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## Political Science 373/573 Territory and Group Conflict

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### Hein Goemans

Harkness 337

Office: Thurs. 12:30–1:30

henk.goemans@rochester.edu

### Course Info: 4 Credits

Spring 2025

Thurs 2:00–4:40

Harkness 329

This seminar examines a major research agenda in International Relations: the role of territory in international (group) politics. The goal is to build a theory *from the ground up* to explain why, when, how and *which* territory becomes contested. We will read from a broad range of disciplines and students are required to read at least 250-300 pages a week and in some cases significantly more.

Territorial conflicts are often viewed as the most contentious and intransigent in international politics. Territorial conflict is also one of the most frequent causes of inter- and *intra*-state war. But why do states and citizens fight over territory? Is it because they seek economic benefits to be gained by additional territory, because they identify with specific territory, because they fear a rival taking over the territory, or for some other reason? In this class, we will focus on various perspectives that suggest causes of territorial conflict. We will evaluate these arguments in terms of both their logical consistency and the empirical record of territorial conflict.

Each student is expected to write a short paper for one session of their choice—picked in coordination with me—not to exceed 1500 words. This paper should provide an independent commentary on some aspect of that week’s readings. It is neither desirable nor necessary that you try to be comprehensive. Rather, you should select issues or angles that interest you, and develop your own thoughts about them. The paper must be circulated to the class via e-mail no later than Tuesday evening at 8:00 p.m. These papers will form the background against which we will discuss the readings in class.

In addition, each student is required to write a 20–25 page research paper, which focuses in depth on one of the discussed emerging research agendas. (Or, in exceptional cases, on an emerging research agenda of the student’s choosing.) This paper is due May 1, 5PM. In the last sessions we will try to organize some time to discuss drafts and/or outlines of these papers.

## *Course Requirements*

Professor Goemans teaches a 4-credit course on Thursday 2:00-4:40. His in-class instruction totals 3 academic hours (of 50 minutes each). His course does not have a lab, recitation or workshop. However, the course has a group project that require students to meet outside of class for an additional hour of work per week. Specifically, each student group will study the *territorial history* of one or more South or Central American countries. This may include both the *national* territorial history – e.g., how each country defined itself, and how this territorial self-definition changed over time – and its *international* territorial history – e.g., its territorial disputes with other countries. Students will meet during office hours once every two weeks to design, plan and develop this research. This research can be used for any of the paper assignments.

This satisfies the credit hour policy as a 4-credit course by providing 3 hours of in-class instruction per week and an additional hour of equivalent instruction through this independent out-of-class assignment per week. Additionally, the students are also assumed to complete an additional 8 hours of supplementary work per week. (3 in-class hours + 1 hour of independent out-of-class assignments + 8 hours of supplementary assignments = 12 hours/week).

Participation in the seminar comprises 25% of your grade. The short paper counts for another 25% of your grade, while the final paper counts for 50%. Writing is therefore a very important aspect of this course. To become a better writer **all students must watch**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtIzMaLkCaM>.

I understand that students sometimes are faced with urgent situations, either of a personal or academic nature – e.g., a reading is not available or cannot be found – and in those cases, of course I welcome e-mails. Otherwise, I strongly prefer students show up for office hours, because dealing with 20 individual e-mails, and going back and forth, swallows enormous amounts of my time and concentration.

## *Books*

The following books will be required reading this semester. I recommend you buy your books through Amazon.

- Jordan Branch, 2014. *The Cartographic State: Maps, Territory, and the Origins of Sovereignty*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge Studies in International Relations.
- Donelson R. Forsyth, 2019. *Group Dynamics*, seventh edition. Boston: Cengage. This book seems to be relatively hard to obtain, I'll make a scan of my copy and distribute.
- Avidity Acharya and Alexander Lee, 2023. *The Cartel System of States; an economic theory of international politics*, New York, Oxford University Press.

## *Academic Resources*

Students may have disabilities which impede their learning. This class, this department and this university are strongly committed to help provide resources to overcome any

obstacles to learning. The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: [http://disability@rochester.edu](mailto:disability@rochester.edu); (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Be familiar with the University's policies on academic integrity and disciplinary action (<http://www.rochester.edu/living/urhere/handbook/discipline2.html#XII>). Violators of University regulations on academic integrity will be dealt with promptly, which means that your grade will suffer, and I will forward your case to the Chair of the College Board on Academic Honesty, on which I served.

