Power, Trade, and War.

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A few other contributions round out the collection. K. Subrahmanyanam gives a factual review of nuclear proliferation, Toru Yano combines a good study of the spread of democratization with a convoluted portrayal of decolonization; Richard Falk attempts to combat neorealism with assertions in the place of analysis; and Willy Brandt and Gro Harlem Brundtland write op-ed pieces—Brandt’s as the introduction (as it should be) and Brundtland’s, curiously, as one of the substantive chapters.

The book is a lost opportunity, marked by a few strong contributions, some salient insights, and a few thematic leitmotivs that could have provided the rails for a powerful analysis if the other chapters had joined in the collective enterprise. The collection is worth reading for those messages; and even the weak chapters can serve as a foil for inquisitive speculation on better ways to handle the problems. Perhaps there were too many noteworthy figures invited to participate in the conference to allow for an effective integration of views, messages, and egos; and perhaps the editors never tried. It is too bad; for the challenge of understanding the upsurging world in all its chaotic diversity is of the magnitude of Alfred Nobel and the conference participants.

Johns Hopkins University I. WILLIAM ZARTMAN


Edward Mansfield argues in this book that there is a curvilinear relationship between the concentration of power and war at the level of the international system, based on data for five-year periods between 1825 and 1964; that is, war is most likely at intermediate levels of power concentration, least likely at either low or high levels. He also argues that war is more (less) likely when there are relatively low (high) levels of international trade flows. The two variables—power concentration and trade—explain a high percentage of variance in the war data. Thus, Mansfield concludes that a combination of neorealist and political economy perspectives is needed to explain war at the level of the international system.

The path to these conclusions is lengthy and difficult, given the disparate approaches to measuring war; but Mansfield does an excellent job of explaining his steps along this tortuous route. An entire chapter (chapter 2) is devoted to describing and comparing war data collections by previous scholars. Five different definitions of war and nine data sets derived from them are discussed in this chapter. It is interesting and somewhat disheartening that the correlations between system war measures in the different data sets is low. According to the author: "Given the low correlation between these data sets, analysts should be hesitant to use them interchangeably. This is not to imply that any of [them] is ‘wrong’ or misleading. Each is useful contingent on the objectives of the particular analysis” (p. 43).

One of the major subsidiary arguments of the book is that scholars have paid too much attention to "polarity"—the number of poles (sometimes equated with the number of great powers) in the system. Mansfield agrees with these authors that the distribution of power is a key potential causal variable but disagrees with their contention that polarity is the best way to measure that distribution. He argues, instead, for using a measure of concentration that takes into account both the number of great powers and the relative distribution of power across them. This argument is made quite persuasively.

Mansfield also suggests that other scholars have erred in testing only monotonic relationships between the distribution of power and war, demonstrating that a curvilinear model explains more variance. Again, I found this demonstration convincing.

Finally, Mansfield shows that multivariate models combining economic variables (trade levels in particular) with political ones (the concentration of power) explain a higher percentage of variance in systemic war levels than models that do not. This suggests to him that "interdisciplinary research between political scientists and economists needs to be conducted, and is likely to foster a fuller understanding of the relationships among power, trade, and war" (p. 253). Again, the argument was quite convincing.

There is only a short discussion in the book of its implications for current policy. Mansfield implies that the breakup of the Soviet empire "bodes poorly for the avoidance of war in Europe" but that "continued expansion of international trade offers an avenue for improving political relations while, at the same time, increasing global welfare" (pp. 252-53).

What is missing here, unfortunately, is a careful discussion of how far one can generalize or extrapolate from the type of systemic data used in the various data analyses. For example, Mansfield mentions briefly that there are reasons to believe that the introduction of nuclear weapons may have changed the relationship between the distribution of power and war but does not go on to explain why he fails to take the argument seriously.

Still, Mansfield should be praised for the care and skill he demonstrates in dealing with a wide variety of theories, data sets, and statistical methods. The prose is a bit tortuous and therefore not suited to use in introductory courses; but for graduate students about to undertake their own empirical quests, it would be hard to find a better exemplar.

Indiana University JEFFREY A. HART


At its core, the field of international political economy remains rightfully concerned with relationships between firms and states in the global economy. The modes of inquiry shift quite frequently in the discipline, as do the subjects, moving from firm back to state, from local to international markets, and from quantitative to qualitative analyses. The basic questions, though, remain largely the same: How do firms affect the behavior of states? How do states shape and constrain the profit-making potential of firms? And how do the two types of actors interact in, and ultimately create, the world economic system?

In Mercantile States and the World Oil Cartel, Gregory Nowell brings a clear and decisive voice to the ongoing dialogue of the field. Unlike many recent works that confine themselves to minor corollaries of existing the-