

PS 0500: IR Basics

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Agenda

- Sovereignty
- Anarchy
- Proximate vs. Underlying Causes
- The Strategic World

Who are the major actors in IR?

Some Actors

- International organizations
- Domestic leaders
- Non-governmental organizations
- Multi-national corporations
- Military alliances

Some Actors

- International organizations
- Domestic leaders
- Non-governmental organizations
- Multi-national corporations
- Military alliances
- States

States vs. States

States

- United States of America
- France
- Japan
- Georgia (Former SSR)

States

- California
- New York
- Texas
- Georgia (Peaches)

States vs. States

States = Countries

- United States of America
- France
- Japan
- Georgia (Former SSR)

States vs. States

States

- United States of America
- France
- Japan
- Georgia (Former SSR)

States are *sovereign* entities

What is sovereignty?

- Definition: the monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a territory

What is sovereignty?

- Definition: the monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a territory
- A “state” is the sovereign entity of a territory

What is sovereignty?

- Definition: the monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a territory
 - Murders, gang violence, etc. are illegitimate
 - National governments often delegate the power
 - Example: local police
 - But the authority to use of force originates from the state's permission

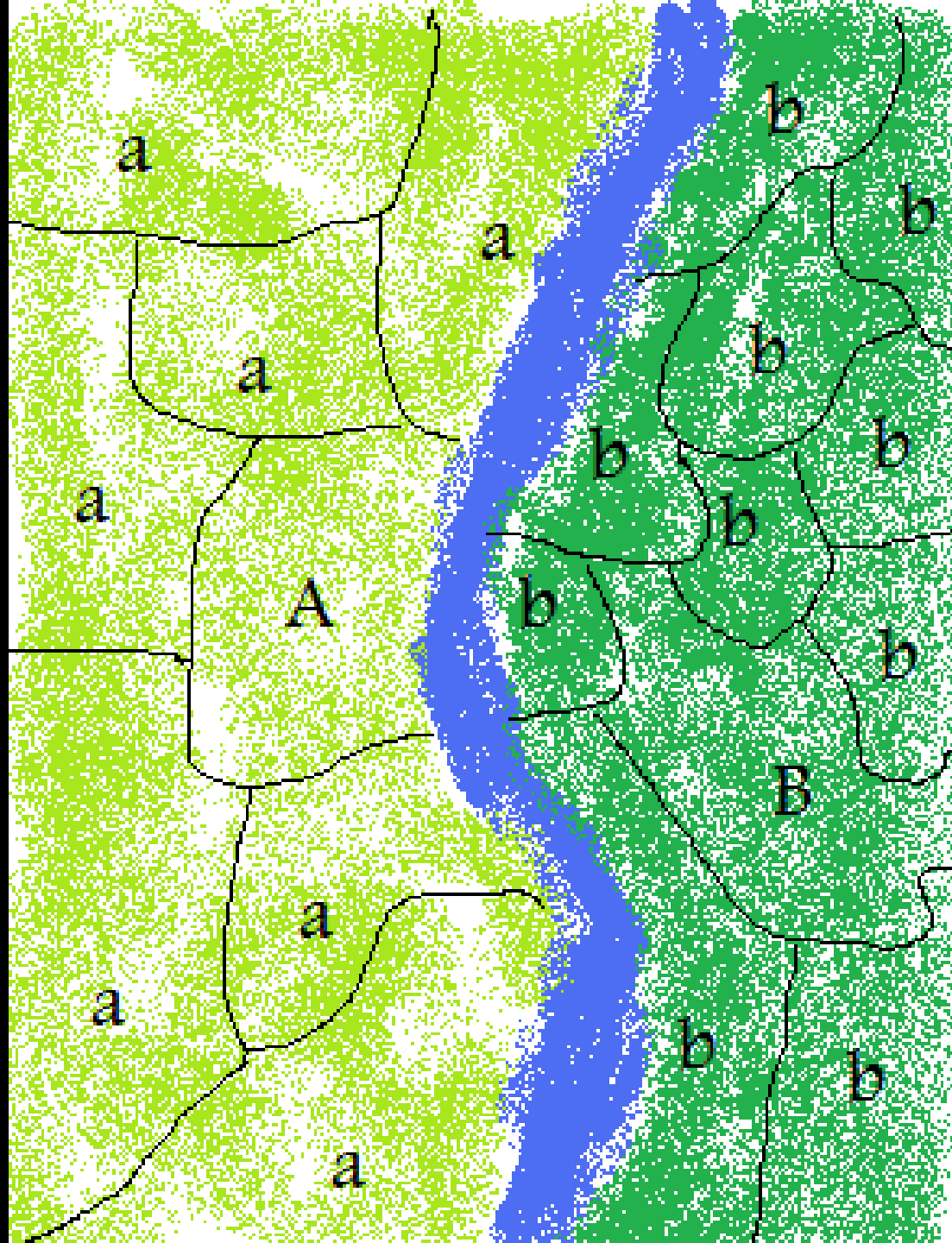
What is sovereignty?