# Course Outline

Thursday January 23

## Introduction

Class cancelled

Friday January 30

### 1. Groups

- Donelson R. Forsyth, 2019. *Group Dynamics*, seventh edition. Boston: Cengage. Chapters 1-3, pp.1-92.
- Andrew Abbott. 1995. “Things of Boundaries.” *Social Research*, Vol. 62, No. 4, Defining the Boundaries of Social Inquiry (WINTER), pp. 857-882.
- Mancur Olson, Jr. 1971. *The Logic of Collective Action; Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Second Printing with a New Preface and Appendix. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ostrom, Elinor. 2000. “Collective Action and the Evolution of Social Norms.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14(3):137–158.

\* Recommended: **Groups & Collective Action**

- Sandler, Todd. 2015. “Collective action: fifty years later.” *Public Choice*. 164 (3-4): 195–216. doi:10.1007/s11127-015-0252-0.
- On **group**, not individual, selection: David Sloan Wilson, 2002. *Darwin’s cathedral: evolution, religion, and the nature of Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Thursday January 30

### 2. Social Identity Theory

- Naomi Ellemers and S. Alexander Haslam, “Social Identity Theory,” Chapter 45 in Paul A. M. Van Lange, Arie W. Kruglanski and E. Tory Higgins (eds.), *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, Sage Publications, 2012. Volume 2: 400–419.
- John C. Turner and Katherine J. Reynolds, “Self-Categorization Theory,” Chapter 46 in Paul A. M. Van Lange, Arie W. Kruglanski and E. Tory Higgins (eds.), *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, Sage Publications, 2012. Volume 2: 420–438.
- Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams. 1988. *Social identifications: a social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes*. New York: Routledge. Chapters 2, 3 and 7.

- Marilyn B. Brewer. 1991. The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time. *Personality Social Psychology Bulletin*, Vol 17(5), (October) 475-482.
- Roberta Sigel, An Introduction to the Symposium on Social Identity, in *Political Psychology*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2001, 111-114.
- Steven Michael Ward, 2017. “Lost in Translation: Social Identity Theory and the Study of Status in World Politics,” *International Studies Quarterly*, 61(4): 821–834.

\* Recommended

- Marilyn B. Brewer, The Many Faces of Social Identity: Implications for Political Psychology, in *Political Psychology*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2001, 115-125
- Brewer, M. B. and Wendi Gardner. 1996. Who is this “we”? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71: (1) 83-93.
- Prentice, Deborah A., Dale T. Miller, and Jenifer R. Lightdale. 1994. Asymmetries in Attachments to Groups and to Their Members: Distinguishing Between Common-identity and Common-Bond Groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* Vol. 20, No. 5 (October) 484-493.
- Nicholas Sambanis and Moses Shayo. 2013. Social Identification and Ethnic Conflict. *American Political Science Review* Volume 107, Issue 2 May 2013 , pp. 294-325

Thursday February 6

### 3. Groups and Identity

- Russell Hardin, *One for All; the logic of group conflict*; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1–6
- Cristina Bicchieri, 2016. *Norms in the Wild: How to Diagnose, Measure, and Change Social Norms*. Oxford University Press. Selected chapters TBD.
- James Fearon, 1999. “What is “Identity” (as we now use the word)?”

\* Recommended: **On Social (Group) Norms**

- Michael A. Hogg, Scott A. Reid, 2006. “Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms”, in *Communication Theory*, Vol. 16, No. 1, February; pp. 7-30.
- Cialdini, Robert B., Carl A. Kallgren and Raymond R. Reno. 1991. “A Focus Theory of Normative Conduct: A Theoretical Refinement and Reevaluation of the Role of Norms in Human Behavior.” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 24:201 – 234.

- Cialdini, Robert, Raymond Reno and Carl Kallgren. 1990. “A Focus Theory of Normative Conduct: Recycling the Concept of Norms to Reduce Littering in Public Places.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58:1015–1026.
- David M. Kreps, “Corporate culture and economic theory,” in James E. Alt and Kenneth A. Shepsle, *Perspectives on Positive Political Economy*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990; 90–143.
- Cristina Bicchieri, 2005. *The Grammar of Society*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dennis Chong, 2000. *Rational Lives; Norms and Values in Politics and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Thursday February 13

#### 4. Territory & Territoriality

- Sack, Robert David. 1986. *Human territoriality: its theory and history*. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp.1–91; 154–168.
- John Agnew, 1994. “The territorial trap: The geographical assumptions of international relations theory,” *Review of International Political Economy* 1 53-80.
- Paul Hensel & Hein Goemans, 2021. “Territory: What do we know about contentious issues,” Chapter 1 in *What do we know about war?*, 3rd edition. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Stuart Elden, 2013. *The Birth of Territory*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Chapter 7: The Rediscovery of Roman Law.

