

The Empire Strikes Back:



Russian Troop Deployments in Eastern Europe Following the Cold War

Research Question:

- "What theory best explains Russian military deployments in Eastern Europe after the Cold War?"

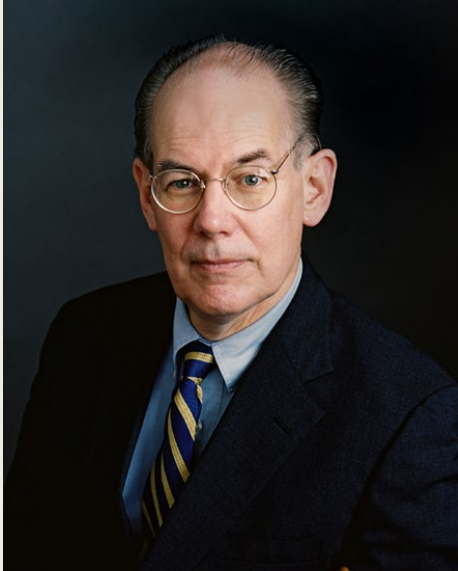
Existing Literature

- Scholars generally apply one of two logics to Russian military deployments.
 - Michael McFaul: Russia actions in Crimea are as a result of internal political dynamics within Russia and were aggressive in nature (McFaul 2014).
 - John Mearsheimer Russian actions in Crimea are defensively motivated (Mearsheimer 2016). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*
 - Jessica Weeks: Autocratic Audience Costs (Weeks 2008)
 - Kenneth Waltz: *The Theory of International Politics*

My Thesis Statement

- Russian troop deployments in the post-Cold War era result from multiple logics, which include offensive and defensive realism and autocratic audience costs.
- I argue that all three logics apply to Russian military troop deployments.

Offensive Realism

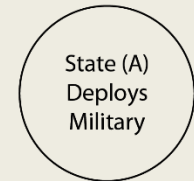
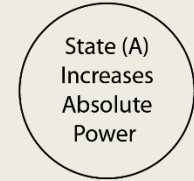


John Mearsheimer
Offensive Realism

Offensive Realism: military actions when a state attempts to maximize its absolute power at any cost.

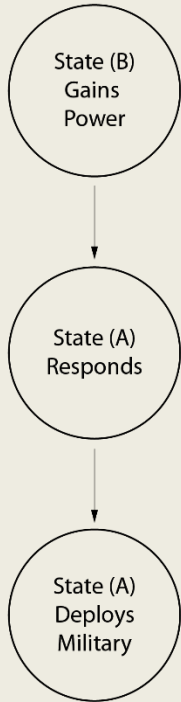
Absolute Power: a state continually tries to gain as much power as possible at any cost, regardless of if other states end up with the most power.

Offensive Realism



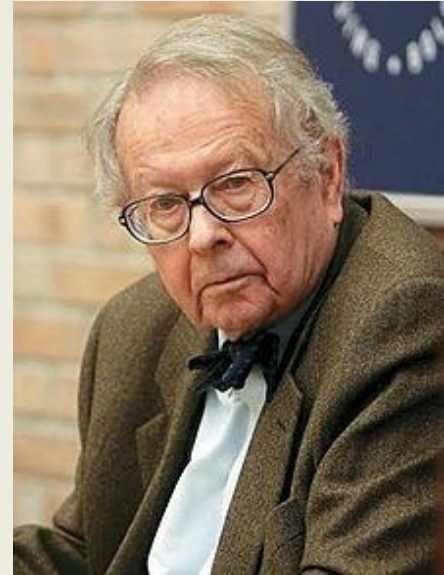
Defensive Realism

Defensive Realism



Defensive Realism: explains military actions when a state tries to maintain a balance in relative power between itself and another state

Relative Power: purpose of relative power is to gain as much power advantage as possible over a potential rival and maintain that advantage.



