In 2015 an international crises emerged that had not been seen since the end of the Cold War. A game-theoretical model that evaluates the rational choice of Russia and the West is regarded as a sufficient explanation of the Ukraine Crisis. The study proposes a more parsimonious explanation that is based upon the game of chicken, which is a good model to explain other likewise phenomena in international relations. For the Ukraine Crisis itself, the internal problems that eventually lead to the Euromaidan are grounded in problems in state-building after becoming independent, and Russian historical incentive in the Ukraine. The strategic choices then become part of a momentum Russia had and which succeeded in Crimea, but failed to materialize in the East of Ukraine. It is that difference in the Ukraine Crisis which causes the choice to be either sequential or non-sequential, rendering different outcomes and different strategies for both players. In short, this outcome is roughly the same as the Stalemate model, but it is a far clearer way for students and teachers of IR in general to comprehend the Ukraine Crisis.
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Since the end of the Cold War (1989-1991) tensions between the major powers have not been so high as with the Ukraine Crisis (2013-present). Understanding what the Ukraine Crisis is about is therefore important for scientists and policy-makers alike.

In 2015 Ericson & Zeagler have written a paper that presents a game-theoretical model of the Ukraine Crisis. According to Ericson & Zeagler (2015: 180) the game is played between the 'West' and Russia. The ultimate outcome of the game and the Ukraine Crisis can be described as a stalemate between Russia and the 'West'. Russia will keep destabilizing the Ukraine, while the 'West' will keep imposing the economic sanctions they have for now. This means that neither will back down, at least unless the other will, and neither wants to take the confrontation a step further.

There are three questions that are central to this thesis. These points are; What is the Ukraine Crisis?, How does it fit in two expected games?, and finally how comparable are these two models?.

To research these questions, the intention is to use an historical and political analysis of the Ukraine Crisis, which focuses upon the 'West' and Russia and their strategies within the Crisis. Then the focus shifts to two game-theoretic models, which have also been used in variation in literature under the Theory of Moves. Both models are then used in game theory to see whether and how they are able to explain the strategic interactions of the 'West' and Russia in the Ukraine Crisis.

Finally, an attempt is made to see whether the models are alike and if a game of chicken is not just as able to explain the Ukraine Crisis as the Stalemate Game. It is expected to be so. Because a game of chicken is more parsimonious it may be favoured over the Stalemate Game as an explanation of the Ukraine Crisis. This leads to the following research question: What game-theoretical model best explains the Ukraine Crisis?
What is the Ukraine Crisis?

The argument about what the Ukraine Crisis is, is at first an historical analysis that uncovers two related ideas. On the one hand, the historical development of the region is greatly defined by Russian history. From the Russian Empire, to the Soviet Union, and up to today, the landscape is formed by that history in terms of Russian identity, language, culture, and military strategy. In an even broader narrative the Ukraine is the gravitas of the band of earth and water that ranges from the Baltic to the Black Sea. On the other hand, there is a profound Ukrainian identity, that after the collapse of the USSR leads to the formation of an independent state. Due to problems in adapting to a Western idea of statehood, the young state eventually develops internal problems, which in turn become internationalised in a divide between the West and Russia.

‘The ‘Ukrainian’ crisis’ refers to profound tensions in the Ukrainian nation and state-building processes since Ukraine achieved independence in late 1991, which now threaten the unity of the state itself. These are no longer described in classical ideological terms, but, in the Roman manner through the use of colours. The Orange tendency thinks in terms of a Ukraine that can finally fulfil its destiny as a nation state, officially monolingual, culturally autonomous from other Slavic nations and aligned with ‘Europe’ and the Atlantic security community (…) the ‘Ukraine crisis refers to the way that internal tensions have become internationalised to provoke the worst crisis in Europe since the end of the Cold War.’ (Sakwa 2016: IX-X)

Geography and Demography

Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. Its southern border is on the Black Sea, to the west lie Poland, Romania and Moldova [Transnistria], and Russia lies to the East. In total its territory stretches around 600,000 square miles or 375,000 km2. The country is inhabited by 45 million people (July 2015 estimate) according to CIA World Factbook (2015). Included in
Table 1.1 are two demographic censuses. They represent either the ethnic demography (1989) or the native language (2001). Ethnicity is not available for the 2001 census. Included in Table 1.2 is a cross-section of the native language and ethnicity in 1989 of Russian and Ukrainian.

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<tr>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
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<td>48.240.902</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>32.577.468</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11.355.582</td>
<td>22,07%</td>
<td>14.273.670</td>
<td>29,59%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 1.1: Two core demographic censuses of Ukraine. Source: http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Speaks Ukrainian</th>
<th>Speaks Russian</th>
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<td>Ukrainian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
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<td>177.534</td>
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Table 1.2: Soviet Census 1989: Language and Ethnicity Correlation. Source: http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/

According to Aslund (2015:5) Ethnic Russians compromise 17 percent of the population, while Ethnic Ukrainians are 78 percent of the total population. About 50 percent of the population is fluent in Ukrainian, and can speak some Russian. However, both are East Slavic languages, and so they are very closely related in word and writing. Many therefore speak a mixture of languages. Geographically, Russian dominates the East and South of the Ukraine, while Ukrainian is prevalent in the Centre and West. Figure 1.1 is included to give some idea of where those regions are. Moreover, Figure 1.1 is helpful if some places are referred to, but especially the borders of pro-Russian activists are incorrect at present time.
History of the Crisis

The struggle over Crimea and the areas which lie in and around modern-day Ukraine is not new. Even the Russian annexation of Crimea has been done before. According to Roberts (1997: 312-313) a 1774 Russo-Turkish war, were a Russian Fleet showed up in the Mediterranean and Russian emissaries tried to create insurgency in Ottoman territory, led to a peace treaty. With the treaty the Ottomans gave up their vassal the Crimean Tatars. This was a loss for the Ottomans because it was the first time they gave up control of an Islamic populace and because the Tatars were an important military asset as they were descendants of the Golden Horde. The Russian Empire thus gained control over the area between the river Dnjepr in Ukraine and the Bug near the modern-day Western border of Ukraine, moreover
Russia gained the right of free navigation on the Black Sea and through the sea straits near Constantinople/Istanbul out into the Mediterranean Sea.