Thursday February 20

#### 5. Territoriality and Groups

- Donelson R. Forsyth, 2019. *Group Dynamics*, seventh edition. Boston: Cengage. Chapter 14, Groups in Context. pp. 479-511 and parts of Chapter 15, pp. 497-506.
- Benedict Anderson, 2006. *Imagined Communities*, New York: Verso, New Edition. Chapter 10, Census, Map, Museum, ppp.163–186.
- Hein Goemans. 2006. “Bounded Communities: territoriality, territorial attachment and conflict,” Chapter 1 in Miles Kahler and Barbara F. Walter, (eds.) *Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Willem van Schendel, “Stateless in South Asia: The Making of the India-Bangladesh Enclaves.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 1, February 2002. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2700191>

\* Recommended:

- Grosby, Steven. “Territoriality: The transcendental primordial feature of modern societies.” In *Nations and Nationalism* Vol. 1, No. 2 (1995), pp. 143–162.
- Paasi, Anssi, “Boundaries as Social Processes: Territoriality in the World of Flows,” in *Boundaries, Territory and Postmodernity*. David Newman. Ed.; London: Frank Cass, 1999: 69–88

Thursday February 27

## 6. Territory and the State

- Hein Goemans and David Carter, “Re-imagi(ni)ng Territorial Disputes,” *Annual Review of Political Science*, forthcoming, 2025.
- Kerry Goettlich, 2019. “The Rise of Linear Border in World Politics.” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.25(1): 203-228.
- Jordan Branch, 2014. *The Cartographic State: Maps, Territory, and the Origins of Sovereignty*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge Studies in International Relations.
- Kerry Goettlich, 2022. “The Colonial Origins of Modern Territoriality: Property Surveying in the Thirteen Colonies”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 116(3): 911-926.
- Naosuke Mukoyama, 2022. “The Eastern cousins of European sovereign states? The development of linear borders in early modern Japan.” *European Journal of International Relations*. Online.

\* Recommended:

- James R. Akerman, 1995. “The Structuring of Political Territory in Early Printed Atlases,” *Imago Mundi* Vol. 47 pp.138–154.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1151310>
- Winichakul, Thongchai. 1994. *Siam Mapped. A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.
- David Buisseret. 1984. “The Cartographic Definition of France’s Eastern Boundary in the Early Seventeenth Century”, *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 36 (1984), pp. 72-80 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1150944>
- Jordan Branch. 2011. “Mapping the Sovereign State: Technology, Authority, and Systemic Change.” *International Organization* 65:1.
- M. Numa Broc. 1984. “Visions Médiévales de la France.” *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 36 (1984), pp. 32-47. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1150938>

Thursday March 6

## 7. Territory and the State System

- Avidity Acharya and Alexander Lee, 2023. *The Cartel System of States; an economic theory of international politics*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Thursday, March 13

## SPRING BREAK

Thursday, March 20

## 8. Territory, Territoriality and Nationalism

- Peter Sahlins, 1991. *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, University of California Press, 1991.
- Naosuke Mukoyama, “The Bottom-Up Formation of Territory Conflicting spatial ideologies of the shogunate, domains, and villages in early modern Japan.” Unpublished paper, presented at the 2023 ISA annual convention in Montreal.
- Harris Mylonas and Maya Tudor, 2021. “Nationalism: What we Know and What we Still Need to Know,” in *Annual Review of Political Science*, Volume 24: 109–132.