- Sovereign entities are not supposed to meddle in the internal affairs of other sovereign entities
- This norm is well-established today but was not always the case

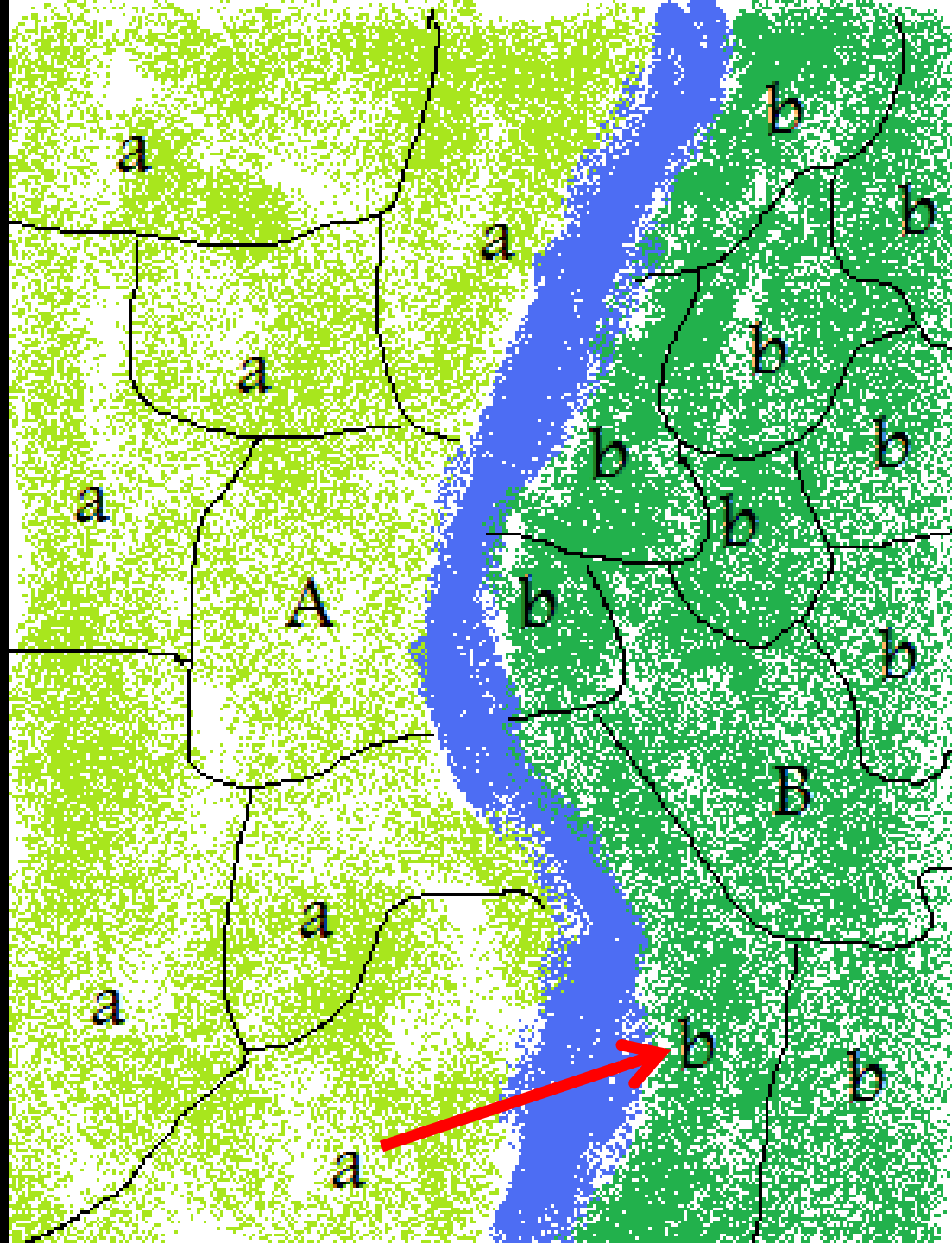
Analogy

- Parents have sovereignty over their children
- If you threw a baseball into your neighbor's window, your neighbor does not punish you
 - Your neighbor has to ask your parents for compensation

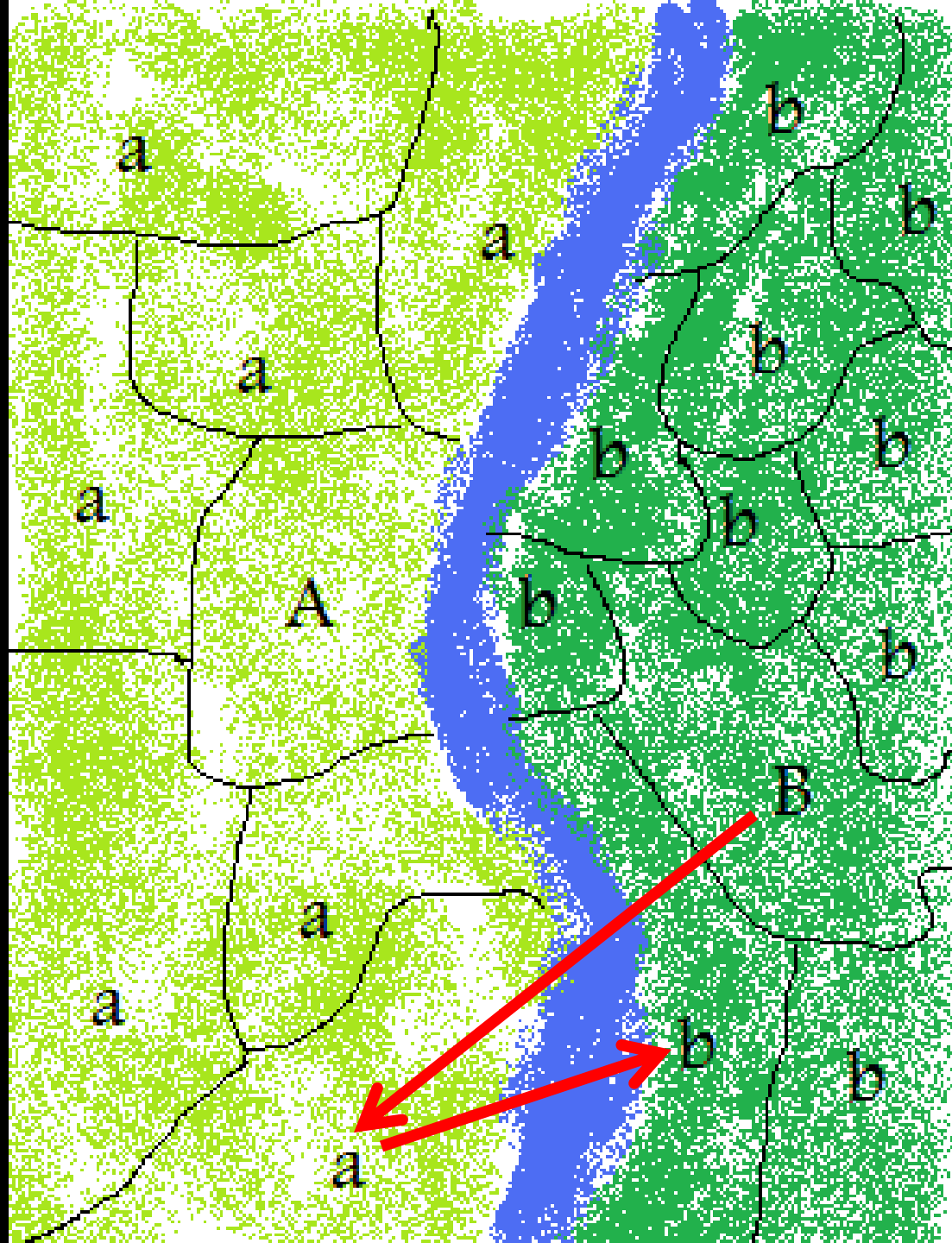
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Sovereignty**