Then in 1783 the Russian Empire annexed Crimea. Another war with the Turks moved the border of the Russian empire up to the river Dniester. By now the Russian empire was under the full attention of the Austrians, as their borders came ever closer. In 1783 the United States of America had not gained their status as a sovereign state in their war of independence from the British Empire, as well as the French Revolution of 1789 had not occurred. Both are the forefathers of the de facto modern Western state-forms.

In 1854 the first Crimean war between Russia and an alliance of Great Britain, France, the Ottoman empire, and Sardinia was waged. This war was not confined to the region of Crimea, as battles ensued in the Baltic and Southern Russia, but the most severe was the battle over Crimea. To be exact, the allied forces were to conquer Sevastopol, the Russian naval base, which had given Russia its control over the Black Sea according to Roberts (1997:405-406).

Up until 1856, for nearly 80 years, the area which now is Ukraine was part of the Russian empire. According to Jansen (2014: 7) Ukraine formally exists as a state since 1991. Before Ukraine became an independent state control over the area was in many different hands. After the Russian empire the Habsburg Empire, Austria-Hungary, the Poland-Lithuania Commonwealth and the Soviet Union gained formal power over what is Ukraine today. But Jansen (2014: 8) argues that Russia is the most notable as even today large parts are considered to be Russian, by Russia. Kiev is considered to be the mother of all Russian cities, Odessa the Russian capital of organized crime and comedy, and Sevastopol the root of Russian heroism and international military security.

According to Roberts (1997: 463) after the first Crimean War the Austrian-Hungarian empire had no desire to have the Russian empire take-over the political position of the
Ottoman empire, if and when they would break-down, and vice-versa. The power vacuum would imply heavy armed conflict over the area near the Danube river, as well as access for the Russian empire through the straits into the Mediterranean. The English and French were most afraid of Russia gaining that access.

Into the 20th century the most important historical event in relation to the Ukraine Crisis is the Communist Revolution of 1917. In 1917 under Vladimir Lenin the Russian Empire becomes the Communist USSR. In 1922, after the First World War, the Ukrainian SSR is established. In due course the Second World War explodes onto the world theatre. For what we know as the Ukraine this has devastating effects.

According to Sakwa (2016: 7) the road to Ukrainian statehood has been long and laborious. The formation as a state and fairly quick integration into the USSR in 1922 prolonged a visceral institutionalization of the Ukrainian statehood. Due to the modernization under the Soviet cause fast industrialization and urbanization in certain areas limited that independent statehood. When World War II decimated the country, the Ukrainian SSR was horribly torn apart. Sakwa (2016: 100-101) reports that after the Second World War Crimea had been so decimated as a region, it took far into the 1950s to become populated again. It was in the 1950s that Crimea was transferred to the Ukrainian SSR by Nikita Khrushchsev in 1954. Before assuming the position of general secretary his career had taken place in Ukraine, and the transfer of Crimea was seen as making amendments for his tough policy implementations.

Did Russians at the time make problems out of the Crimean transfer? Formally not, because the administrative transfer was not to an independent state, but rather to a subheading of the supreme Soviet Union according to Sakwa (2016: 101).
In 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed, Ukraine did become an independent state. The most important foreign partner of the Ukraine was Russia. The Yeltsin government, who had assumed power in Russia, longed for one thing: Crimea. According to Sakwa (2016: 101) one of the major issues with the dissolution of the USSR was that the administrative borders it had during its existence now became independent states. Important here is that Russia became the formal state that continued what was left of the USSR its duties, treaties, and freedoms. Because Crimea is an important part of the Soviet Union, it should technically have been returned to the continuer state of which it was originally part says Sakwa (2016: 101). According to Aslund (2015: 67) not until 1997 did Boris Yeltsin have the leverage to acquire a treaty with Ukraine over the division, cost, and basing of the Black Sea Fleet. Russia now leased the naval base in Sevastopol for $98 million a year, until 2017.

While Putin ascents to power in Russia at the dawn of the new millennium, state-building in Ukraine continues. It is at the presidential elections of 2004 that a major shift in the foreign policy vista of the Ukraine starts to take shape. As argued earlier, up until 2004 Russia is the most important foreign partner of the Ukraine. According to Lane (2006: 526-527) Ukraine is one of many former USSR states that has problems in adapting to its independent state-building by formally becoming democratic and capitalist. The result is that the GDP has fallen to 59 percent of the level in 1989. This indicates a downgrade of living standards. In turn social and political discontent are on the rise. The results of the inadequate state-building process are even worse:

‘While the two models of Ukrainian state development, the monist and the pluralist, quarrelled, the bureaucratic-oligarchic plutocracy ran off with the cream (Sakwa 2016: 60)’.
Oligarchy means that only a few people rule. Plutocracy means that the wealthy rule. Hence a few very wealthy people rule in Ukraine. Most of these people earn their money in industries of natural resources and are trading them with Russia and the West. According to Aslund (2015: 62-63) it is especially due to state-building gone wrong, in the form of exorbitant inflation and the following privatization of the natural resources industries, that these people were able to gain such a stronghold in the economy and politics of the Ukraine. It is under these conditions that the presidential election in 2004 is the start of the Orange Revolution.


