

## Constructivist Approach to The Exchange of Power in Search to The Possibility of The Russo-Ukraine Conflict Settlement

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### Abstract

*This paper examines the exchange of power dynamics between Russia and Ukraine within the context of the Russo-Ukraine conflict through a constructivist lens. Qualitative research methods are employed, including in-depth interviews with experts and policymakers, analysis of scholarly articles and reports, and document analysis. Thematic analysis is utilized to identify recurring patterns and themes related to power dynamics and conflict settlement possibilities. The analysis reveals that norms and shared identities play a significant role in shaping power relations between Russia and Ukraine, and contestation and reinterpretation of norms influence the exchange of power. Discourses and narratives surrounding the conflict contribute to power dynamics and shape conflict settlement possibilities. Socialization processes, including interactions between actors and institutional dynamics, influence power relations and its effect to conflict settlement attempts. This study contributes to the field of international relations by highlighting the relevance of constructivism in analyzing conflicts and generating insights for conflict resolution efforts.*

**Keywords** constructivist approach, exchange of power, conflict settlement, power balancing, shifting orientation.

### INTRODUCTION

Settlement of the violent conflict between Russia versus Ukraine remains a big question. The continuing war between Russia versus Ukraine since February 2022 is the further impact of the fall of Soviet Union in 1990s and the CIS disintegration. Relations between the two parties change from a civilized divorced into an uncivilized warfare that was caused by three underlying factors: the security dilemma, the impact of democratization on geopolitics, and the incompatible goals of post-Cold War Europe (D'Anieri, 2019). Considering the recent scale of the war, it has possibilities to reshape the future world order in both significant and minor ways. There is no turning back to the earlier status quo. Since the struggle for territorial acquisition with immeasurable costs has been happening, and much will depend on what happens next. What kind of international order do they envision for the future, what steps are being taken to ensure it, and what price are they willing to pay to attempt to achieve it? These are the questions that governments around the world should be asking, and their citizens should insist on hearing the answers. Because their choices in this fight have incredibly high implications, particularly for Ukrainians but also for the rest of the world (Brunk & Hakimi, 2022). Without intending to oversimplify, this paper intends to explain aspects of the interaction and exchange of power in the context of the conflict between the two countries. Hopefully, the understanding of the pattern of interaction and the nature of power exchange would be contributive in formulating some more reasonable scenarios of the conflict settlement.

This paper used a constructivist approach to balance of power politics that foregrounds contests over balance interpretations between states (Müller & Albert, 2021). The authors



empirically studied the contests over conventional and theatre nuclear balances between East and West in the last two decades of the Cold War. They provide insights into the politics and dynamics that shape these contests. It means that the discussion of the exchange of power is not merely possible from the realist or neorealist view, however, it could be analyzed through the mode dynamic constructivist approach (Bourhrous, 2023).

Theoretically, this research is important to emphasize analysis of international relations on its relational nature rather than focused on the actors, system, or even the legal aspect. While, practically, it could contribute to support diplomatic efforts, promote communication, and build understanding between the parties involved in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict to formulate conflict resolution frameworks and evidence-based recommendations for policymakers.

This paper argues that the prolonged duration of the war requires a more constructive resolution formula in the form of encouragement to shift patterns of interaction between both leaders, while continuously keep the conventional balance of power exchange and considering minimizing the escalation towards a nuclear war which causes nothing but a zero-sum game.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Russo-Ukrainian Conflict

An article authored by Yevsieieva et al. examines the origins of Russian aggression against the Ukrainian people and the prospects of relations with the Russian state for the preservation and stable development of future generations of Ukrainians. They argue that historians agree that the destruction of the modern Russian empire could lead to the development of post-imperial ethnic groups. Boris Johnson proposes forming a coalition of countries interested in Russia's disarmament, including Britain, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and possibly Turkey, to oppose the revival of the Soviet Union. It is important, however, to remember the mistakes and miscalculations that led to the defeat of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917-1921, and to end the war for the sovereignty of Ukraine and the life of its people (YEVSEIEVA et al., 2023).