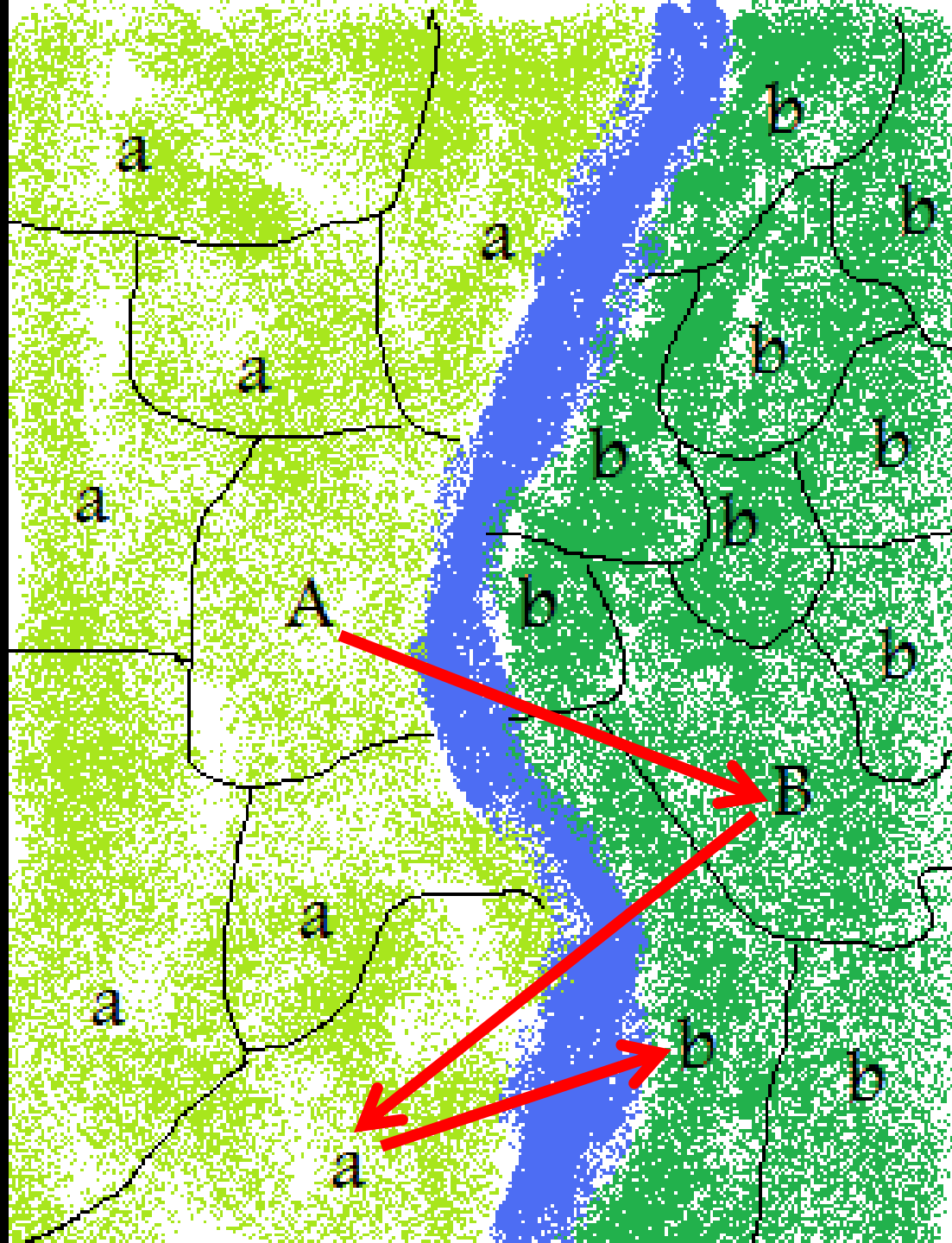
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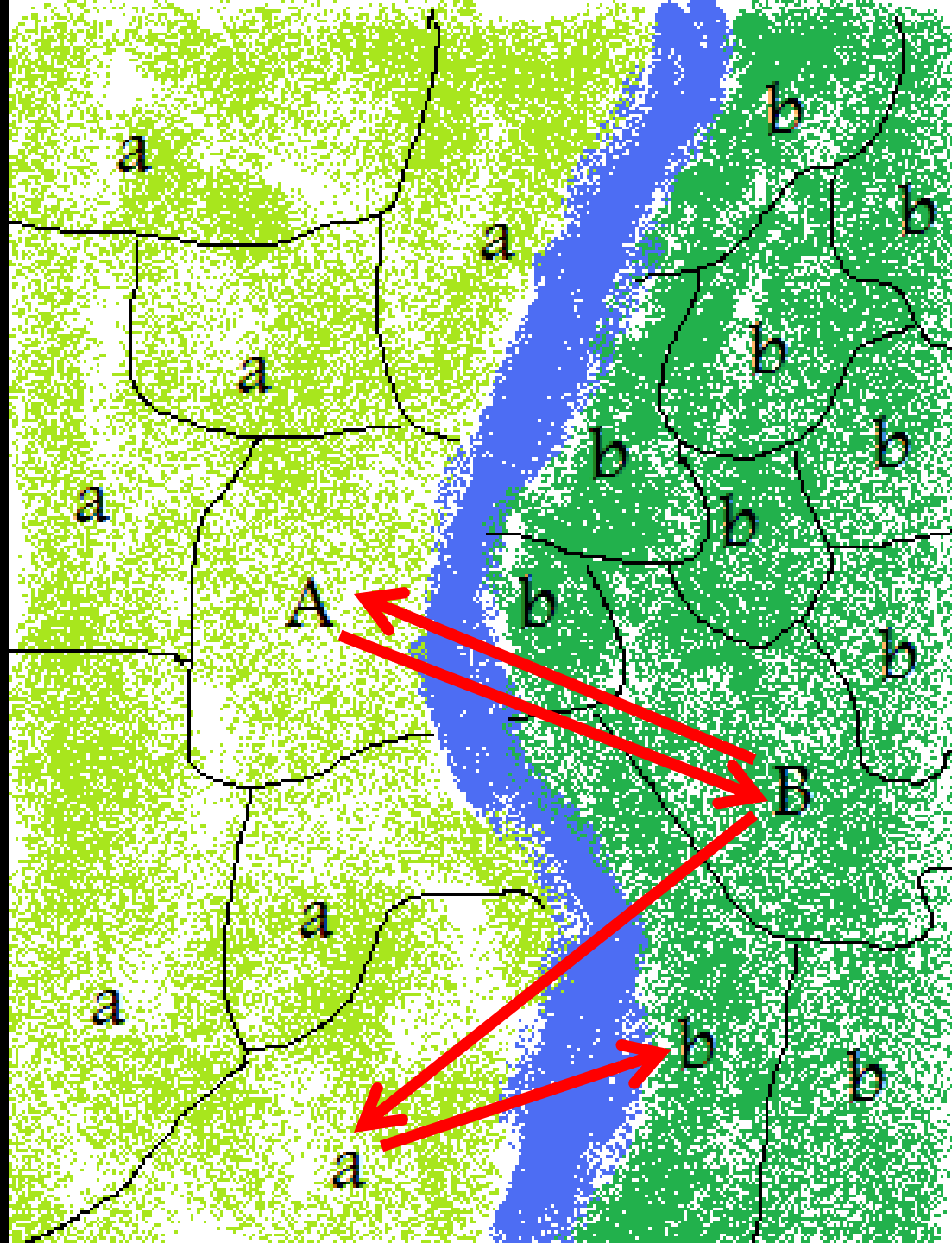
