

South, are, like the positions of the traditional powers, also derived from their own national interests. While it was to their political advantage to portray themselves as the instruments of the economic agenda of the Global South, they play this role only insofar as the general agendas of the Global South are consistent with the specific agendas of their own politically important domestic groups.

The contrasting cases of Brazil and India illustrate the point. India is happy to support free trade in services, but defends its agricultural sector fiercely against the threats posed by openness to imports. Brazil became the hero of the Global South by winning WTO victories against the European Union sugar subsidies and U.S. cotton subsidies that disadvantaged agriculturalists from the Global South. Brazil's ability to win this victory was derived from its willingness to take a politically audacious position, but it also depended on the confidence of Brazilian private agribusinesses that they would be major beneficiaries from a victory, and on their consequent willingness to marshal full-scale technical support in the negotiations (pp. 112–17). Not surprisingly, the distribution of eventual benefits was tilted toward agribusiness interests rather than poor cotton farmers in Benin or Chad. In short, while the political successes of the emerging powers may redound to a certain extent to the Global South as a whole, they continue to reflect domestic national interests for these new actors.

Hopewell demonstrates why an understanding of national political and economic dynamics is essential for grounding an analysis of negotiating conflicts in the WTO. At the same time, her analysis provides a springboard for thinking about the institutional future of the global political economy as a whole.

One way of thinking about the decay of global neoliberal institutions is as a case of the evaporation of hegemony in the Gramscian sense of hegemony as applied to the global system by Robert Cox, Giovanni Arrighi, and others (pp. 27–28). Hegemony in this sense is more effective and less costly to maintain than simple domination. The ability to exert coercive power (domination) is part of hegemony, but hegemony requires, in addition, that the global agendas of dominant nations be credibly perceived by less powerful nations as delivering positive externalities and thereby serving a more general interest.

The United States (supported by its allies) dominated the global political economy in the second half of the twentieth century, but it also exercised a substantial degree of hegemony. The double myth that global institutions were, in fact, delivering nationally neutral “free markets” and that these free markets maximized the returns to all players was contested but also accepted in surprisingly large measure. Hopewell demonstrates how the erosion of domination undermines hegemony, reinforcing in turn the erosion of domination.

The evaporation of hegemony sets the stage for even the leader of the dominant power to abandon the shared mythology and thereby give up whatever positive externalities the system might have delivered, increasing instability and the cost of governing the system.

Reflecting on the evaporation of hegemony makes China's place in Hopewell's analysis particularly interesting. She underlines that China was forced to give up a great deal to be accepted as a member of the system of neoliberal global governance. She also points out that while China has more actual economic leverage than either India or Brazil, it has used its leverage in a quieter way in the course of struggles over the WTO, eschewing the role of “rabble-rouser” and avoiding rhetoric that would draw additional attention to the massive effects of its manufactured exports.

Reading Hopewell's Chapter 6 on China, one cannot help thinking that it sounds like the behavior of a country exploring the possibilities of constructing hegemony. Even if this is true, there is, of course, no reason to believe that even the most sophisticated strategy can surmount the chaos likely to ensue as the current system of hegemony declines in the direction of ineffectual efforts at domination. Nonetheless, the author's fertile insights into a path that might lead in the direction of a new hegemony nicely complements her analysis of the decay of the existing system. Regardless of how the uncertain future of global governance institutions plays out in the coming decades, carefully perusing Hopewell's brilliant *Breaking the WTO* should be part of the preparation of anyone hoping to understand the current bases of future trajectories.

The Causes of War and the Spread of Peace: But Will War Rebound? By Azar Gat. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 320p. \$34.95 cloth.
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— David Sobek, *Louisiana State University*

Attempting to understand the origins of war and peace has a long lineage in international relations. One could argue that Thucydides made the first effort a couple millennia ago. Azar Gat actually embeds his analysis in history well past even Thucydides as he looks to anthropologic evidence to more deeply understand if war is an inherent biological trait of humanity or a problem of our own making. In this way, the book under review here is not only about what causes war but also about the root source of violence itself.

The starting point of any such endeavor seems to be an evaluation of the biology of violence. Is violence endemic among animal species or is it an exception to the rule of peace? One would expect that natural selection would work to remove propensities to kill from a species, as that trait would decrease its long-term survival prospects, but theorists have also long argued about the violent and

competitive status of nature. Gat focuses on the more recent biological literature and notes that “innumerable field studies have revealed that lethal violent competition within species in nature is endemic and widespread” (p. 5). Of course, humans may still be an exception, but there are also numerous studies that have shown that prehistoric human groupings were quite violent. For instance, a study of around 9,000-year-old Paleoamerican remains found “violent injuries in 58 percent of the males and 18 percent of the females” (p. 13).