\* Recommended:

- George C. White, *Nationalism and Territory; Constructing group identity in southeastern Europe*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000. Selected Chapters. TBD
- Jan Penrose, Nations, states and homelands: territory and territoriality in nationalist thought, in *Nations and Nationalism* Vol. 7, (3), 2002, pp.277–297
- Ernest Gellner, Nationalism in the Vacuum, Chapter 10 in Alexander J. Motyl, *Thinking Theoretically About Soviet Nationalities*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Katherine Cutts Dougherty and Margaret Eisenhart, The Role of Social Representations and National Identities in the Development of Territorial Knowledge: A Study of Political Socialization in Argentina and England. in *American Educational Research Journal*, Winter 1992, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 809–835
- David B. Knight, Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 72, No.4, December 1982, pp. 514–531



- James Anderson, Nationalist Ideology and Territory, Chapter 2 in R. J. Johnson, David B. Knight and Eleonore Kofman, eds., *Nationalism, Self-Determination and Political Geography*, London: Croom Helm, 1988
- Anthony D. Smith, Ethnic Identity and Territorial Nationalism in Comparative Perspective, Chapter 3 in Alexander J. Motyl, *Thinking Theoretically About Soviet Nationalities*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Oren Yiftachel. 2001. “The Homeland and Nationalism.” In Alexander J. Motyl, (ed.), *Encyclopedia of nationalism*. New York: Academic Press. Vol. 1: 359–383.
- Herb, Guntram H. 1999. “National Identity and Territory.” In Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan. *Nested Identities; Nationalism Territory and Scale*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., pp.9–30.
- Andreas Wimmer and Yuval Feinstein, “The Rise of the Nation-State across the World, 1816–2001,” in *American Sociological Review*, 75 (October 2010), pp. 764–90.

Thursday, March 27

## 9. The Bases of Territorial Claims

- Hein Goemans & Kenneth A. Schultz, “The Politics of Territorial Claims: A geospatial approach applied to Africa”, *International Organization*, 71:1, pp. 41-64.
- Alexander B. Murphy. 2002. “National Claims to Territory in the Modern State System: Geographical Considerations” in *Geopolitics*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Autumn), pp. 193–214
- Soyoung Lee, 2023 “Valuable to Any and None: Domestic Distributional Roots of National Interest.” Unpublished Manuscript, Stanford University.
- Andrew F. Burghardt, 1973. “The Bases of Territorial Claims.” *Geographical Review* 63(2):225–245.
- Ron Hassner. 2003. “To Halve and to Hold: Conflicts over Sacred Space and the Problem of Indivisibility,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 12, No.4 (Summer 2003), pp.1–33.

\* Recommended:

- Alexander B. Murphy. 1990. “Historical Justifications for Territorial Claims.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80(4):531–548.
- Alexander B. Murphy. 1991. ”Territorial Ideology and International Conflict: The Legacy of Prior Political Formations.” In *The Political Geography of Conflict and Peace*, N. Kliot and S. Waterman, eds. London: Belhaven, 1991, pp. 126-141.

- Myron Weiner. 1971. “The Macedonian Syndrome: An Historical Model of International Relations and Political Development.” *World Politics* Vol. 23, No. 4. (July)
- MacKinder, Halford J. “The Geographical Pivot of History.” in *Geographical Journal*, xxiii, no. 4. (April 1904).
- Spykman, Nicholas J., and Rollins, Abbie A. “Geographic Objectives in Foreign Policy, I.” *The American Political Science Review* Vol. 33, No. 3 (August 1939), pp. 391-410. Norman Hill. 1945. *Claims to Territory in International Law and Relations*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Thursday, April 3

## 10. History and Territorial Disputes

- David B. Carter and H. E. Goemans, “The Making of the Territorial Order: New Borders and the Emergence of Interstate Conflict,” *International Organization*, Vol. 65, No.2, Spring 2011.
- Scott Abramson and David Carter. 2016. “The Historical Origins of Territorial Disputes,” *American Political Science Review*, Volume 110, Issue 4 November, pp. 675-698.
- Nikolaus Wolf. 2005. “Path Dependent Border Effects: The Case of Poland’s Reunification (1918–1939).” *Explorations in Economic History*. 42:414–438.
- Nikolaus Wolf, Max-Stephen Schulze and Hans-Christian Heinemeyer. 2011. “On the Economic Consequences of the Peace: Trade and Borders after Versailles.” *Journal of Economic History*. 71(4):915–949.

