

CDSn4001: Conflict Analysis

Hypotheses on military
factors as a cause of war

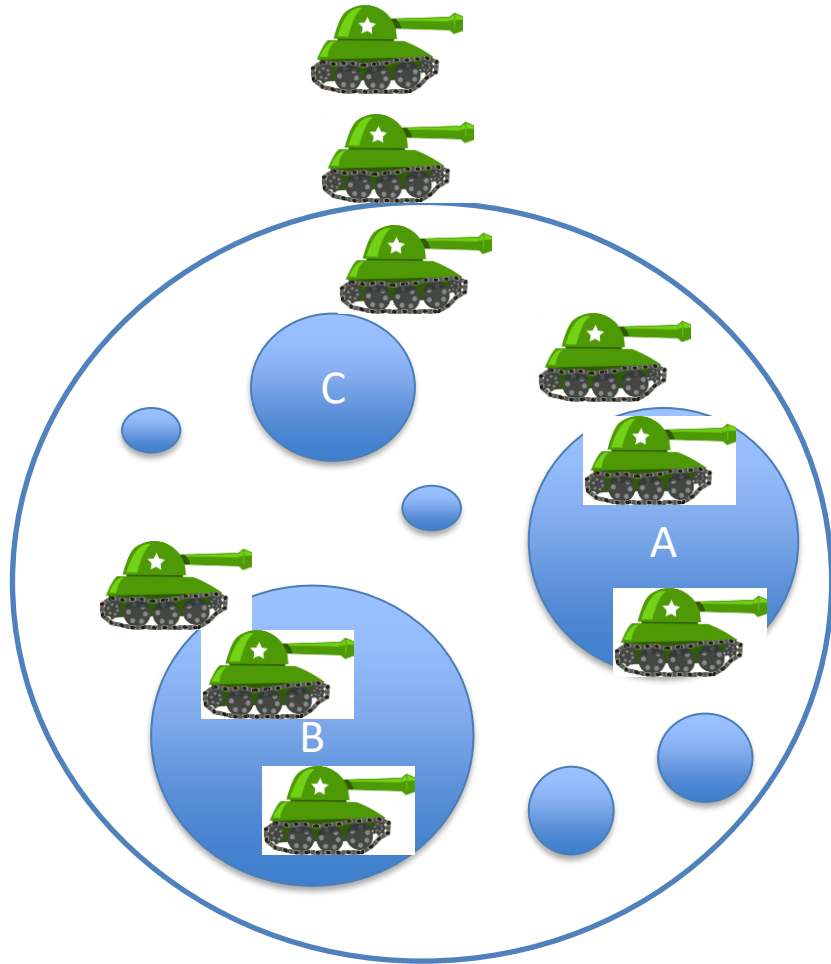
October 18, 2022

Miriam Matejova, PhD

Agenda

- What military factors encourage or discourage conflict among states?
- What is the significance of offense/defense as a cause of war?
- What is the significance of military culture as a cause of war?

Anarchy and the security dilemma



- When states look at the system of anarchy, they feel insecure
 - State A builds up military power
 - State B: Why did state A do that? Are they going to attack us?
 - State A: Why did State B do that? Are they going to attack?
- Arms race
- Trying to ensure their own security, these states have created more insecurity.

Offense/defense and the security dilemma

	OFFENSE HAS THE ADVANTAGE	DEFENSE HAS THE ADVANTAGE
OFFENSIVE POSTURE NOT DISTINGUISHABLE FROM DEFENSIVE ONE	<p>1</p> <p>Doubly dangerous</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Security dilemma, but security requirements may be compatible.</p>
OFFENSIVE POSTURE DISTINGUISHABLE FROM DEFENSIVE ONE	<p>3</p> <p>No security dilemma, but aggression possible. Status-quo states can follow different policy than aggressors. Warning given.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Doubly stable</p>

Discussion questions

- What is the role of geography and technology in a world of defense? A world of offense?
- Can the security dilemma ever be “removed” in an (anarchic) international system?
- Why are offensive capabilities often exaggerated?
- What would an international system without anarchy look like? What is the alternative?

Preventive vs pre-emptive war

- **Pre-emptive war**

- First move by opponent is imminent
- Evidence of an attack in the short term
- The first mover gains an important advantage

- **Preventive war**

- Perception that attack will happen in the long term
- Better to attack before opponent gains strength