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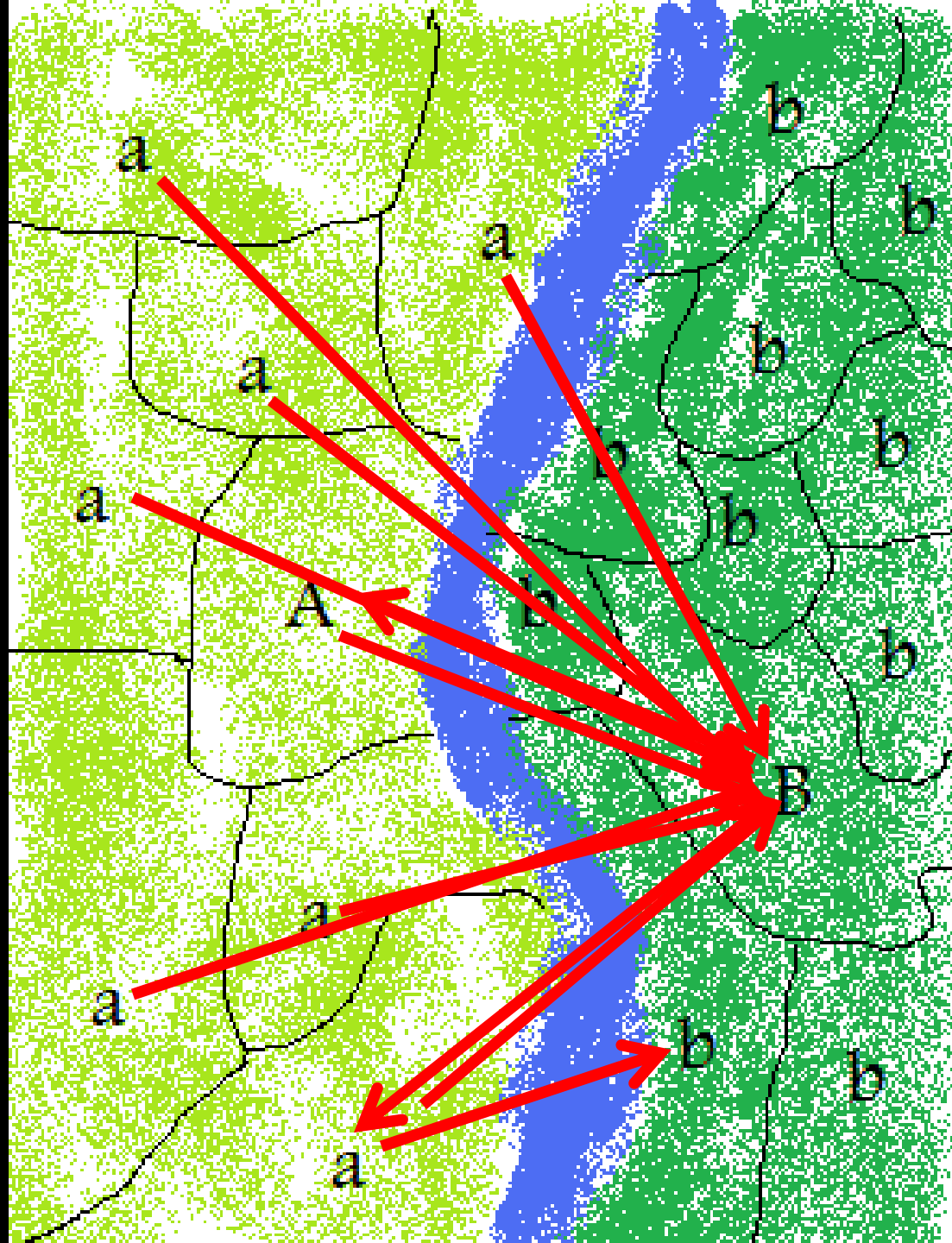