\* Recommended: ***Uti Possidetis, Ita Possideatis***

- Suzanne Lalonde, 2002. *Determining Boundaries in a Conflicted World; The Role of Uti Possidetis*, McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- *Report of International Arbitral Awards. Recueil des sentences arbitrales.* Volume 1. “Affaire des fontrières Colombo-vénézuéliennes (Colombia contre Vénézuéla.” 24 March 1922. pp.223-298

\* Other Recommended:

- David Carter and Hein Goemans. 2018. “International Trade and Coordination: Tracing Border Effects,” *World Politics*. Volume 70, Issue 1 January , pp. 1-52.
- Beth A. Simmons, 2005. “Rules over Real Estate; Trade, Territorial Conflict and International Borders as Institutions.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49(6):823–848.

- Ron Hassner. 2015. “Barriers to Entry: Who Builds Fortified Boundaries and Why?” with Jason Wittenberg, *International Security*, Vol. 40, No.1, Summer 2015.
- David B. Carter and Paul Poast, 2015 “Why Do States Build Walls? Political Economy, Security, and Border Stability.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Published online before print September 1, 2015.
- George Gavrilis. 2008. *The Dynamics of Interstate Boundaries*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thursday, April 10

## 11. Territory in International Relations: Conflict

- Mark Zacher, 2001. “The Territorial Integrity Norm.” *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Spring 2001), pp. 215–50.
- Dan Altman, 2020. “The Evolution of Territorial Conquest after 1945 and the Limits of the Territorial Integrity Norm,” *International Organization*, Vol. 74, No. 3 (2020), pp. 490-522.
- Dan Altman, 2017. “By Fait Accompli, Not Coercion: How States Wrest Territory from Their Adversaries.” *International Studies Quarterly* (2017) 61, 881–891.
- Kenneth A. Schultz, 2014. “What’s in a Claim? De Jure versus De Facto Borders in Interstate Territorial Disputes.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(6): 1059–1084.
- Starr, Harvey and Benjamin A. Most. 1976. “The Substance and Study of Borders in International Relations Research.” *International Studies Quarterly* 20(4):581–620.
- Kacowicz, Arie Marcelo. “The Problem of Peaceful Territorial Change.” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 38, Issue 2 (June 1994), pp. 219–254.

Thursday April 17

## 12. On the homeland

- Nadav Shelef, 2020. *Homelands; Shifting borders and territorial disputes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press
- Hein Goemans, Andi Zhou, Michael Weintraub & Joel Selway, 2023. “Maps to Die For?” Unpublished ms. University of Rochester. January.

\* Recommended:

- Boaz Atzili, 2012. *Good Fences, Bad Neighbors; Border fixity and international conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- **Optional:** Andrew P. Owsiak, 2013. "Signing Up for Peace: International Boundary Agreements, Democracy, and Militarized Interstate Conflict." *International Studies Quarterly* 56(1): 51–66.

Thursday April 24

13. **TBD**

Thursday May 1

14. **LAST DAY OF CLASS**

## Questions to consider in formulating and evaluating social science research:

1. *What is the central question?*
  - Why is it important (theoretically, substantively)?
  - What is being explained (what is the dependent variable and how does it vary)?
  - How does this phenomenon present a puzzle?
2. *What is the central answer?*
  - What is doing the explaining (what are the independent variables and how do they vary)?
  - What are the hypotheses, i.e., what is the relationship between independent and dependent variables, what kind of change in the independent variable causes what kind of change in the dependent variable?
  - What are the causal mechanisms, i.e., why are the independent and dependent variables so related?
  - How do the independent variables relate to each other?
  - What assumptions does your theory make?
  - Is the theory falsifiable in concept?
  - What does this explanation add to our understanding of the question?
3. *What are the possible alternative explanations?*
  - What assumptions are you making about the direction of causality?
  - What other explanations might there be for the phenomenon of study, and to what degree do they conflict with the central answer?
  - Could the hypothesized relationships have occurred by chance?
4. *Why are the possible alternative explanations wrong?*
  - What is the logical structure of the alternative explanations (compare 2)?
  - What is the empirical evidence?
5. *What is the relationship between the theory and the evidence?*
  - What does the research design allow to vary, i.e., in this design are the explanations variables or constants?
  - What does your research design hold constant, i.e., does it help to rule out the alternative competing explanations?
  - How are the theoretical constructs represented empirically, i.e., how do you know it when you see it (measurement)?
6. *How do the empirical conclusions relate to the theory?*
  - How confident are you about the theory in light of the evidence?
  - How widely do the conclusions generalize, i.e., what might be the limitations of the study?
  - What does the provisionally accepted or revised theory say about questions of broader importance?