Russia's invasion of Ukraine dispelled any illusions about order in post-Cold War Europe. The conflict had deep-seated causes, and various elements interacted. Even though the euphoria that accompanied the demise of communism concealed it, the participants' intentions were incompatible from the beginning. The war and the responses to it have made all of the causes of the conflict worse. The author argues that one of causes to Ukraine's separation from Russia in 1991 is incompatible goals to Russia. Implicitly, interacting various elements and the goal incompatibility reflect interactionist or relationist understanding to the given case (D'Anieri, 2019). Despite its vivid description on the history and explanation of the roots of the conflict since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the author did not reveal the prospective formulation of conflict resolution, except, "Understanding the root reasons of the conflict leads us to face the possibility that easy fixes, like Putin's demise, are probably not going to end it." (D'Anieri, 2023).

### **Legal solution is a dead end**

One of the offers to solve the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is authored by Vasetsky (2022). His paper analyzes the grounds of existing legislation and the practice of its application to convict criminals in the war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Crimes committed by Russia, its military and political leadership, and individual perpetrators are defined as war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crimes of aggression. Signs of Nazi Germany's war against humanity can be seen in the war. The war waged by the Russian Federation in Ukraine is inhuman and falls under the definitions of crimes in the Rome Statute. It is necessary to create conditions to prevent such crimes in the future, with responsibility for this at all levels (Vasetsky, 2022). Nevertheless, in the case where one of the actors is obviously a superpower who has veto rights in the UN Security Council and control thousands of nuclear warheads, the legal approach seems unsupported by the legal system itself. In short, legal recommendation for this case is dead-end.

### **Nuclear threat is a way to a zero-sum game**

The other extreme "solution" is come from Russia when President Putin declared nuclear threats during its invasion of Ukraine. The Russia-Ukraine War was driven by a security dilemma to achieve nuclear superiority. The U.S. attempted to gain nuclear superiority, leading to Russia modernizing its nuclear forces and extending the scope of nuclear deterrence into Putin's statement which implicitly to open the possibilities of using tactical nuclear weapon over Ukraine and its western allies (Sethi, 2022) (Yang, 2022). This war has awakened the world to the reality that nuclear threats are actively being used as a tool of intimidation and escalation management. Obviously, it has had profound implications for the global nuclear order and its two constitutive systems of nuclear deterrence and nuclear restraint. The outcome of the war in Ukraine has critical importance for deciding the value of nuclear weapons and resolving the conundrum between these systems (Budjeryn, 2022). Therefore, the Russia's nuclear threat leads to a zero-sum game.

### **Constructivist approach**

To create a breakthrough beyond those extremes above, this paper used constructivism as the theoretical framework. The first enlightenment to interactive and constructive approach in international relations was presented by of Alexander Wendt (Wendt, 1992). In terms of measuring a nation-state's power, constructivist methodology prioritizes disagreements among states over how to perceive the balance of power (Müller & Albert, 2021). The authors conducted an empirical study of East-West conflicts over conventional and theater nuclear balances during the final two decades of the Cold War. They shed light on the politics and (military) forces that influence the relative value of power (Bourhrous, 2023).

Criticizing Wendt's work, Fiammenghi stated that the claim "Anarchy is what states make of it" is true in the sense that states' identities can change, and international affairs are constructed from "cultural" or "social" interaction among nation-states. However, Wendt's claim that states act on the basis of their "culture" in a broad, socio-cognitive sense is wrong,