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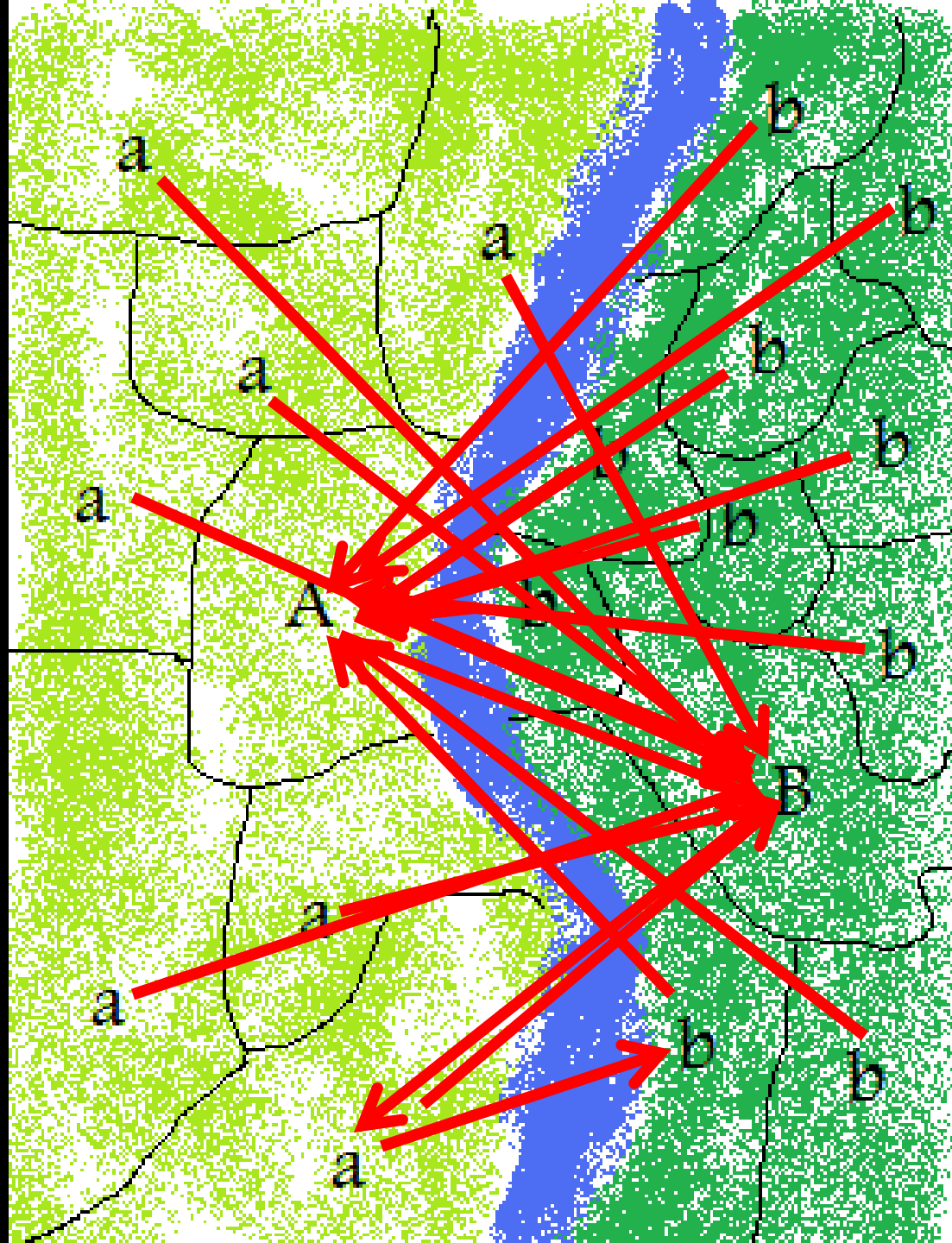
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