Causes of War

Identity and War

February 10, 2015

Today's Agenda

1. Identity, territory, and war.
2. Presentation on "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict."
3. Presentation on "Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas."

Identity

We think of *identity* as personal characteristics that are impossible, or exceedingly difficult, to change.

Identity

— **Immutable (or nearly so)**
  — **Race**
  — **Ethnicity**
  — **Religion**
  — **Gender identity and sexual orientiation**
— **Not immutable**
  — **Ideology**
  — **Economic class**

Can Identity Alone Cause War?

Recall our conceptions of war.

— Clausewitz 1: "An act of force to compel our enemy to do our will."
— Clausewitz 2: "The continuation of policy by other means."
— Bargaining model: Use of force when negotiations fail.

Can Identity Alone Cause War?

Hatred on the basis of identity can cause *violence* on a horrific scale, but not *war* in the way we have defined it.

Nationalism

An ideology whereby one's attachment to a state forms a component of one's identity.

The state, in turn, becomes the political representative of the nation.

Nationalism and Territory

— **State sovereignty is defined territorially**
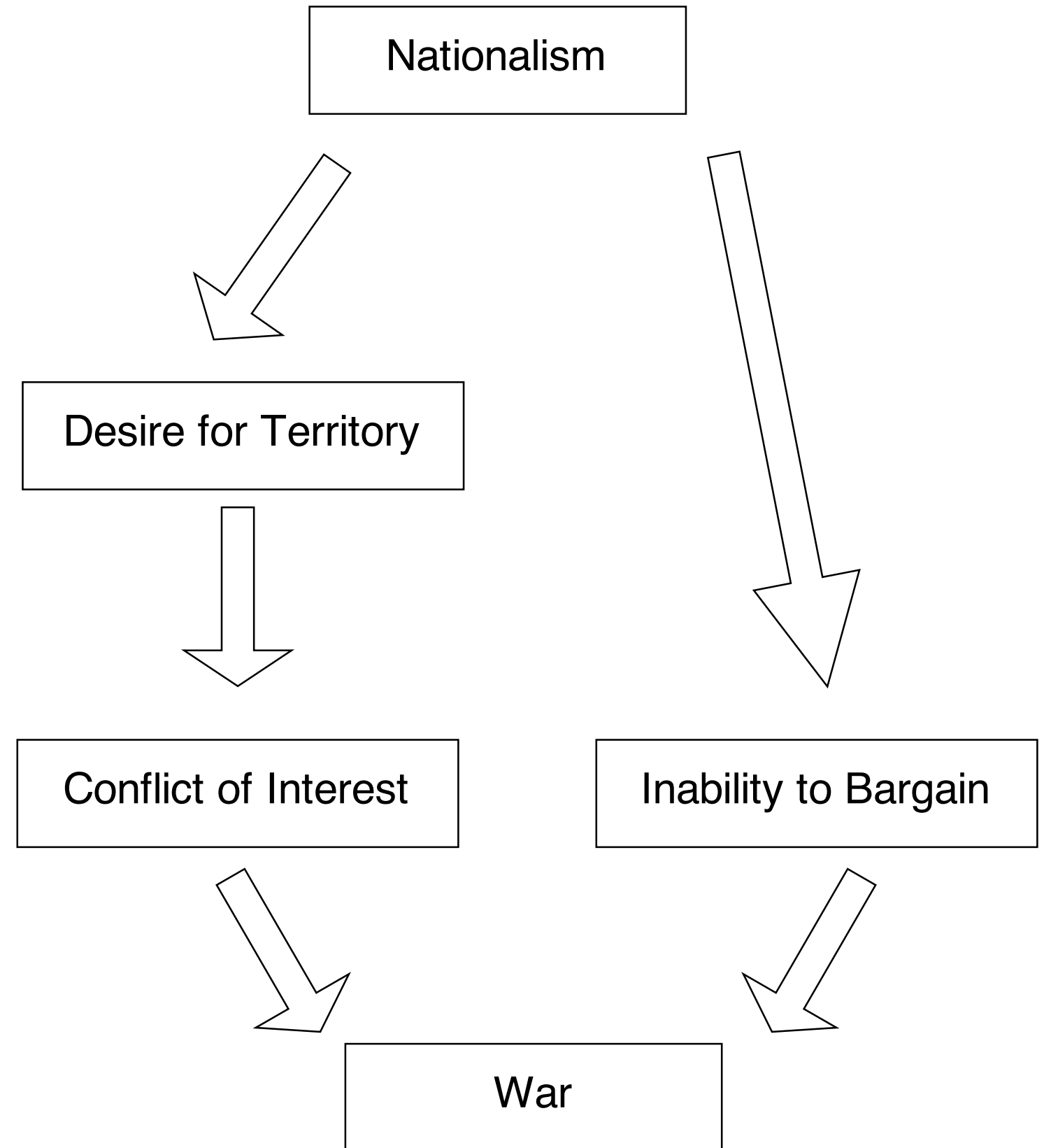— **State is the political manifestation of the nation**

$$\Downarrow$$

— **State and national boundaries must coincide**

Identity, Nationalism, and War

How identity can cause war between nation-states.

Nationalism

Desire for Territory

Conflict of Interest

Inability to Bargain

War

Nationalism and War in European Politics

— **Italian unification (1848–1866)**
— **German unification (1864–1871)**
— **Decolonization (1776–1975)**
— **World War I? (1914–1918)**
— **World War II (1939–1945)**
— **Wars in Bosnia (1992–1995) and Kosovo (1998–1999)**

Summary

— **Identity alone doesn't cause war**
— **But identity channeled through (or stoked by) the *ideology* of nationalism can cause *territorial* war**

For Next Time

— Reminder: Midterm is a week from today
— Read Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" and Henderson & Tucker, "Clear and Present Strangers" (both on JSTOR)
— Presentations on "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict" and "A(nother) Dark Side of the Protection Racket"

Image Sources

— Flags waving: Geraint Rowland, via Flickr