as he never shows that states share such common norms. (Fiammenghi, 2019). More recently, the new constructivism's reflexivity and advancement of a phronetic social science are written all over its DNA. Early constructivist theoretical treatises placed heavy emphasis on practices and relations, as well as reflexivity and history. Wendt, Onuf, and Kratochwil all placed political practice at the forefront of their constructivist theorization (McCourt, 2022). Furthermore, practice theory and relationalism are two fresh perspectives on international relations theory that are gaining traction and creating innovative applications. Practice theory highlights commonplace logics in international politics. It emphasizes how practical imperatives that depend on the situation rather than abstract ideas of the national interest, identity, or preferences are what drive international actors. Relationalism opposes the notion that states, and other international institutions are the fundamental building blocks of international politics. They are replaced with an emphasis on continuous processes. The New Constructivism in IR is represented by practice theory and relationalism combined. Constructivism's meaning limited throughout time, being bound to a particular scientific ontology that concentrated on the importance of identity, norms, and culture in global politics, necessitating a practice-relational change (McCourt, 2016). In general, it means that the issue of the exchange of power can be approached from a dynamic constructivist perspective rather than just from a realist or neorealist perspective (Bourhrous, 2023). We will implement those interactionist thoughts to define the concept of power, balance (or imbalance) of power, and the dynamic pattern of interaction among nation-states.

### Power exchange

In classic Realist view, concept of "power", more especially "national power", is essential in the study of international politics (Moore & Morgenthau, 1949) (Morgenthau & Thompson, 1993) (Frei, 2016) (Pardo, 2017). Each state's use of national power is a well acknowledged fact in international relations. One of the key factors influencing a state's behavior in international relations is the distribution of its individual authority. However, the unbridled exercise of power by governments has the potential to lead to conflict, anarchy, and disorder in world affairs. Political and military leaders have always been interested in state power, its estimates, and measuring methods because they needed fairly objective criteria to make choices that would have a significant impact on how nations behave and develop in the system of international relations (STOICA, 2021).

Therefore, two possible interpretations of such power could be considered here. First, power as entity, in forms of *a priori* predicates like superpower, powerful, less power, least power, or even powerless nations based on some criteria. For example, dominant powers seek to enact major changes to international order when they perceive a major new threat on the horizon, with the goal of blocking that threatening entity from amassing further influence (Becker, 2022). While the second meaning of power is the creation of outcomes in and through social relations that mold an actor's capacity to control their surroundings and destiny. The types of social relations that power operates through (in social relations of interaction or in social relations of constitution) and the specificity of social relations through which effects are produced (specific/direct or diffuse/indirect) are two crucial, analytical

dimensions that go along with this general concept. There are four conceptions of power—mandatory, institutional, structural, and productive—are created as a result of these distinctions (Barnett & Duvall, 2005). Peter M. Blau’s study of exchange and power in social life examines how social life becomes organized into increasingly complex structures. He uses concepts of reciprocity and imbalance to derive processes such as power, changes in group structure, and the two major forces that govern the dynamics of complex social structures (Blau, 2017).

In the context of Russo-Ukrainian war, we should be cautious in seeing neorealism and classical realism as one. They stem from disparate intellectual traditions and historical backgrounds, rest on opposing ontologies, produce different normative outlooks on the world, and their epistemologies ask for different approaches to study international politics. However, there is more to gain by separating these two perspectives. Classical realists highlighted the role of emotions in politics, warned of nationalism and the nation-state, promoted global communities, criticized the squandering of natural resources, and dismissed modern economies for their greed. The most important details in this text are that Mearsheimer and Morgenthau were prominent critics of the Vietnam War and that diplomacy is the rational, peaceful way to find compromises for conflicting interests. However, he was not so naive as to believe that there will be no wars anymore, as the attack on the Ukraine by Russia is imperialistic. Morgenthau would have sought to keep diplomatic channels open and support Ukrainians militarily, as he would have seen the Russian attack as just the beginning, rather than the end (Rösch, 2022).

## METHODS

Russia’s “special military action” against Ukraine in early 2022 is very important to pay attention to because it creates an additional burden on the world in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic situation, even the agenda for action on global climate change as a result of the 2015 Paris Agreement is also still echoing. The pandemic has had negative implications for the world economic situation in general, and climate change has become a real threat to the security of humanity worldwide (Abbasi, 2022; Quitzow et al., 2022; Tollefson, 2022) (Bin-Nashwan et al., 2022). The outbreak of war as a result of the Russian invasion, which is still ongoing today, is like a satire on the health of the mind, economic prosperity, and global peace (Allam et al., 2022; Chumachenko et al., 2022; Diop & Asongu, 2022; Quinn V et al., 2022; Vuorio et al., 2023). Therefore, Proposals for conflict resolution that are based on evidence and are quite reasonable are needed.