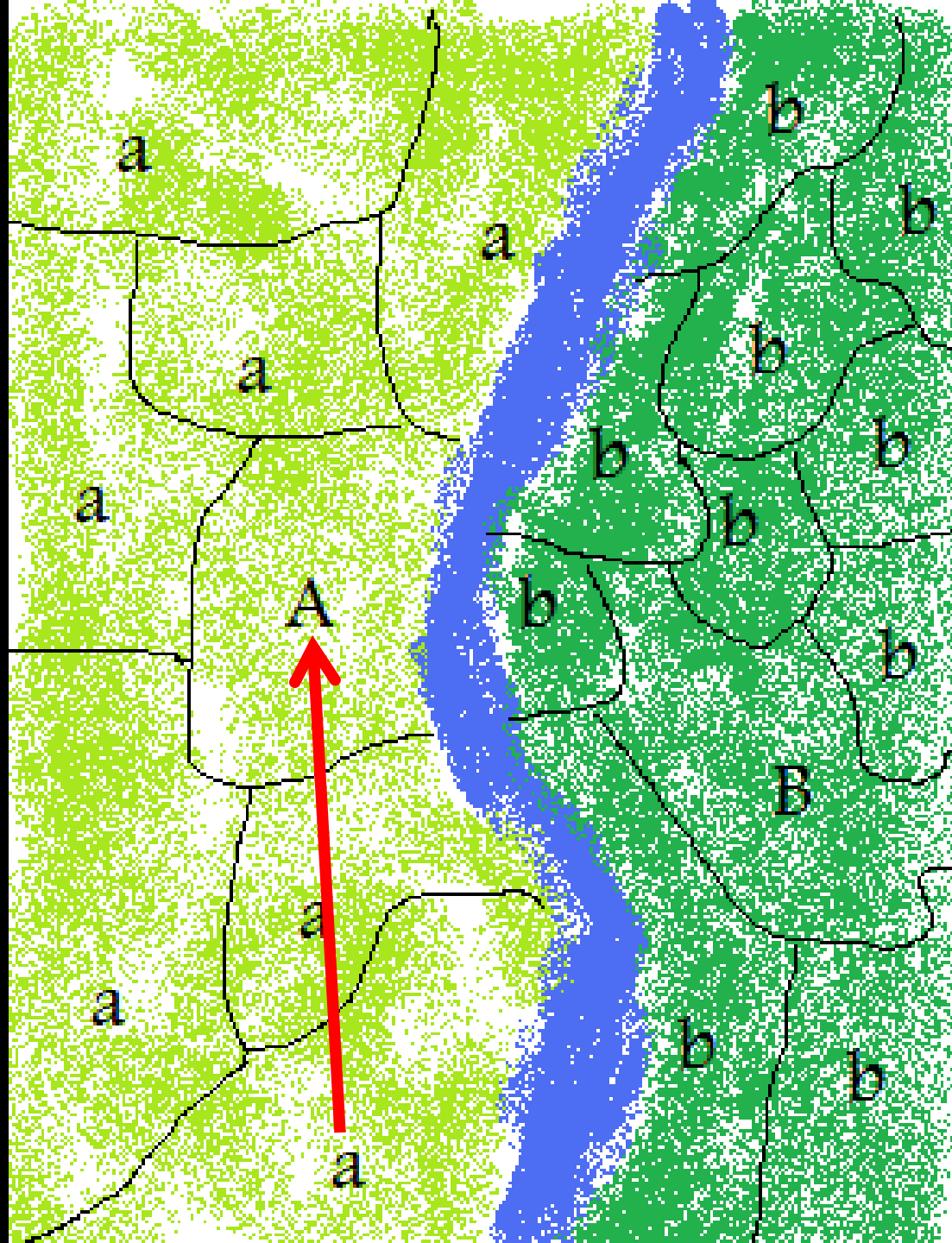
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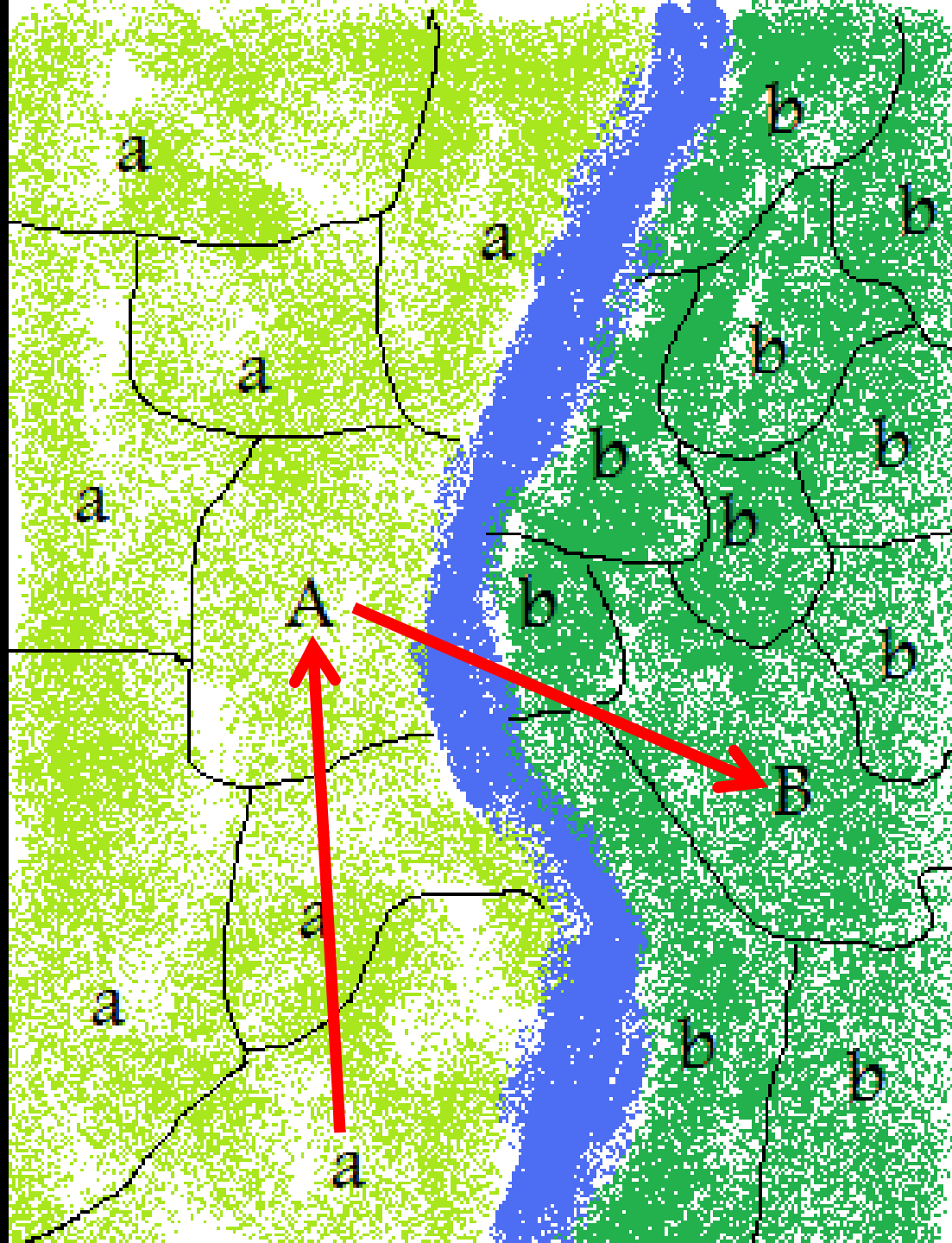
