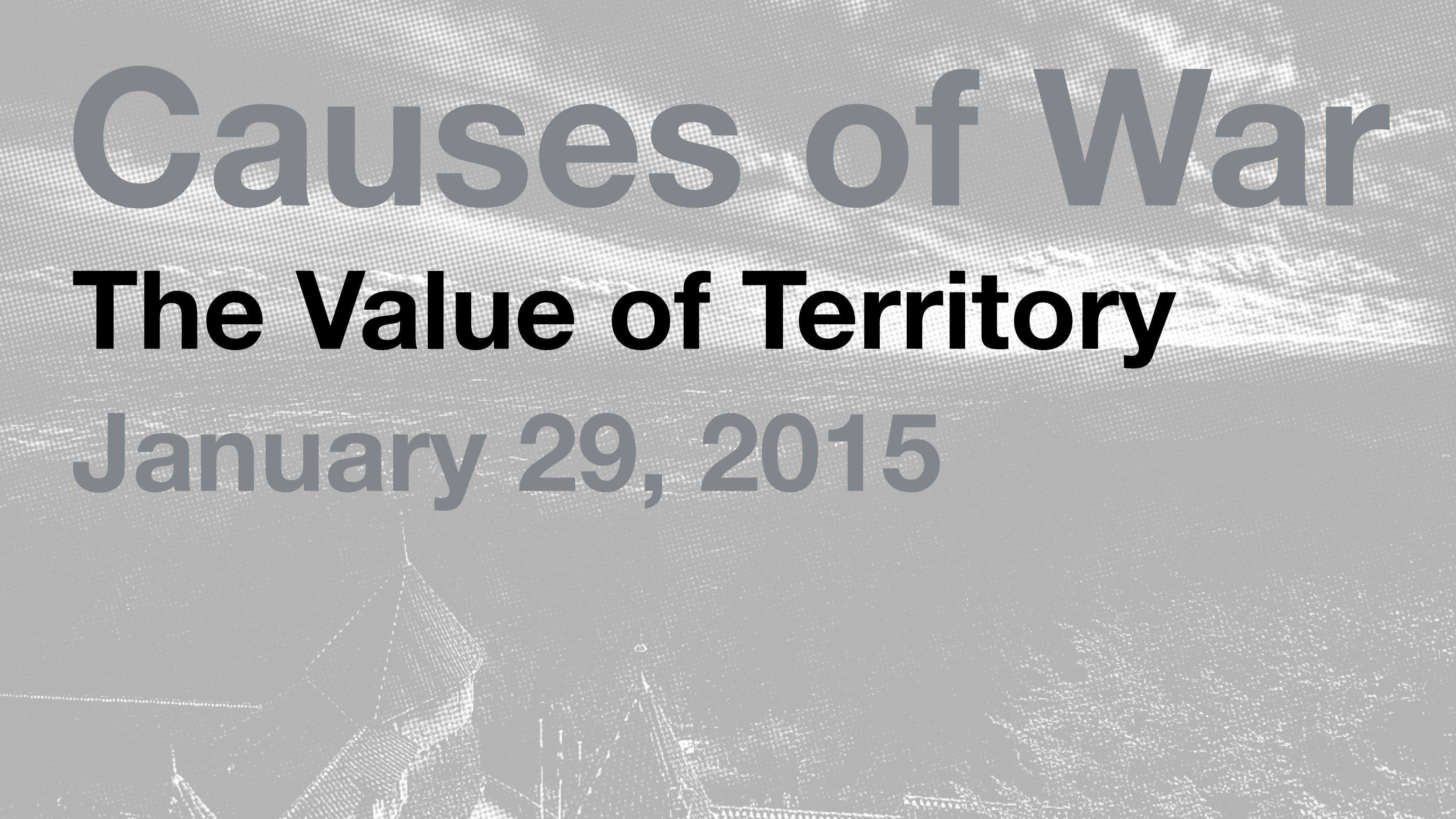


Causes of War

The Value of Territory

January 29, 2015



Today's Agenda

- 1. How territory gives states what they want.**
- 2. The hidden (and not-so-hidden) costs of territorial expansion.**
- 3. Student presentation on Walter, "Explaining the Intractability of Territorial Conflict."**

How

Territory

gives states what they want

The Sovereign State

(a quick review)

A state has *sovereignty* in a piece of territory if it has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force there.

- Professional army**
- Regular tax revenue**
- Bureaucracy**

Bargaining and Territory

How—and when—is territory a cause of war?

We must know what makes it worth bargaining over.

What Do States Want?

- 1. To stay secure in their current position.**
- 2. To expand their power in the international system.**
- 3. To keep the current leadership in power.**

Territory and Security

How does more territory aid security?

- Buffer for the center/capital**
- Economic extraction**

Territory and Power

Why would a power-seeking state want more territory?

- Tautological?**
- Bargaining power and salami tactics**

Territory and Domestic Politics

How does territory help a leader remain in power?

- Extraction and bribes**
- Counter population pressures**

The Science of Territorial Conflict

- **Make assumptions about what states want**
- **Derive conclusions about most likely sources of territorial conflict**
- **Compare to historical record**

The hidden (and not-so-hidden)

Costs

of territorial expansion

Is Territory a Zero-Sum Game?

There's only so much territory in the world.

Whatever I have, you don't, and vice versa.

Territorial *Stability* as Public Good

Simmons (2005) argues that all states benefit from stable boundaries.

- Better-defined property rights**
- Less uncertainty**
- Lower transaction costs**

Drawing Boundaries

Carter and Goemans (2011) look at what kinds of new borders are typically drawn.

- Ethnic group cohesion? No.**
- Defensible borders? No.**
- Previous administrative frontiers? Yes.**

Natural Resources

**If economic extraction is a purpose of expansion,
territory with natural resources should be especially
valuable—right?**

Resource Curses

Economic: Countries with more natural resources tend to grow at slower rates.

Political: Countries with more natural resources are more likely to experience civil wars.

Costs of Governance

It can be costly to establish sovereignty in and extract economic resources from a new piece of territory.

Risk Factors for Costly Governance

- **Heterogeneity and internal conflict**
- **New competitors for central authority**
- **Nationalism and the erosion of legitimacy**

For Next Time

- **Read Howard, ch. 5.**
- **Student presentations on "Powerful Pacifists" and "From Dynastic to National War."**

Image Sources

— **Castle in Alsace:** MorBCN, via [Flickr](#)