This research used qualitative research design with an exploratory and descriptive approach. It focused on understanding and interpreting phenomena in-depth, exploring new areas of research, and describing the characteristics and qualities of the relational patterns of the Russo-Ukraine conflict as the subject under study. It involves gathering rich, detailed data through methods especially document analysis, with the aim of generating insights, developing theories, and even policy recommendation to the decision makers that focuses on the Russia Ukraine Crisis and critically examines its causes and future implications for the global community. The research draws on secondary sources such as research articles



and previously published pertinent data (Bin-Nashwan et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2022; Lebow, 2022; Mohamad Ikhwan Syahtaria, 2022).

Analysis of this research will be set up in a systematic approach to understand the dynamics of power exchange and its relationship to conflict settlement from a constructivist perspective. First, a review of the key concepts and principles of constructivist theory, such as the role of norms, identities, ideas, and social construction in shaping international relations. Second, to understand how constructivism differs from other theoretical approaches, such as realism or liberalism, regarding power dynamics and conflict resolution. Third, to identify relevant power dynamics of the key actors involved in the Russo-Ukraine conflict and the power dynamics between them and also to analyze how power is exchanged, distributed, and negotiated in the context of the conflict. Finally, to synthesize the findings from the analysis to identify patterns, relationships, and key insights related to the constructivist approach to the exchange of power and proposing a set of the conflict settlement (Cupchik, 2001).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The nature of relations between countries can change over time. The changing character of political relations between Russia and Ukraine reminds us of the Soviet Union's political history towards the surrounding countries as well as towards its main competitor, the United States. The Soviet Union and the United States shifted from cooperation in the World War II to a competitive arms race during the Cold War due to ideological differences and geopolitical concerns (Monet, 2021).

The Soviet Union's annexation of Eastern Europe after World War II (see Table 1 below) was a major factor in the start of the Cold War, as it created tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States and its Western allies. It established communist governments in several Eastern European countries, using tactics such as military occupation, political subversion, and propaganda. Non-communist parties were outlawed or marginalized, political opposition was suppressed with violence, and dissidents were imprisoned or executed (Kraujelis, 2010).

**Table 1. Timeline of Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe**

Country	Year	Methods used
Albania	1945	Soon after the end of World War II, a communist administration was established.
Bulgaria	1946	The Bulgarian monarchy was dissolved in 1946, and later that year a communist administration was in charge and its opponents were gradually exterminated.
East Germany	1945	East Germany was included in the Soviet zone of occupation established at the Yalta Conference, and the Soviets established a communist government there in 1945.

Country	Year	Methods used
Romania	1945	A coalition government led by communists and composed of multiple political parties won the 1945 elections. The Romanian monarchy was abolished by the Communists after they gradually ousted its coalition allies.
Poland	1947	Stalin called 16 non-communist Polish politicians to Moscow, where they were detained, out of fear that a non-communist administration might be chosen in 1947. The Polish communists won the election when their political rivals were defeated.
Hungary	1948	Despite the fact that the non-communists won the 1945 election, Rakosi, a communist leader, employed the secret police to arrest and assassinate his rivals. By 1948, the Communist Party had total dominance over the nation.
Czechoslovakia	1948	In 1948, Czechoslovakia became the last nation in Eastern Europe to fully embrace communism. Only communists were permitted to run in the elections that year, and a communist administration was duly elected.

Source: [Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe, 1945-1948 - The Cold War origins, 1941-1948 - AQA - GCSE History Revision - AQA - BBC Bitesize](#)

The Warsaw Pact formation was also the obvious evidence of the shifting characteristics of the Soviet – US relations. The Soviet Union reacted strongly and negatively to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949.