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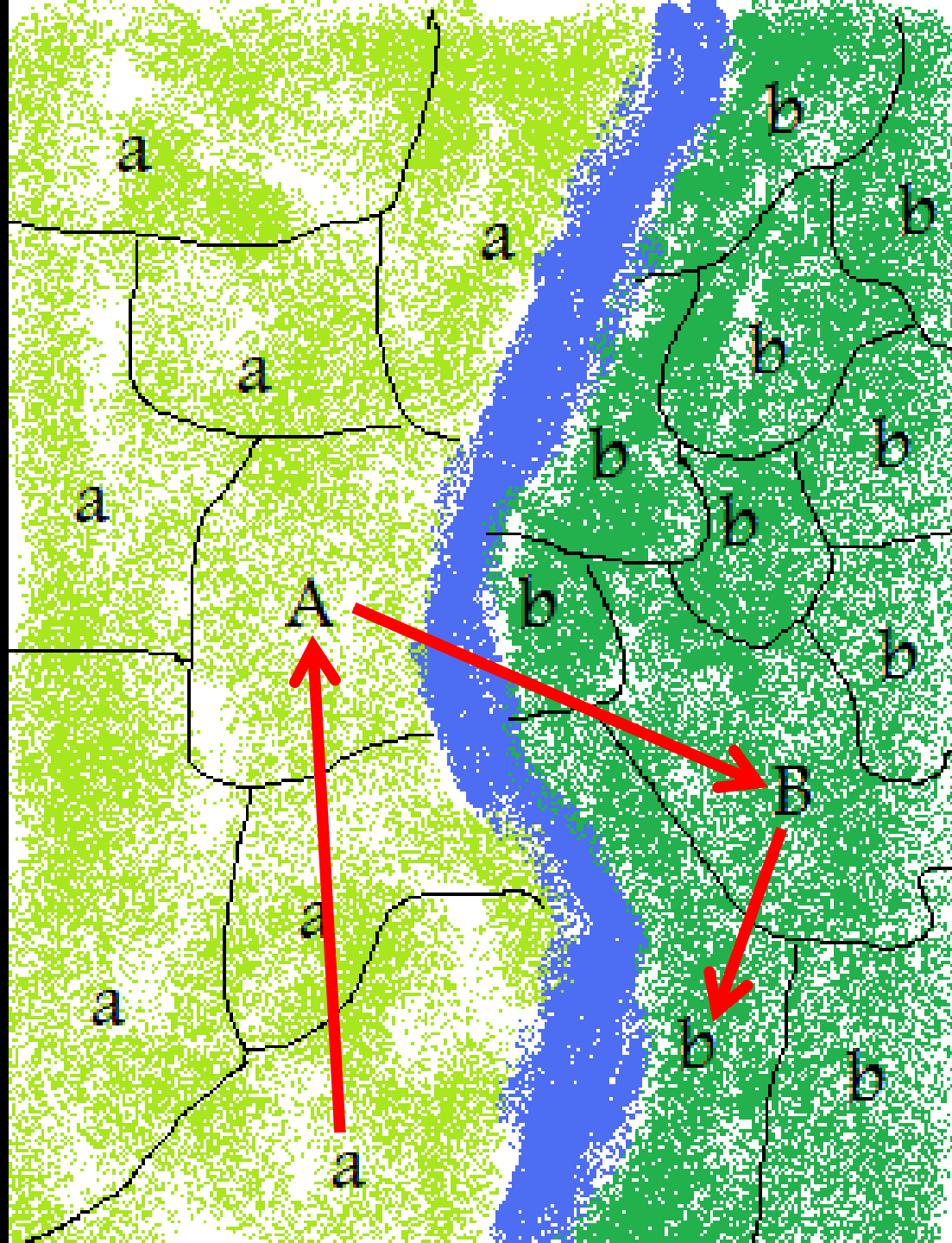
**With
Sovereignty**