Kenneth Waltz
Defensive Realism

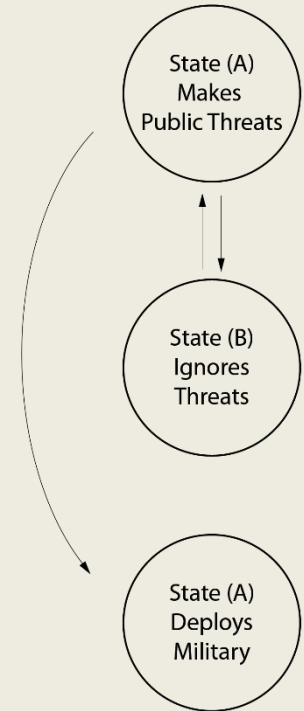
Audience Costs



Jessica Weeks
Autocratic Audience Costs

Audience Costs: when a leader makes a public threat to the international community, and does not follow through with that threat, and then is punished, and removed from power.

Audience Costs



Hypotheses

- H1: Russian military behavior after the Cold War is driven primarily by offensive objectives to expand Russia's absolute power in Eastern Europe.
- H2: Russian military behavior after the Cold War is powered primarily by defensive objectives trying to maintain a relative balance of power.
- H3: Russian troop deployments are due audience costs from the regime insiders due to Vladimir Putin backing down from public threats that he made.

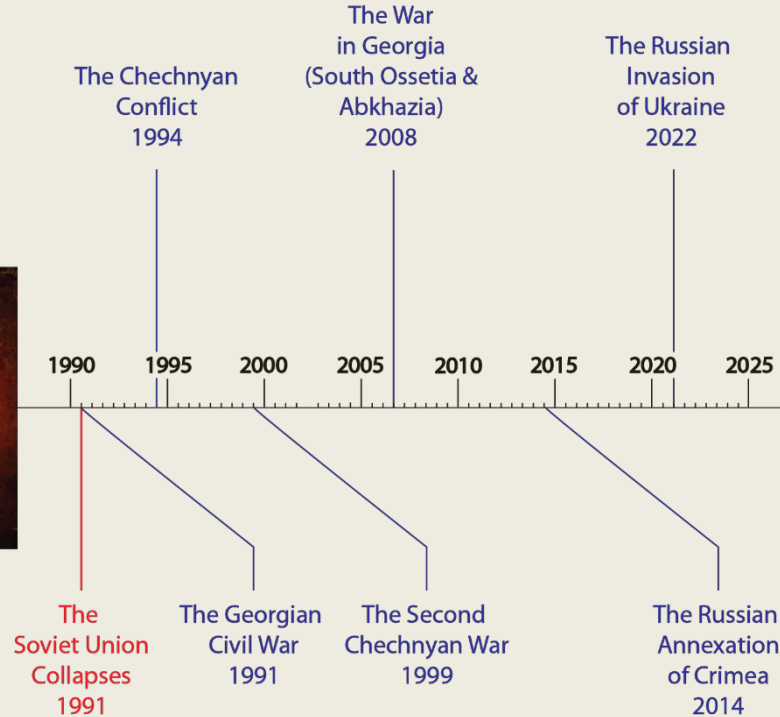
Research Design

- Process Tracing: Qualitative case analyses to identify the motivations of Russian military deployments and their objectives.
- Analyze Russian decisions to deploy troops and then either stay and continue to occupy each region once the fighting finished or did Russia withdraw forces from where the conflict occurred.
- Dependent Variable (DV):
 - Russian military deployments into Eastern Europe in the post-Cold War era.

Independent Variables

- H1 - Independent Variables (IV) - Offensive Realism:
 - Russia is trying to expand its absolute power.
- H2 - Independent Variables (IV) - Defensive Realism:
 - Russia wants to maintain its regional influence
 - Russia wants to maintain territorial control in the region
 - Russia wants to strengthen cooperation with its neighbors
- H3 - Independent Variables (IV) - Audience Costs:
 - Vladimir Putin is concerned with punishment from regime insiders

Temporal Timeline



Data Sources

- Russian non-state news organizations
 - Meduza – English Based
 - Novaya Gazeta – Russian Based
- Scholarly Journal Articles

Conclusion

- I expect to find that numerous factors motivate Russian troop deployments into Eastern Europe. These motivations include Russia maintaining its influence in the region and the international community
- Russia attempting to expand its influence both regionally and internationally.
- Putin has immense power, he must concern himself with audience costs if regime insiders if he were to back down from threats that he made.