“In response to the formation of NATO, the Soviet Union formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955. This pact united the Soviet Union with most of the Eastern European nations (including Albania, Romania, Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria).” ([sage-advice.com, 2020](https://sage-advice.com/what-was-the-soviet-unions-reaction-to-nato/)) <https://sage-advice.com/what-was-the-soviet-unions-reaction-to-nato/>

“The Soviet reaction to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was a show-exercise; they created the ‘defensive’ Warsaw Pact alliance of their own from nations they already controlled.” (Thompson, 2016)

The Soviet Union saw the formation of NATO as a direct military threat to its security and interests and responded by building up its own military alliance and engaging in a propaganda campaign to undermine NATO’s legitimacy. The tensions between the two sides continued to escalate throughout the Cold War era (Wagner, 2012).

The Soviet Union played a significant role in the Korean War, which took place from 1950 to 1953.

“... the opening of the State Archives the Soviet role is finally being exposed. ... this telegram sent to Stalin by his ambassador in North Korea conclusively shows that the North attacked the South with Stalin’s full knowledge.” (Musicman & John, 2019)



Third, the Korean War. It began when North Korea invaded South Korea, with the Soviet Union providing military and economic assistance. It was seen as an opportunity for the Soviet Union to expand its influence in Asia and challenge the United States' position as a global superpower. The conflict ended in 1953 with an armistice that established a demilitarized zone between North and South Korea (Al-Alwani, 2018; Bugay, 2020; Campbell, 2014; Chang-IL, 2010; Mujiyati et al., 2016; O'Neill, 2000).

In short, the Soviet Union's shift from cooperation with the United States during World War II to a competitive arms race during the Cold War was the result of a complex set of factors, including ideological differences, geopolitical concerns, and geostrategic considerations.

Constructivist analysis must be carried out by looking at changes in both parties, Russia and Ukraine, and how the two interact to construct certain patterns and characteristics of relationships. On the one hand, Russia is the successor of the Soviet Union so that its internal political evolution and changes in its external geopolitical orientation will influence the dynamics of the nature of its relations with other countries, including Ukraine. On the other hand, Ukraine's internal political evolution and changes in external geopolitical orientation must also be examined to see its influence on the dynamics and nature of its relations with other countries, particularly in this context, Russia.

### **Evolution in the Russia's domestic politics and its impact to geopolitical strategy**

Russia has sought to maintain its status as a significant power in international affairs after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Even after the end of the heyday of Soviet grandeur and the post-Soviet transition, Russia still considers itself to be a "great power" and values such status highly. The nation's leaders worked with Western countries to restore its great power status up to the mid-2000s. By emphasizing ideals of national sovereignty and patriotism, Russia has gone in the direction of confronting Western global agendas since the mid-2000s. Russia has been attempting to create non-interfering zones in its dealings with the West more recently. This strategy led to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, an uptick in tensions, and a conflict with the US and NATO (Wengle, 2022).

Under Vladimir Putin, Russia experienced the significant increases of its power. The policy and decision-making with strategic and long-lasting impacts on foreign affairs and global security are influenced by opposing views on the dynamics of Russia's national strength. Measurement of the national power of Russia and compared it to the top Western governments, the BRICS members, the former Soviet republics, and oil-dependent economies using three known quantitative approaches and one experimental method showed that Russia was gaining ground on its Western rivals between 1999 and 2016, but that it lagged behind China, India, and the United States in terms of absolute national power value (Saradzhyan & Abdullaev, 2021). It was influenced by Putin's state-of-the-nation address in January 15, 2020 which led to the amendment of the 1993 Yeltsin constitution to meet his political objectives. This included overturning the term limits on his presidency, creating a new power vertical, a stronger presidency, and a more subservient judiciary. Additionally,



Putin's amendments undermined the constitution's internal consistency by introducing contradictions, downgrading Russia's civil liberties (Pomeranz, 2021).