Yanukovich, the later President in 2010-2014, was elected victor of the presidential election of 2004 by the Electoral Commission. As seen in figure 21, it is in the Eastern part of the
Ukraine where his votes were the highest. In the West the electorate voted more for
Yushenko. According to Lane (2006: 527) this led to public demonstrations in Kiev and other
areas, which is called the ‘Orange Revolution’. The goal was to change the election result
through mass mobilisation. Because the exit polls legitimized the protestors’ claim that it was
actually Yuschenko who had won, the campaign team of Yuschenko pushed for an
overruling. In a broader context, Yuschenko’s victory would promise a major shift of
Ukraine’s policies. Specifically, foreign policy would focus more on the ‘West’ instead of
Russia. By doing so Ukraine would be able to shake of the problems that President Leonid
Kuchma had effectively created in terms of corruption and an unsuccessful liberal economy
since 1994. However, it resulted in creating the shift in international orientation:

‘(…) to define the political ‘other’ as Russia, and the friendly ‘our’ as the west in
general and the European Union in particular (epitomised in the Orange slogan of
‘Back to Europe!’) (Lane 2006: 540).’

Eventually Viktor Yanukovich, who was the contested winner of the rigged election that led
to the Orange Revolution, became president of the Ukraine in July 2010. It is with
Yanukovich that we see the struggle between a Western-oriented or Eastern-oriented foreign
policy really grow. It radically grows into what is now known as the Ukraine Crisis.

According to Sakwa (2016: 37) the Eastern-oriented forces from Russia try to
integrate the Ukraine, among other countries into Eurasian customs union. Most of those lie
in the Baltic-Black Sea conflict region. At the same time integration into the West is
promoted via NATO-enlargement and EU ascension. It is with EU association agreement
were the Euromaidan, the famous February Revolution of 2014 that lead to the regime
change, starts and the Ukraine Crisis is born.
Strategic Interactions and Premises of Russia and the ‘West’

According to Trenin (2014: 6) to Russia Ukraine is not a foreign country. After the change of a Russian-oriented regime to a Western-oriented regime a force emerged that would suppress Russian language, culture, and identity within the Ukraine as well as make Ukraine a certain member of NATO. In the eyes of Russia both are unacceptable. Before the Ukraine had been a weak and even fragile state which caused problems for Russian energy which was headed for Europe. Now the much needed influence to tackle these problems was slipping out of Russian hands. This was the danger of losing a state that was decisively a part of ‘Greater’ Russia, as Russians see it.

The answers to these problems of Russia were two-fold, first they strategically incorporated the peninsula of Crimea within the Russian state. They did so by force. Russian special forces sealed of the peninsula from the mainland of Ukraine on 27 February 2014 by seizing the Supreme Council in Simferopol. Within in the next weeks they so helped pro-Russian elements to seize control of local government, parliament, and law enforcement agencies. These elements were then urged to hold a referendum over the reunification of Crimea with Russia. This resulted in a landslide win for the now pro-Russian institutions and on 18 March 2014 a treaty was signed in Moscow which incorporates Crimea and, paramount to Russia, the city of Sevastopol into the Russian state. By gaining Crimea, Russia won the certainty of fleet basing rights, the supremacy as a fleet over the Turkish in the Black Sea, and the ability to militarily develop the extent to which Crimea could control the region according to Allison (2014: 1278).

Second, Russia wanted to achieve a situation whereby the West and Kiev could not formally dominate the rest of the Ukraine. This implies that the formal integration of Ukraine into NATO becomes impossible. Before the official treaty on Crimea, on 1 March 2016, Vladimir Putin had acquired from the high house of parliament the legitimate power to use
Russian military force inside the Ukraine. In contrast to the special forces that already were in Crimea these forces could openly be Russian armed forces in terms of wearing their insignia. The armed forces of Russia started to do massive training operations on the Ukraine’s Eastern borders, but the forces did not invade officially. Instead of using the newly acquired power by Putin the threat of being able to do so put the Ukrainian government, as well as Brussels and Washington, on to their back foot by deterring them from substantial intervention. At least official military meddling were too high risks for both Russia and the West.

While the official military powers were engaging in this struggle inside the East of the Ukraine pro-Russian protesters were mobilizing to form a break-away alliance which, alike to Crimea, could eventually join the Russian state. This, according to Trenin (2014: 7) actually failed to fully materialize, and only within Luhansk and Donetsk, which lie closest to the border with Russia, a coherent pro-Russian faction emerged. This was not what Russia was hoping for as their maximum strategic interest. However, the destabilization of the region still continues today.

At the same time the West needed a political reaction to the major problems that were now surfacing in the Ukraine. Both the NATO-membership of the Ukraine and the EU-association agreement with Ukraine were threatened by the annexation of Crimea and the political insurgency in the East of the Ukraine. The potential gains for the West are thus slowly diminished, but not gone altogether. Apart from military intervention the West saw another political solution to the problems they now faced. It was however a break-away from the older trend of Russian-Western bonding and a return to the Cold War adversaries’ interaction between Russia and the West according to Trenin (2014: 8).

The first measure the West took, was throwing Russia out of the G8 group. The G7 now consists out of the USA, Canada, Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, and the EU. The EU relations with Russia were immediately limited, and NATO cooperation
was frozen. Furthermore, the ascension of Russia to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was put on hold. And finally, Russian delegates in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Western delegates at the security and economic summits in Moscow and St. Petersburg left their respective stations. In short, most institutional and diplomatic relations were cut short.

The second measure the West took, now that it institutionally was more capable to do so without the Russians contradicting them, was imposing heavy economic sanctions on Russia. The goal, according to Trenin (2014: 8) is that this will eventually hurt Russia so much that it would need to back down out of the Ukraine. The economic sanctions resulted in the degradation of stock value of the Russian stock market, capital on Russian accounts overnight being transferred to safer banks, and a further plunge of the value of the Russian ruble, its currency. This in turn build up a deterrence against investing in Russia. According to Connolly (2014: 224-226) the access to the Western economy for Russia has been closed. However, the main artery of Western-Russian cooperation is its energy-trade. A lot of EU economies are living of the energy Russia supplies to them.

