went down after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. President Mikhail Gorbachev’s policies of Perestroika and Glasnost reasonably contributed to the whole process of the breakup of the Soviet Union. The breakup of the Union eventually led to the emergence of fifteen new independent states. Russia although was disappointed by the breakup, sought to maintain good neighborliness with its former Republics. Unfortunately the expansion of Westernization closer to its borders caused it to resist and in 2008 led to the Russian annexation of South Ossetia. In late 2014, an upsurge in Ukraine, following President Yanuchovych’s refusal to sign an association agreement intended to enable Ukraine join the EU broke out in Kiev, Ukraine’s capital. The aftermath was Russia’s annexation of Crimea.

- Secondly, the work stresses that the strong leadership of Vladimir Putin, aided by Russian nationalism, vast resources and military power are pivots of Russia’s success at re-emergence.

Russia’s administration under President Putin has sought to move Russia away from the weak policies it experienced under Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. Analysis of Putin as a political figure revealed that Putin shows forth his assertiveness by openly opposing America, NATO and other Western ideas that spread towards Russian borders. Dmitri Trenin asserts that Russia has regained its parity with the U.S in terms of global influence which it lost at the end of the Cold War.

- Thirdly, the study found that Realism enjoins Russia to seek for National Interest. Adding to the assertive image that Putin brings to Russian politics, this study revealed that Russia’s re-emergence has been solely by virtue of a desire to protect its National Interest. The greatest of which is the defense of its territories and its citizens abroad. The issue of irredentism
as well as its energy concerns was found to be good justification for its re-emergence. Thus, Russia’s re-emergence is an inevitable process because of post-Cold War realities from which the Crimean annexation may be explained.

4.2 Conclusions

➢ The research found that the study of Russia’s re-emergence is incomplete without appreciating the immense role played by Vladimir Putin. His assertiveness has been remarkable in opposing the U. S and other world powers. Clearly, under Putin, a substantive message has thus been sent across to show forth Russia’s military and nuclear strengths.

➢ The study also found that by annexing Crimea, Russia has succeeded in strengthening its protection of its military base, the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol, and also protecting its citizens in Ukraine. Russia has also been successful in protecting its territorial integrity from NATO and EU and any other threat either perceived or real.

➢ Based on the findings above, this study concludes that through Vladimir Putin, Russia’s Foreign Policy has been designed to lead Russia to the path of re-emergence and this has been reinforced by Russia’s annexation of Crimea. Russia’s annexation of Crimea nonetheless was in total conformity with its National Interest in the bid to protect its territorial integrity. Russia has therefore been successful till this day in proving to the United States of America, its NATO allies, the EU member states, Asian countries and the whole world that Russia’s power is not to be taken for granted. Annexation of Crimea in 2014 has confirmed Russia’s annexation of South Ossetia in 2008 and as it remains, any further provocation from the West to encroach on Russia’s interests will attract a
similar or even a much stronger reaction from Russia. The Ukrainian crisis has therefore been good grounds to show forth Russia’s re-emergence. What has remained the focus of this study is Russia’s desire to gain influence over Eastern Ukraine.

- The hypothesis for this study which states that “Russia’s involvement in the Ukraine crisis is an indication of its re-emergence in the international system” has been proven to be positive. Thus, Russia’s Foreign Policy under Putin might be directed towards leading Russia to re-emergence but this has nonetheless been heightened and been made even more valid by Russia’s annexation of Crimea due to the laudable impact that the annexation has had on international politics in general. As it has been mentioned above, the annexation’s impact goes beyond the borders of Ukraine and Russia to even Europe, the United States, China, Syria, Iran and other international politics.

- Notwithstanding the position of this study above, it cannot be ignored that Russia’s annexation of Crimea can be argued by some scholars to be in complete violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter on the principle of state sovereignty by which the UN Charter prohibits states from using “threat or force against the territorial integrity or political independence of another state.”

### 4.3 Recommendations

The researcher wishes to make the following recommendations based on the outcome of this work:

- This research focused on Russia’s re-emergence using the Ukraine crisis as a case study. Future researchers who wish to carry out a research along the same lines can consider
using other post-Soviet countries such as Georgia or any of the Slavic or Baltic states to make an analysis of Russia’s re-emergence.

- To enrich the data needed for such analysis, a naturalistic observation by future researchers interested in Ukraine-Russian studies could enhance the validity of information. By employing naturalistic observational method, the future researcher may choose to study the situation on the ground from Ukraine and Russia in order to be in a better position to make conclusions that are devoid of other people’s subjectivity as it proves to be a major challenge for secondary sources of data.

- Another recommendation that the researcher wishes to make, based on the outcome of the research, is that, Ukraine, as the smaller power stands a chance of suffering at any attempt to allow association with NATO and EU. It is therefore, safe on the part of Ukraine to refrain from any such alliances that Russia deems threatening to its interest. Should Ukraine overlook Russia’s concerns it stands a greater chance of losing the millions it makes from its transit route that Russia uses to transfer oil and gas to Europe as Russia is reconsidering having other routes elsewhere apart from Ukraine.

- Furthermore, considering the implications that Russia’s annexation of Crimea has had on the geopolitics of the world, this study recommends that as far as Russia’s re-emergence as a great power is concerned, any attempt by the West to expand towards Russia’s doorstep will attract Russia’s response. NATO and EU expansions which intend to include Ukraine in particular should be reconsidered carefully by the West. If Russia’s cooperation on major global issues (such as the war on terror, ending the Syrian crisis, negotiations on Iran nuclear weapons) would be needed, then Russia’s territorial integrity
should be respected. Russia will forever annex Ukraine if NATO and EU continue to grant Ukraine membership status.
ENDNOTE

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**C. Reports/Papers/Documents**


**D. Interview**

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**E. Internet Sources**


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