

Try to apply Kenneth  
Waltz's three images  
to the origins of the  
Cold War and analy...

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Political Science Kenneth Waltz contributions to the origins of war are engraved in 3 theories that he refers to as “ images” in his famous book Man, the State, and War. The first image focuses on the human nature as the cause of war. In the analysis of the first image, Waltz asserts that the nature of certain political leaders or statesmen influence the start of war (Suganami 380). This was characteristic of classical realism. The human nature encompassed the desire to seek power as a prime goal. This power drive, consequently led to frictions between countries. It was characteristic of individuals like Napoleon Bonaparte to proceed with this power drive during their eras. In the second image, Waltz posits that wars are mainly caused by the domestic ambitions of the states (Waltz 45). He employed the Lenin theory of imperialism to explain that capitalists are driven by their ambitions to create new frontiers in other places to increase their domestic economic power. Separates states structures influence war. This is why Waltz argued that multipolar systems had a higher likelihood of war conflicts that bipolar systems. The third image, one that he put great emphasis, is a fine tuning of the structural realism that he had devised (Waltz 56). The anarchic structure of the international system is a huge influence of the international relations. The structure of the international power is dependent on frequency and size of power fluctuations, offense-defense balance, size of first-move advantages and the amount of resources.

Arguably, the cold war was about the balance of power. Kenneth Waltz third image shows more concern to the dynamics of the anarchic nature of the international system (Suganami 384). The standoff between the United

States of American and the Soviet Union during the cold war depicts a scenario where the two major powers were exhibiting interests in third parties. On this note, Waltz argues that bipolarity stands to lessen a conflict such as that of the cold war because the countries would go back to relying on their resources instead of competing for those of the third parties to try and bring a balance of power. This third image shows an in-depth focus on the bigger perspective of the cause of war by showcasing the underlying causes rather than only highlighting the superficial causes such as the human nature in the first image and the domestic influence of the second image. This implies that the third image is more refined to show how the players of the cold war envisioned the manner to influence the balance of power from their influence of the third parties and resources.

The cold war was less of a human nature event. This implies that the first image does not play part in the onset and development of the cold war. However, the second image has a slight bearing. It is arguable that the domestic ambitions cause the administration of a state to pursue stronger power and dominance. This translates to full blown ambitions in practices as seen in the cold war standoff. The major powers show interest in third parties in a bid to amass more power (Joseph and Wight 17). Kenneth Waltz was correct to put forward the three analysis as each played a part in the history of wars at a unique point. However, the third image of refined structural realism is more on point in relation to the cold war. The serious competition for power and security in the cold war is a typical case of a state trying to prioritize security for survival and dominance. According to Waltz,

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neorealism is a significant player in the behavior of modern powerful where they strive to balance each other.

#### Works Cited

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