This, which is a far slower process in economic sense than the other sanctions, urges these economies to try and diversify their energy supply away from Russia. In figure 2.2 we can closely inspect the actual relationship in terms of energy supply for both Russia and the West in regard to the Ukraine Crisis. Most pipelines, both oil and gas, flow through the Ukraine. Only two pipelines north of the Ukraine avoid Ukrainian territory. Namely, the Northern Druzhba and the Xamal-Europe which are connected to Northern Germany, going through Poland. The region below this line are mostly dependent of the pipelines that go through the Ukraine.
In 2007/2008 the energy relationship between the West, Ukraine, and Russia came under fire. According to Percebois (2008: 33) for the 27 member states of the EU [27 in 2008 – 28 states today] 24 percent of their energy supply is from natural gas. According to Aslund (2014: 75-77) Putin started to push for higher gas prices for Ukraine when he took control of Gazprom in 2001, also because European gas prices started to rise. The prior price to 2005 was $42 per
1,000 cubic metres (mcm) for Ukraine, afterwards Putin pushed for prices as high as $230 per mcm. According to Percebois (2008: 47) the European market price for natural gas from Russia was around $250 per mcm, and both Ukraine and Belarus were pushed towards paying that price.

What made the higher prices so problematic for the Ukraine in the end? Russia tried to take control of the pipelines and related assets that reside inside Ukraine. According to Aslund (2014: 76) the amicable price for ex-USSR countries created a system of enrichment for the Ukrainian and Russian oligarchs. Ukrainian gas traders did not pay for the gas they bought, and then put that debt to the Ukrainian state by asking for state guarantees. The cheaply attained gas was sold for a much higher but market-conform price to others. That the traders acquired high debt with Russia was not a problem for Russia, as Russia expected to acquire control over gas pipelines and other assets of the Ukraine in return.

The favourable position of the energy trade contributed in making Ukraine a bureaucratic-oligarchic plutocracy according to Sakwa (2016: 60). This essentially means that a small group of extremely wealthy people have a vast amount of power. To counter that favourable situation which evolved in an oligarchic plutocracy, by enriching those happy few and bleeding control over pipelines and other assets to Russia, was one of the core objects of the Orange Revolution under Viktor Yushenko, according to Aslund (2014: 76).

Both Russia and the EU tried to differentiate from the problems arising in the Ukraine at the time, and other countries in the Baltic-Black Sea region, the so-called transit countries. According to Percebois (2008: 48) Russian and EU companies have been building several pipelines to avoid the problems in these areas. In the North, right under the Baltic Sea, the ‘Nordstream’ pipeline avoids the Baltic states and Poland as well as Belarus to reach Germany. South, and under the Black Sea, ENI (Italy) and Gazprom have finished the ‘Bluestream’, which transfers gas to Turkey, and is now connected to the Mediterranean Sea.
Finally, a gas pipeline from as far as Azerbaijan is planned, ‘Nabucco’, and it leads through Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary to Austria. The main political goal is to avoid all transit countries, like Ukraine. However, since the Ukraine Crisis, the EU is even more prone to differentiate from importing Russian gas at all.

Russia is not the only country that can provide natural gas to the EU, and demand is declining as well. In table 2.1 we see that 22.77% of natural gas consumption in the EU-28 in 2005 is not consumed anymore in 2014. At the same time the market share of EU-28 import of natural gas from Russia has declined from 35% to around 30%. The price, for a medium household in the EU, has risen greatly. According to Trenin (2014: 8) the ruble has plunged due to severe inflation. However, because gas is paid in dollars, and it is coupled to the oil price, the yield of gas-export for Russia is not affected by this difference in the value of currency according to Percebois (2008: 34).

The EU-28 did however start to invest in differentiating from Russian gas, by importing it from Norway, the Netherlands and others. Eurostat (2016) reports that in the period 2005-2014, Norway, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom are the gas producers of the EU. All three border on the gas reserves in the North Sea. However, there is a steady overall decline of 190,652 tonnes produced in 2005 towards 117,985 tonnes in 2014. The reason therefore, according to Aslund (2015: 76), is that the EU-28 has been building a gas reserve. By storing gas, they are differentiating from Russian gas dependency and so increasing their energy security.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>445.272</td>
<td>136.250</td>
<td>389.591</td>
<td>34.97%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>440.359</td>
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<td>33.42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>435.119</td>
<td>128.692</td>
<td>396.820</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>443.957</td>
<td>133.536</td>
<td>420.516</td>
<td>31.75%</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>119.647</td>
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<td>27.25%</td>
<td>14.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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<td>121.548</td>
<td>426.211</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>414.804</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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</table>

Table 2.1: Energy Relationship. Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat

In figure 2.3 information is included over where most natural resources are located, and of which type they are. Immediately we see that the Eastern Ukraine is one of the main sources for coal, and the concentration is very high in relation to the rest of the Ukraine. If Russia would be able to control this area, not much will be left for the Ukrainian state. As argued Russia has severe interest in the natural resources of the Ukraine, because the Ukrainian state is in debt to Russia for gas trade and trade in other resources.
Russia and the West show to be changing their course, which is sometimes mutually beneficial, and creating less interdependence. Paramount to the structure of the Ukraine Crisis is military security. As Mearsheimer (2014: 77) duly notes, the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s fault. It is the West’s strategic NATO-enlargement that provoked Russia in the annexation of Crimea and inciting and even aiding rebels in the East of Ukraine.

The idea of NATO-enlargement lies in a broader international context. After the collapse of the USSR NATO had two rounds of enlargement; Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic joined in 1999, in 2004 Bulgaria, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, and the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia became members. Already in 2008 the intention of Georgia and Ukraine to join NATO was agreed according to Mearsheimer (2014:78). Georgia paid for this insubordination, in Russia’s eyes, with the South-Ossetian intervention in the same year. According to Allison (2014: 1269-1270) Georgian ascension to NATO was,
as a paramount no-go for Russia, the first of many that might come. Russia admitted in 2011 that if they had not stopped NATO-membership of Georgia by intervening, mostly all other countries would have followed.

The Ukraine as a NATO-member would mean something more than Georgia becoming a member in terms of military capability. Included in Table 2.2 are statistics that support this. Ukraine is militarily about 8 times as strong as Georgia. Russia is quite comparable to either the EU, or the USA, but not as much in comparison to NATO.