One has to be careful inferring too much from these studies, but the consistency of violence seen across different animal species is likely meaningful. While this does not mean that humans are inherently violent, the weight of evidence seems to weaken the image of the peaceful prestate societies. This is an important conclusion as it shows that violence preceded the state, which is a foundational part of Gat’s argument. There remains a key distinction, however, because even if violence is not driven by the state, it does not necessarily mean that war preceded the state.

Gat acknowledges that violence and war are not quite the same, and this would certainly be true with just about all of the prehistoric analyses. The anthropologic record, then, really creates two new questions. First, assuming that there was violence, what were humans fighting over? Second, what happens when one takes these apparent biological drivers of violent competition and places them in more complex social organizations, which eventually become the modern state?

To answer the first question, Gat dives into the rich psychological and social-psychological literature that has repeatedly examined the sources of human desires and actions. The answer that he settles on is both intuitive and not necessarily new: biological imperative. In other words, individuals are competing over resources that determine their biological fitness and the ability to pass on genes to future generations. As such, it is not surprising that the competition for resources (food and water) as well as reproductive partners sparks violent confrontations. Of course, this is not the end of the story.

The real crux of the question concerning the origins of violence revolves around the impact of complex social organizations. Unlike our animal counterparts, humans have developed a large set of social connections and institutions that can alter individual calculations about violence and cooperation. Gat sees these institutions as less about altering human behaviors than about being designed to enhance the survival of those who control them. In other words, the state is a vehicle that can be used to increase the survival of an individual or group of individuals.

The story, though, is not that simple. The development of these complex social organizations also creates a new set of competitions that can lead to violence:

power, security, status, worldviews, pageantry, and play. The importance of these competitions remains tied to the biological imperatives and to the ways in which control of the state satisfies those necessities. These new competitions, however, also raise the stakes as they often involve not just individuals competing but entire societies as well.

If these social organizations can drive behaviors of a large group of individuals, can they ultimately be used to limit the use of violence? Gat’s use of evolutionary theory and links to biological drives leaves open a path to both peace and war. In other words, the drive is to increase survival and procreation (even if society has hid it behind other competitions), but there is no reason to believe that violence is always the most effective path to survival. Violence and cooperation are two tools that can be used to increase survival, and the choice of instrument remains driven by the costs and benefits of each approach.

From this perspective, Gat argues that the recent era of international peace between the great powers has less to do with a changing view of international politics, inherently peaceful views of democracies, or a change in the base desires of humans, but more to do with the economic benefits that modernization has created. In other words, states/individuals can better increase their survival chances with the peaceful benefits of a modernized economy than with more violent appropriations. In this way, Gat offers a new, and more pragmatic, twist on Normal Angell’s *The Great Illusion* (1910). Where Angell saw the prospects for war virtually eliminated, Gat offers a more tempered view in that the likelihood of war is currently decreased but never far from the surface, given its biological roots.

In general, the author offers a well-reasoned and researched analysis of both the root causes of war and the way that human society and institutions have mapped onto the biological sources of violence. He nicely brings the question down to the individual level and builds up to the larger questions, but this strength also leads to an omission. The state, for Gat, remains a vehicle. It is important inasmuch as individuals can use it to fulfill their needs, but it seems to have no agency in and of itself. While he is clearly correct that individuals can use the state for their own purposes, it appears unlikely that the state has no role other than as a tool for others to control.

This role of the state could range from a bureaucratic model where it is no longer a unitary actor but a loosely connected group of bureaucracies to a stronger version in which the state has its own set of interests that drives its behaviors. When a state goes to war, for instance, is that cost/benefit decision driven by the interests of the state or the interests of those that control the state? Gat seems to imply the latter, which is possible, but it is difficult to completely discount the ability of the state to have its own set of preferences and act accordingly.

Overall, *The Causes of War and the Spread of Peace* offers a compelling argument as to the biological roots of human violence as well as the ways that human institutions affect the choices to use cooperation or violence to achieve our ends.

This emphasis on the biology of violence dovetails nicely with Gat's use of evolutionary theory to explain both the continued role that violence plays and the choices we made that have changed over time and may change in the future.