In terms of norm contestation, Russia's geopolitical shift policy can be seen as challenging Western-centric norms and attempting to promote alternative norms that align with its own interests. For example, Russia has been vocal in its opposition to what it perceives as Western dominance and has sought to assert its own vision of international order (Casier, 2022; Dagi, 2020; Pieper, 2019). While the construction of identities, Russia has sought to construct an identity that emphasizes its historical role as a great power and a defender of its Eurasian traditional values. This identity construction contributes to its assertion of national power and its geopolitical shift policy, which aims to position Russia as a counterbalance to Western influence. In addition, Russia's geopolitical shift can be seen as a response to perceived power shifts in the international system, particularly the relative decline of Western influence and the rise of other powers. Russia seeks to capitalize on these shifts and assert its own power in areas of strategic importance. In the stage of Ukraine war, however, keeping the balance of power in the battlefield is matter (Glance, 2022). Russia has strategically framed its geopolitical shift as a response to perceived Western encroachment and as a means of protecting its national interests. It has used discursive power to challenge dominant narratives and promote alternative perspectives that resonate with non-Western actors (Welt et al., 2005). Russia has also utilized its cultural, historical, and energy resources to foster relationships with other states and project its influence. Through institutions like the Eurasian Economic Union and various cultural initiatives, Russia seeks to shape norms and identities in its sphere of influence (Bolatbayeva, 2021; Mostafa & Mahmood, 2018; Sergi, 2018; Veicy, 2022). Russia's geopolitical shift policy can be understood as a response to regional challenges and aspirations, particularly in its near abroad. Russia aims to secure its influence in regions such as Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, where it perceives strategic interests and cultural affinities (Baranowski, 2022; Kordan, 2022; Kotkin, 2016b, 2016a; Marinova, 2023; Tampubolon, 2022).

In summary, we obtain a clearer understanding of how norm contestation, identity formation, discursive power, soft power, power transfer, and regional dynamics impact Russia's national power and foreign policy decisions by adopting a constructivist lens to its geopolitical shift strategy. This analysis sheds light on Russia's goals and the variables influencing its quest for a repositioned geopolitical position in the global scene.

### **Evolution in the Ukraine's domestic politics and its impact to geopolitical strategy**

Since obtaining independence in 1991, Ukraine's domestic politics have undergone substantial changes that have had a significant impact on its geopolitical strategy. This essay explores the development of Ukrainian domestic politics and discusses how it has affected the geopolitical strategy of the nation. We can learn more about how Ukraine's internal dynamics influence its outward conduct in the geopolitical sphere by examining significant political developments, societal dynamics, and foreign policy changes (Coleman, 2021) (Bellezza, 2022).



Political and economic difficulties characterized Ukraine's post-Soviet transition. It started down the path of democratization by establishing a parliamentary government and having free and fair elections. However, the process of democratic consolidation has been difficult and has been hampered by corruption, poor institutions, and power struggles, all of which have affected Ukraine's geopolitical strategy. The 2013–2014 Euromaidan demonstrations marked a turning point in Ukrainian domestic politics. President Yanukovich was overthrown by the revolution, which was motivated by a desire for deeper connections with the European Union, and a pro-European shift ensued. This change has significantly impacted Ukraine's geopolitical policy, bringing it closer to Western institutions and posing a threat to Russia's sway. Deep regional differences and identity politics have an impact on Ukraine's political politics. Political allegiances, policy preferences, and foreign policy orientations have been molded by the East-West divide, which is predominantly along linguistic and cultural lines. The geopolitical strategy of Ukraine is affected by these splits as various areas try to impose their interests and influence (Bohdanova, 2014; Krasynska & Martin, 2017; Pop-Eleches & Robertson, 2018; Shveda & Park, 2016; Tejasuar & Hanura, 2022).