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<td>143.819.569</td>
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<td>251.000</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
<td>178.000</td>
<td>1,2%</td>
<td>80.970.732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>341.967</td>
<td>2,3%</td>
<td>312.350</td>
<td>2,2%</td>
<td>66.217.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>174.020</td>
<td>2,4%</td>
<td>154.700</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>64.559.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>2.945.000</td>
<td>1,9%</td>
<td>2.993.000</td>
<td>1,9%</td>
<td>1.364.270.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>182.940</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
<td>158.000</td>
<td>1,3%</td>
<td>9.470.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>612.800</td>
<td>2,5%</td>
<td>612.800</td>
<td>2,2%</td>
<td>75.932.348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: Military Strength in comparison. Sources: http://data.worldbank.org and https://issuu.com/europeandefenceagency/docs/eda_defence_data_2013_web/1?e=4763412/12106343
Note: NATO is calculated as the sum of USA, EU, and Turkey.

According to Walker (2014: 154) NATO-enlargement is the principle cause for a dangerous geopolitical struggle between Russia and the West, Ukraine up front. The whole idea of NATO as such is seen by Russia as the penultimate threat to their security. EU expansion is just another route to Western dominance, be it via access to the economy and domestic politics in the eyes of Russia.
Figure 2.4 is included to represent the current state of that geopolitical struggle. In it current NATO-members and other types are represented. It is clear that the Baltic-Black Sea Region is a complete ‘disputed’ area in terms of military security. Both Russia and the West are geopolitical major powers. They have a vast array of nuclear weaponry which they are able to use against each other if necessary.

The Ukraine would be, in terms of military strength, and in terms of regional strategic magnitude, the central factor. Moreover, politically the Russian base in Transnistria, between Moldova and Ukraine, would be encircled by NATO-members and cut off from Russia. Also, Belarus would be encircled by NATO-members. Also, the naval base and control of the Black Sea would be lost. Finally, NATO would effectively stand on the longest border with Russia, and also closer to Moscow than the West had ever been. It is no wonder that if Georgia was out of the question for Russia, Ukraine would be even more so. Therefore, I conclude that there is no way Russia would ever have let go of the Ukraine. Russia would not have backed down for NATO, the EU, not for anyone.
Figure 2.4: NATO-Russia military strategic relationship. Sources: http://www.nato.int/nato-on-duty/index.html and http://uk.businessinsider.com/a-map-of-the-russia-nato-confrontation-2014-9?r=US&IR=T
The EU Association Agreement

If NATO-enlargement is the powder in the keg, then the EU association agreement was the fuse that lit the Ukraine Crisis.

‘The immediate trigger for the Ukraine crisis was not, however, NATO enlargement. Rather, it was an EU plan to offer association agreements, coupled with so-called Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements, to Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, and Ukraine at its Vilnius Summit in late November 2013 (walker 2014: 150).’

It was already argued that Yanukovich’ aim was not to sign the EU association agreement, and how that choice led to the Euromaidan in 2014. The effect of the EU association agreement, which is in place these days, in the geopolitical sphere is quite obvious. The agreement is aimed at the development of the Ukrainian state and at implementation of trade rights.

The Atlantic security partnership began in ideological terms to merge with the EU's Wider Europe, while Russia initially had taken a relatively benign stance on EU enlargement, the increasing coincidence of Atlanticist and Wider European identities became a matter of concern” (Sakwa 2016: 48).

According to Sakwa (2016: 26-29) Ukraine is part of the Baltic-Black Sea conflict system. This conflict system is a constant dispute over the territories in this geographical sphere between European countries and Russia. In its different variations to Russia there are two Europes. One is from 1989, and all countries in Eastern Europe that were part of the first wave of re-Europanization can be included in it. The second Europe is the Europe of 1991 after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, Ukraine belongs to this wave. Sakwa calls this the Wider Europe.
"The Atlantic security partnership began in ideological terms to merge with the EU's Wider Europe, while Russia initially had taken a relatively benign stance on EU enlargement, the increasing coincidence of Atlanticist and Wider European identities became a matter of concern" (Sakwa 2016: 48).

Game of Chicken

According to Slobodchikoff (24-04-2014) and Hill & Pifer (15-06-2015) the Ukraine Crisis can be explained with the aid of a game of chicken. A game of chicken is a model, like Prisoner’s Dilemma or Stag Hunt, that is helpful in explaining political phenomena.

The game of chicken should first be developed. According to Pellikaan (2015: 47) the game of chicken in normal form is;

```
Player 1 | Defect | Cooperate
---------|--------|-----------
Defect   | 1,1    | 4,2       
Cooperate| 2,4    | 3,3       
```

*Figure 3.1: The game of chicken. (Note: utility is ranked as 4>3>2>1, which is an ordinal ranking.)*

The chicken game is a positive-sum game, this means that the pay-offs of the game are different in regard to what choice the players make. In other words, they can get out of their choice something beneficial or negative. According to Pellikaan (2015: 46-47) the game of chicken its main focus is that both players have the same incentive to deviate from the outcome of mutual cooperation. In figure 3.1 mutual cooperation is represented in Cooperate-
Cooperate (3,3). So the incentive to defect is there because it yields a higher utility than mutual cooperation. At the same time this may lead to mutual defection in Defect-Defect (1,1). Therefore, the chicken game has two equilibria [Either variant of Defect-Cooperate]. This means that there are two best options at the same time for a player. Defining a player’s rational choice in game of chicken is therefore difficult.

In extensive form the game of chicken may posit a solution to the problem of the two equilibria and so produce a strategy for a player. In extensive form players make a choice one after the other. This is called sequential. According to Pellikaan (2015: 47) the player who makes the first move will determine which of the two equilibria will be reached, which is of course the one in favour of the first player. In figure 3.2 we can see why.