**With
Sovereignty**



With
Sovereignty



Treaty of Westphalia

- Signed in 1648
- Ended the Thirty Years' War
- Established the principle of sovereignty
 - Sometimes called *Westphalian* sovereignty





KATY PERRY  @katyperry · 13h

During all my 9 years as a pop artist, the one thing I know for sure is that The Treaty of Westphalia was complete

 94

 4.1K

 6.2K



What is sovereignty?

- Definition: the monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a territory
- Dispute resolution between two sub-state actors occurs through the sovereign states
- Sovereigns are expected to ensure their sub-state actors do not use force against foreign actors

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 - But states violate this occasionally

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- Sovereign states control their own domestic affairs
 - But states violate this occasionally
 - U.S. incursion into Pakistan to kill Bin Laden
 - U.S. in Libya
 - Russia protecting South Ossetia from Georgia

What is sovereignty?

- Definition: the monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a territory
- Sovereign states control their own domestic affairs
 - But states violate this occasionally. Why?
 - Strong actors can get away with it
 - Why is there no punishment

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Who is sovereign over the
sovereign?

Violations of Domestic Political Order

- A man kills his neighbor
- A bank robber steals thousands of dollars
- The party last night got a little too crazy

Violations of Domestic Political Order

- A man kills his neighbor
 - The police come and take care of it
- A bank robber steals thousands of dollars
 - The police come and take care of it
- The party last night got a little too crazy
 - The police come and take care of it

When Things Aren't So Great

- A drug dealer kills a rival drug dealer
- A mafia boss assassinates a rival mafia boss

When Things Aren't So Great

- A drug dealer kills a rival drug dealer
 - Local police is too weak to do anything
- A mafia boss assassinates a rival mafia boss
 - Local police is too weak to do anything

Violations of Sovereignty

- In theory, sovereign states control their own domestic affairs
- But states sometimes encroach on other states' rights
 - Why doesn't the police come and arrest them?

Violations of Sovereignty

- Life in international relations is closer to the mafia world
- World police is either non-existent or weak (the United Nations)

Anarchy

- Definition: The lack of political authority

Anarchy

- Definition: The lack of political authority
- In international relations, no one is sovereign over the sovereign

Anarchy

- Anarchy is a world of “self-help”
 - Have a problem? Either go solve it on your own or convince your friend to help you
 - No government to come and rescue you

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 - Have a problem? Either go solve it on your own or convince your friend to help you
 - No government to come and rescue you
- Anarchy is *not* chaos
 - Most states are not fighting each other
 - Anarchy permits chaos...or order...or anything in between

IR's Challenge

- If anything can happen, how do we predict or explain outcomes?
 - Anarchy is a trivial explanation
 - We need more precise predictions and explanations

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How do we want to explain history
and predict the future?

Two Types of Explanations

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- Proximate cause: why did this happen the way it happened?
- Underlying cause: why was this asking to happen?
- We value underlying causes more
 - Proximate causes are descriptively useful but give us silly policy recommendations
 - Underlying causes tell us how to fix things

Examples: Dead Driver

Proximate Cause

- The driver died because he flew through the front windshield of his vehicle.

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Underlying Cause

- The driver died because he was not wearing his seatbelt.

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What have we learned?

- Don't fly through the windshield of your vehicle.
Don't get into car accidents.
Don't break a fall with your face.

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What have we learned?

- Don't fly through the windshield of your vehicle.
Don't get into car accidents.
Don't break a fall with your face.

What have we learned?

- Wear your seatbelt.

Examples: World War I

Proximate Cause

- Franz Ferdinand was assassinated.

Franz Ferdinand





Archduke Franz Ferdinand



Examples: World War I

Proximate Cause

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Underlying Cause

- Military technology gave states a huge first strike advantage.

Examples: World War I

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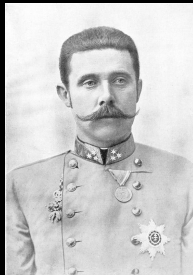
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- Don't let men with funny mustaches be assassinated.



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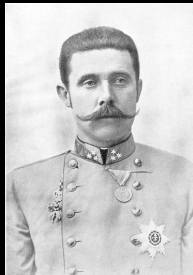
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What have we learned?

- First strike advantages cause war.



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What have we learned?

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What have we learned?

- Be magnanimous in victory.

The Lesson

- Proximate causes are funny
- Discovering underlying causes allows us to connect dissimilar situations and make sensible recommendations about today's world

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- Proximate causes are funny
- Discovering underlying causes allows us to connect dissimilar situations and make sensible recommendations about today's world
 - The process of discovery is hard

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The Problem

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- Solution: Analyze actors' abilities and desires to find plausible outcomes

The Strategic World

- There are about 200 states in the world
- How State 1 acts affects State 2's outcomes
- How State 2 acts affects State 1's outcomes
- How State 1 acts affects State 3's outcomes
- Etc.

The Strategic World

- There are about 200 states in the world
- How State 1 acts affects State 2's outcomes
- How State 2 acts affects State 1's outcomes
- How State 1 acts affects State 3's outcomes
- Etc.
- Therefore, states are strategically interdependent

The Strategic World

- States know they are strategically interdependent
 - Think about the intelligence budget of the United States alone. If the U.S. didn't care about strategic interdependence, why would they spend that much money?

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 - Think about the intelligence budget of the United States alone. If the U.S. didn't care about strategic interdependence, why would they spend that much money?
- If only there were a scientific way to study strategic interdependence...

Why We Formalize Arguments

- It's easy to get lost in the complex incentives that states face
- Building models of state behavior helps us keep things tractable
- Goal: Map assumptions to logically valid conclusions

Our Recipe

1. Create some assumptions
2. Do some (light) math
3. Reach logically valid conclusions

Some Pitfalls

- If our assumptions are silly, our conclusions might also be silly
 - But they will be logically valid silliness!
 - Our results are only as good as our assumptions
- If our assumptions are too open, we won't be able to do the math
 - Therefore, we won't be able to reach any conclusions at all

Thinking about Models

- Models are not reality—and intentionally so
- Don't say: "This model is bad because it doesn't exactly match the real world"
- Say: "I don't think this model captures important strategic dynamics that could fundamentally alter our conclusions"