Ukraine's domestic politics and geopolitical policy have been significantly impacted by the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, which developed after Russia annexed Crimea. Security worries have increased as a result of the conflict, and attention is now being paid to defense capabilities, global alliances, and balancing Russia's influence in the area. Additionally, it has altered how the general public feels about Ukraine's geopolitical priorities (“DIME’ Analysis of the Conflict in Eastern Ukraine,” 2022; Klymenko, 2020; Makhortykh & Sydorova, 2017; Šmíd & Šmídová, 2021). Therefore, the geopolitical strategy of Ukraine is impacted by the country's continued difficulties with democratization and effective government. In addition to being essential for maintaining domestic stability, enhancing democratic institutions, combating corruption, and promoting transparency are also important for winning over the favor of the international community.

A difficult geopolitical balancing act characterizes Ukrainian domestic politics. The nation upholds its sovereignty and pursues its own national interests while attempting to maintain connections with both the West and Russia. Ukraine's foreign policy, particularly its participation in regional projects like the Eastern Partnership and efforts to negotiate the difficulties of its relations with the European Union and NATO, have been molded by balancing these conflicting influences (Mansur et al., 2022; Onyshchuk & Tatarinova, 2022; Pifer, 2020; Skachko, 2020).

In short, since gaining independence, Ukraine's domestic politics have undergone a considerable transformation that has had a long-lasting effect on its geopolitical policy. Ukraine's behavior in the geopolitical sphere has been influenced by the country's post-Soviet transition, pro-European tilt, regional differences, conflict in Eastern Ukraine, and security concerns. It is still very difficult to pursue democratic consolidation and decent governance while juggling the difficulties of striking a balance between relations with the West and Russia. Addressing internal rifts, bolstering democratic institutions, and pursuing efficient governance will be vital for establishing stability and advancing Ukraine's national

interests on the international arena as it continues to shape its domestic politics and geopolitical strategy.

The development of the domestic politics and strategic geopolitics of the two countries which have a direct land border has constructed a shift from a pattern of peaceful neighbors to war on a large scale as it is today. The balance of power was evident from the long duration of the war and the heavy casualties on both sides. Even though Russia is superior regionally because it is still in the position of attacker, Ukraine's defense supported by NATO countries poses a significant obstacle for Russia to stabilize its territorial control in the invasion area.

If it is to be used as a framework for a peaceful solution, these facts must be acknowledged by both parties in order to reopen peaceful diplomacy. However, it should be noted that to enforce Russia which holds a veto right at the UN Security Council and as the owner of thousands of nuclear weapons to be more lenient, of course it is very difficult to imagine. Therefore, a more probable way is to change the attitude of the Ukrainian leadership to be able to accommodate Russia's interests to a certain extent so that the conflict does not result in more victims.

## CONCLUSION

The constructivist approach to the power exchange in the search for a potential resolution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict offers insightful information about how the conflict works through looking at discourses, identities, norms, and socialization processes. Their adherence to various standards and the development of separate national identities have an impact on how Russia and Ukraine exchange power. Power dynamics are significantly shaped by conflict-related discourses and narratives. By carefully framing the issue, defending their conduct, and swaying public opinion through language, actors have an impact on efforts to resolve conflicts. The power dynamics influenced by interactions between actors proposing the continuing balance of power in the battleground while keep away from the possibility to open the nuclear war. The most possible proposal to solve the conflict is a strategic change of Ukraine's leader's diplomacy, from too close and rely on the US-led back up towards the more peaceful diplomacy with the Russia counterpart. Of course that it will be effective in the cease-fire condition.

It has to be confessed that this study is limited in its ability to analyze the dynamic pattern of norms, identities, and discourses and its impact as parts of constructivism. Additionally, it may not fully capture the material aspects of power, such as military capabilities or economic factors, which also influence the dynamics of the conflict.

In order to better comprehend the constructivist approach to power exchange and conflict resolution and to shed light on the complexities of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, there are still a number of research gaps that need to be filled to advance the understanding of the constructivist approach to the exchange of power in the conflict. These could include a comparative analysis of other conflicts with constructivist lenses, a longitudinal studies to examine the evolution of power dynamics, norms, and identities over time, and an investigation of the role of information communication technologies, social media, and online platforms in shaping discourses, narratives, and power dynamics.



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