![Figure 3.2: Chicken game in extensive form.](image)

The best method to discover the strategy with the highest payoff is via backwards induction according to Pellikaan (2015: 48). Note that in this case the game is a mirror-image for either player, this is to say that it is symmetric. Therefore, it does not matter who plays first and thus player 1 can be swapped for player 2 in figure II according to who starts. For player 2 the highest pay-off when the player 1 chooses to cooperate is to defect (4). But when player 1
would choose to defect, player 2 his highest pay-off would be to cooperate (2). So for player 1 it would always be best to defect when it can choose to act before player 2.

The game of chicken is famously used in the context of the Cuban Missile Crisis to indicate deterrence between two nuclear powers. The Cuban Missile Crisis is thus a good real-world example of the problems states face in defining their rational choice. The Cuban Missile Crisis is a 13-day period of extreme tension between the United States and the USSR (16-28 October 1962). The USSR reacted upon both the attempted invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, as well as the strategic positioning of nuclear ballistic missiles in Turkey and Italy which were logically aimed at the USSR. So the Soviet Union was discovered to be building and arming missile launch sites in Cuba. The USA reacted in discovery of this by blocking missile transport to Cuba, and demanded that the USSR destroyed the missile launch sites. Nuclear war did not come so close as this during the Cold War.

The Ukraine Crisis

It is assumed that Russia and the West are rational actors. Therefore, they know what they want the most and what the other wants. Ideally, that means that:

‘In general terms, we idealize the bargaining problem by assuming that the two individuals are highly rational, that each can accurately compare his desires for various things, that they are equal in bargaining skill, and that each has full knowledge of the tastes and preferences of the other (Nash 1952: 155)’

Basically, Russia has two lines of reasoning to not let go of the Ukraine. If the Ukraine truly becomes Western, in the sense that it joins NATO or becomes part of the same economic sphere, this is a problem for Russia. Specifically, the naval base in Crimea has the highest preference. Then there is Eastern Ukraine, which is also part of the national identity of Russia
in terms of language, ethnicity, and history. Moreover, Eastern Ukraine contains a lot of natural resources and large chunks of pipelines, it comprises nearly half of the land mass of Ukraine, and finally it is the buffer between the Russian border in the East and the base in Transnistria in the West. In a broader perspective, if the West is able to haul in the Ukraine into NATO and the EU, Russia would lose all that, endangering its own security in the Baltic-Black Sea conflict, surely giving the win to the West. Therefore, when Yanoukovich stepped down and a new pro-Western government would be put in place, they knew they had to defect to win:

‘(...) regime change. It was only then that Moscow reacted, and implemented what from its perspective was a counter-coup, the remarkably smooth and peaceful takeover of Crimea. (...) Putin was willing to damage his international reputation and risk isolating Russia and alienating Ukraine to gain what for him was a ‘crucial’ piece, Crimea, and with it the Sevastopol naval base (Sakwa 2016: 100).’

In figure 3.3 we can inspect the defection. Assume that the West and Russia are willing to cooperate, leaving Ukraine as a buffer-zone between them. At the moment the regime is changed, Ukraine would start to fall to the West. The obvious assumption Russia makes is that the West, which it had already had shown to be willing to do, would Defect by signing the EU association agreement, and in time make Ukraine a member of NATO. The only thing Russia could do now, to secure Crimea and Sevastopol, is Defect before the West could make its choice. This all boils down to momentum for Russia, because Ukraine and the West were occupied with the regime change, they could not pursue their action quickly. Russia gambled that the ‘West’ would not be able to now also Defect, because that would mean that the West also had to do some kind of military intervention. This would let the game end in Defect-Defect (1,1); which means war. This also means that because of the internal struggle in the
Ukraine the game should be treated as a sequential game in which Russia had the first choice. As argued before then the Wests’ best option is to cooperate in a game of chicken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Russia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>(Nuclear) War 1,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate</td>
<td>Annex Crimea 2,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3.3: The Annexation of Crimea*

The game of chicken is as such well suited to explain the Annexation of Crimea. Roughly at the same time Russia starts moving along the border and rebellious groups pop-up in the rest the East of the Ukraine. Eastern Ukraine is therefore treated as the second game of chicken. In figure 3.4 it is included. Because the game of chicken for Crimea was won by Russia, a new game starts for control over Eastern Ukraine. The actions are a little different because there are different outcomes we can connect to both choices. On the one hand, if Eastern Ukraine would become part of Russia like the success in Crimea, Ukraine would have been broken in two. On the other hand, this would reasonably mean that the West would try in some way to intervene militarily.

What happened was that, like Crimea, rebellious groups rose up in the East, but only in Luhansk and Donetsk did they succeed in establishing some form of power. Other areas have shown similar phenomena to occur in Eastern Ukraine, but they have not been able to
consolidate. Therefore, the actions of the West and Russia are not sequential in this case and they have opted for the most reasonable strategy they both have as rational actors.

Both could assume that the West would be more likely to defect than cooperate, if Russia would defect (1,1). Because Russia had defected before, and it needed good reason to do so again, it is assumed that Russia only would do so if success was guaranteed (2,4). Because the Eastern Ukrainian uprising failed to materialize the best option for both was to cooperate. This game therefore ends in the Cooperate-Cooperate (3,3). Again the game of chicken can explain the choices for the West and Russia in the Ukraine Crisis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>Cooperate</th>
<th>Defect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defect</td>
<td>(Nuclear) War</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate</td>
<td>Annex Eastern Ukraine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ukraine Stable and Able</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stalemate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3.4: Eastern Ukraine*

**Theory of Moves Variation of Cuban Missile Crisis**

Ericson & Zeagler (2015) have built an alternative model instead of the chicken game to explain the Ukraine Crisis. However, their basic premise was that in their vision of theory and reality the most applicable was the Theory of Moves (ToM) by Brams (1994). The ToM is closely related to the theory of games, but also abides to a different set of rules than game
theory. To be able to understand the differences the following paragraphs focus upon Brams' use of the chicken game.

According to Brams (2001) there is an alternative pay-off matrix for the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis. It is given in figure III to explain how the Theory of Moves is applied and differs from game theory.

According to Brams (2001) the first move by the USSR would be to maintain the missiles on Cuba even for the blockade to be in place. This means they would go from a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Soviet Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blockade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Withdraw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Strike</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Dishonourable' US action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure III. ToM Brams (1994, 2001) chicken variant of Cuban Missile Crisis

In the ToM figure III the biggest difference we can immediately spot are the arrows that move from one outcome to the other. According to Brams (1994: 170-173, 2001) the distinct and starting change when using the ToM is that players start in an initial outcome. In figure III this would be Compromise (3,3). In game theory the assumption is not that players are in a position on the grid from which they start to form their choice [make a move]. It does assume that a player chooses a strategy initially without assuming an assymetric relationship to their opponent. According to Pellikaan (2015: 165) this is what incorporates power in the ToM.

According to Brams (2001) the first move by the USSR would be to maintain the missiles on Cuba even for the blockade to be in place. This means they would go from a
utility of 3,3 to 1,4. After the first move the US decides to move from 1,4 towards 4,1 by enabling an airstrike. As this completely turns around the initial utility gains for the USSR they decide to move to withdrawal which ends in a 2,2. Logically both the USSR and US can now only move to 3,3 creating a loop. Simply put, it is never in the best interest of the USSR to maintain because this will probably lead the US to do an airstrike. Does power (of movement) need to be incorporated like the ToM does in our study of the Ukraine Crisis? The chicken game itself is able to provide an answer. Because nuclear power is the strongest power and that what drives the game of chicken, power is ultimately equal in the worst outcome possible; nuclear war. Incorporating it via a set of rules is therefore not essential for a game of chicken.

"The advantage of the theory of moves is that it explains how an actor in a negotiation can use his power to obtain a better result by ignoring the directives of the classic theory of games. The disadvantage is that it disrupts the stability of equilibria theorems without replacing them with convincing alternatives, which means it fails to be a general theory (Pellikaan 2015: 170)."

The stability of equilibria theorems is a problematic point and especially for the game of chicken. Because the whole mechanism of a game of chicken centres around the existence of two (symmetric) equilibria. This may be the reason Brams (2001) uses a variant of the Chicken Game to explain the Cuban Missile Crisis.
Ericson and Zeagler (2015) studied the Ukraine Crisis as a strategic interaction between the ‘West’ and Russia via the following game setup, and by using the Theory of Moves, which is different from the work and outcomes of the theory of games.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ukraine Crisis</th>
<th>Russia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BU</td>
<td>9, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN</td>
<td>2, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>1, 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The abbreviations of the actions mean; BU – business as usual, SN - economic sanctions, MA – military aid, LG – Let Go of Ukraine, DS – Destabilize the Eastern Region, and IN – Invade the Ukraine. These are all six more or less logical policy options for the players in the reality of the Ukraine Crisis. There is however one problem with the first of all actions. Business as Usual implies idleness. But there must have been internal and external reasons to act towards the Ukraine from the ‘West’. What this means to say is that trying to include the Ukraine in NATO, and signing a trade agreement can fall under it. Mearsheimer (2015) actually implies that this was the case. According to Mearsheimer (2014: 77) the Ukraine Crisis is the fault of the West’s slow hauling of the Ukraine into its sphere of influence via NATO, and to some extent the EU. If the Ukraine falls into the sphere of influence of the West, Russia completely loses its gains from the Ukraine.

Figure 3.5: 2nd Scenario. Source: Ericson & Zeagler (2015: 164).
Minimum and maximum strategies

The West’s minimum preference ordering is BU>SN>MA, which is the exact same ordering for its maximum. Russia has a preference ordering of IN>DS>LG for its minimum while its maximum preference ordering is DS>IN>LG. These preference orderings tell us that the only difference between the minimum and maximum strategies would be that there is reason for Russia to either IN or DS. However, the difference has only a value of one in both the minimum and maximum.

The rational individual could also choose to avoid the worst possible outcome. In this case the worst possible outcome for both players would be to avoid MA-LG. 1,1 is the worst outcome for both players, only followed by 2,2 in SN-LG. What does this tell us about the Ukraine Crisis? It tells us at the very least that both players have an outcome they would deem worse, more so than anything else.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S2: Ukraine Crisis</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>Row Min</th>
<th>Row Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LG</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td>IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>9, 3</td>
<td>5, 9</td>
<td>3, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN</td>
<td></td>
<td>2, 2</td>
<td>8, 7</td>
<td>6, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td></td>
<td>1, 1</td>
<td>4, 4</td>
<td>7, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Minimum</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.6: Maximin Strategy. Source: Ericson & Zeagler (2015: 164). Minima and Maxima by author.

The utility-distance of the West for each of their three possible actions, is 6. For BU; 9 minus 3, for SN; 8 minus 2, and for MA; 7 minus 1. The same utility-distance for all three actions is an indication that no matter what the ‘West’ does, they are as much depended for their outcome on Russia’s course of action in each of their own three actions.
Maximin & Minimax

The simple answers a minimum or maximum gives us in the form of preference ordering, a slight indicator is very much the simplest form of strategy. For example, a maximum indicates what one wants the most, and a minimum what one does not want at all. There is not much strategy involved, and a lot of games do not end in the best solutions if everyone goes for the best they can get for themselves. A little trickier, and what often leads to better results, are the maximin and minimax strategies.

The formal and mathematical definition of maximin is;

$$v_i = \max_{a_i} \min_{a_{-i}} v_i(a_i, a_{-i})$$

Informally, a maximin strategy is nothing else than a strategy where a player tries to maximize its minimal pay-off. So of all the actions it can take, it will take the action that will render it with the highest pay-off of all the minima of every set of its actions, independent of the actions and strategies the other player makes.

The formal and mathematical definition of minimax is;

$$\bar{v}_i = \min_{a_{-i}} \max_{a_i} v_i(a_i, a_{-i})$$

The informal definition of the minimax strategy follows the same way of thinking. However, it tries to gain a minimize the maximum of the other player.

Finally:

$$v_i \leq \bar{v}_i$$

The maximin strategy is never higher in its result than the outcome of the minimax strategy.
In our case, scenario II, these strategies are explored in Figure III. The West, again see the equal utility-distance of 6 between every row minimum and row maximum, will BU for their maximin and minimax strategy, they do not have to follow any other rationale. The outcome for the strategy of Russia is IN for maximin and DS for minimax.

BU-Ds is the Saddle Point of this scenario. According to Pellikaan (2015: 34) the saddle point is there were the column maximum and row minimum are intersecting. Also the point has the row minimums maximum.

According to Ericson and Zeagler (2015: 180) there are three equilibria, or ultimate outcomes, in the analysis of the strategic interaction between the West (A) and Russia (B) in 8 different scenarios. These equilibria are Economic Sanctions (A)-Destabilize (B) (SN-DS), Business as Usual (A)-Destabilize (B) (BU-DS), and Economic Sanctions (A)-Invade (B) (SN-IN). The most important out of all eight scenarios is the SN-DS equilibrium, and to Ericson & Zeagler (2015) it best represents the outcome of their model. This means that the Ukraine Crisis, according to their research ends in the stalemate of SN-DS.

The stalemate of SN-DS has some essential properties. Both are ‘active’ policies that have effects. Especially SN, Economic Sanctions, has effects on Russia. The sanctions are
aimed at bleeding Russia out of the Ukraine Crisis within time. Does Russia at some point become unable to continue its current policy in the stalemate?

The concept of ‘holding power’ can be defined as:

‘The ability of one player to in a sequential game to absorb the costs of staying [longer] at a position (which may perhaps be Pareto-inferior) [longer] than his opponent’ (Kilgour & Zagare 1987: 92).

The concept of holding power is very closely associated with the move of SN; Economic Sanctions. Economic Sanctions are mend to bleed Russia out of the Ukraine Crisis.

*Model Comparison*

Sometimes one model is better at explaining the same phenomenon than the other. Central to this debate is that one model formally wins from the other. However, each model is different in the way it is made. What is meant by them being different is that game-theory produces models that can help us understand reality. The Theory of Moves starts by observing reality and building models from there, especially in the case of Ericson & Zeagler (2015). So a game of chicken is always the same model and we test it to see in how far reality fits in this theory. The similarities and differences then teach us something about reality. The Stalemate game however, is created inductively. This is so because reality is used to form models. This means that game-theory, which has deductive properties, and the ToM, which has inductive properties, both help us to understand reality, be it in a different way.

In the case of the Ukraine Crisis however, this leads to a problem. The strategies Ericson & Zeagler (2015) propose are strategies that are consecutively making use of more power. This means that they are cumulative to the latter strategy. Letting Go is equal to doing nothing, while Destabilization involves at least some action, and finally Invading is making
use of all the hard power one has. Just like the game of chicken, the strategies really raise the stakes against each other.

That is why it can be argued that choosing one strategy in the game, would logically lead to the same reaction of the other player who would want to be doing at least the same to you. The game of chicken has a little bit of the same machination if we assume that it is better to not cooperate, because if the other player gets the chance he will win by choosing to defect.

Finally, other proof that the Stalemate game is in fact like a game of chicken is the following. Assuming that the Ukraine Crisis has been correctly described by using two games of chicken to explain two different outcomes of the same phenomenon by the same players in different instances, we can place the same actions in their respective game of chicken of which the outcomes are argued. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 are a strong indication that the Stalemate game is in fact some form of a game of chicken. It may be a combination of the two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West</th>
<th>Russia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Aid</td>
<td>(Nuclear) War 1,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business as Usual</td>
<td>Annex Crimea 2,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.1: Annexation of Crimea with strategy E&Z.*
Conclusion

The history of the region of Ukraine has shown that both the Russian interests in terms of what is coined Russian, as well as of military concern are very real. Also the state-building process which has gone awry in the Ukraine is part of the problem at hand. It made a few people so powerful and rich that Western-oriented forces resorted to uprising the Euromaidan.

The Ukraine Crisis is a struggle over the Ukraine between Russia, Russian people who live inside the Ukraine, the West, and Ukrainians who have tried to build up a state in a country that is only independent since 1991. The struggle over the Ukraine however, is not confined to the Ukraine. It is the nucleus of a conflict-zone that stretches from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Since gaining independency the state has been build up in a grave manner. It has become a oligarchic plutocracy that has always worked in the shadows of Russia. At another, but much more violent, uprising against another setback for the Western-oriented forces, Russia took what it perceived to be rightfully theirs. Due to such momentum they have succeeded in getting what they want. The annexation of Crimea was the only thing
Russia could have been expected to do for sure. Meanwhile Eastern Ukraine turned into a conflict zone. This continues till this day.

The West has imposed severe sanctions on Russia, which is now economically crippled. All in the hope Russia will loosen their grip on the Ukraine and other areas of conflicting interest. Not since the Cold War have the West and East been so far apart while geographically so close together. NATO-enlargement will probably continue in the near future, as did the eventual signing of the EU Association agreement go through after all. For the Ukraine the costs are high. There is an uprising in the East, they have lost the prodigal area of interest to Russia, and managing the country has not become easier.

To be able to explain the choices the West and Russia have made in the Ukraine Crisis two models were presented. After careful consideration it became clear that both models are able to clarify the Ukraine Crisis. Because of the way they are made, deductive versus inductive, it is not easy to tell which one is better. However, strong indications were found that with the use of the more parsimonious game of chicken one is able to explain to Ukraine Crisis. To do so the model was used twice for two sets of decisions. The Stalemate model was compared to game of chicken. This resulted in the idea that the model is actually a combination of the earlier found double sets of decisions. So because of parsimony and clarity about a complex phenomenon a game of chicken is enough to explain the Ukraine Crisis. Well, two are enough.
Bibliography


