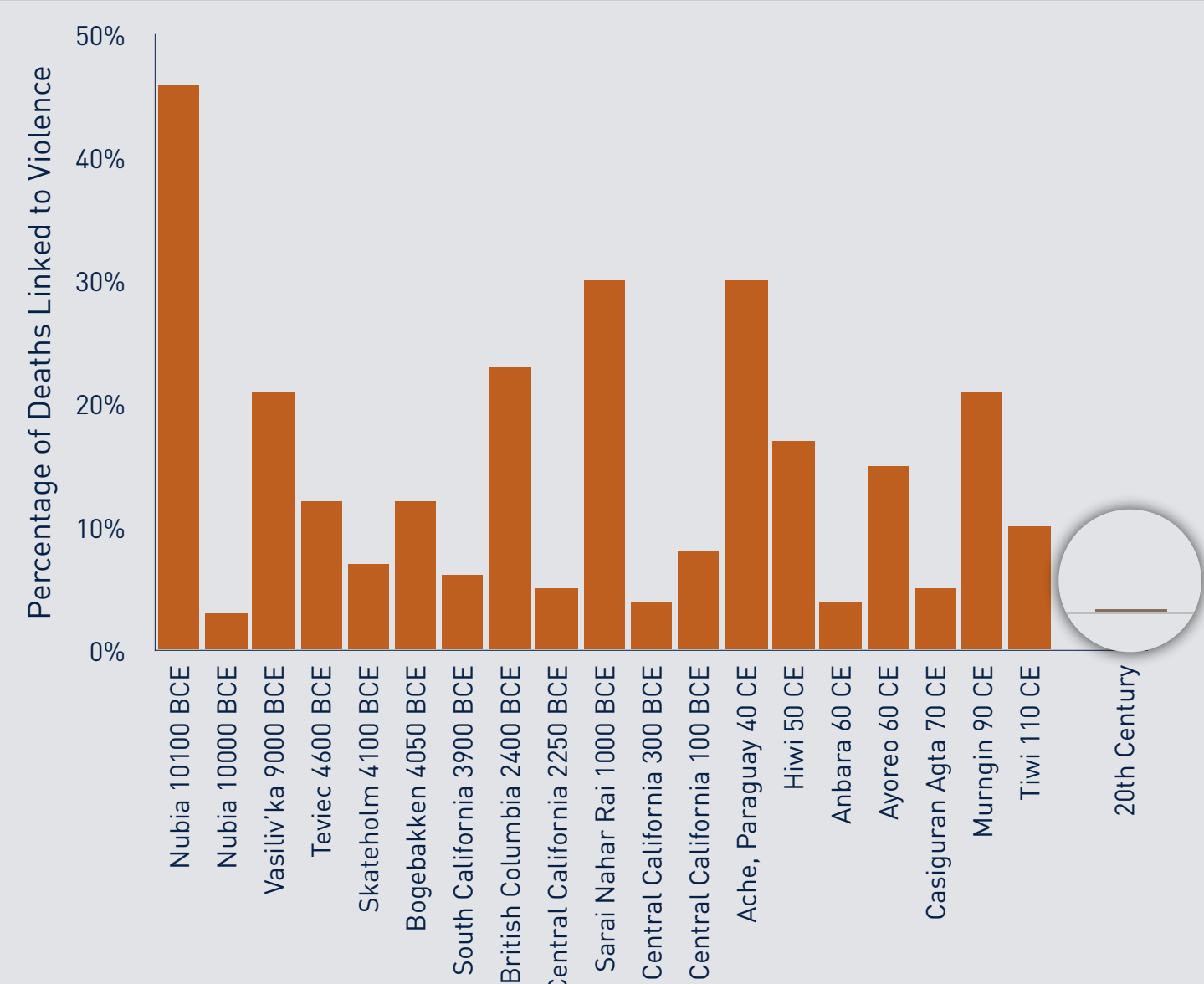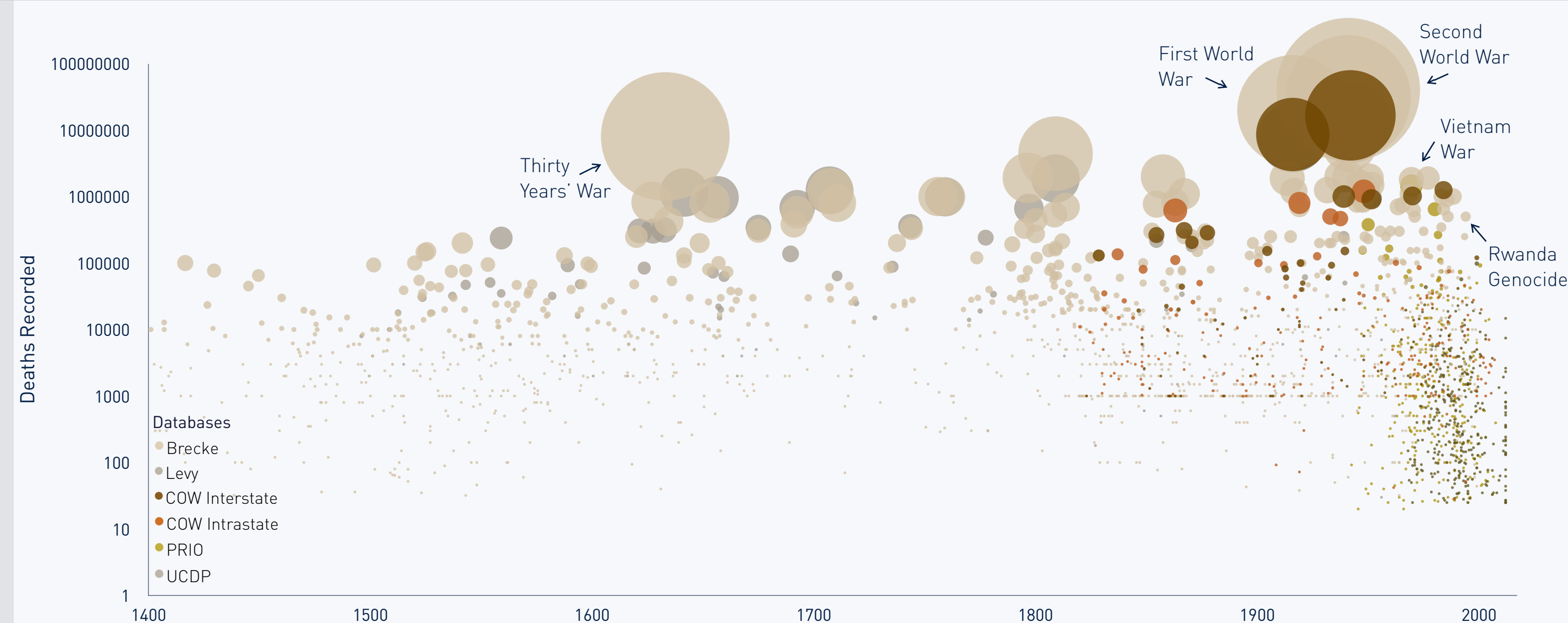# PEACE AND CONFLICT ACROSS TIME
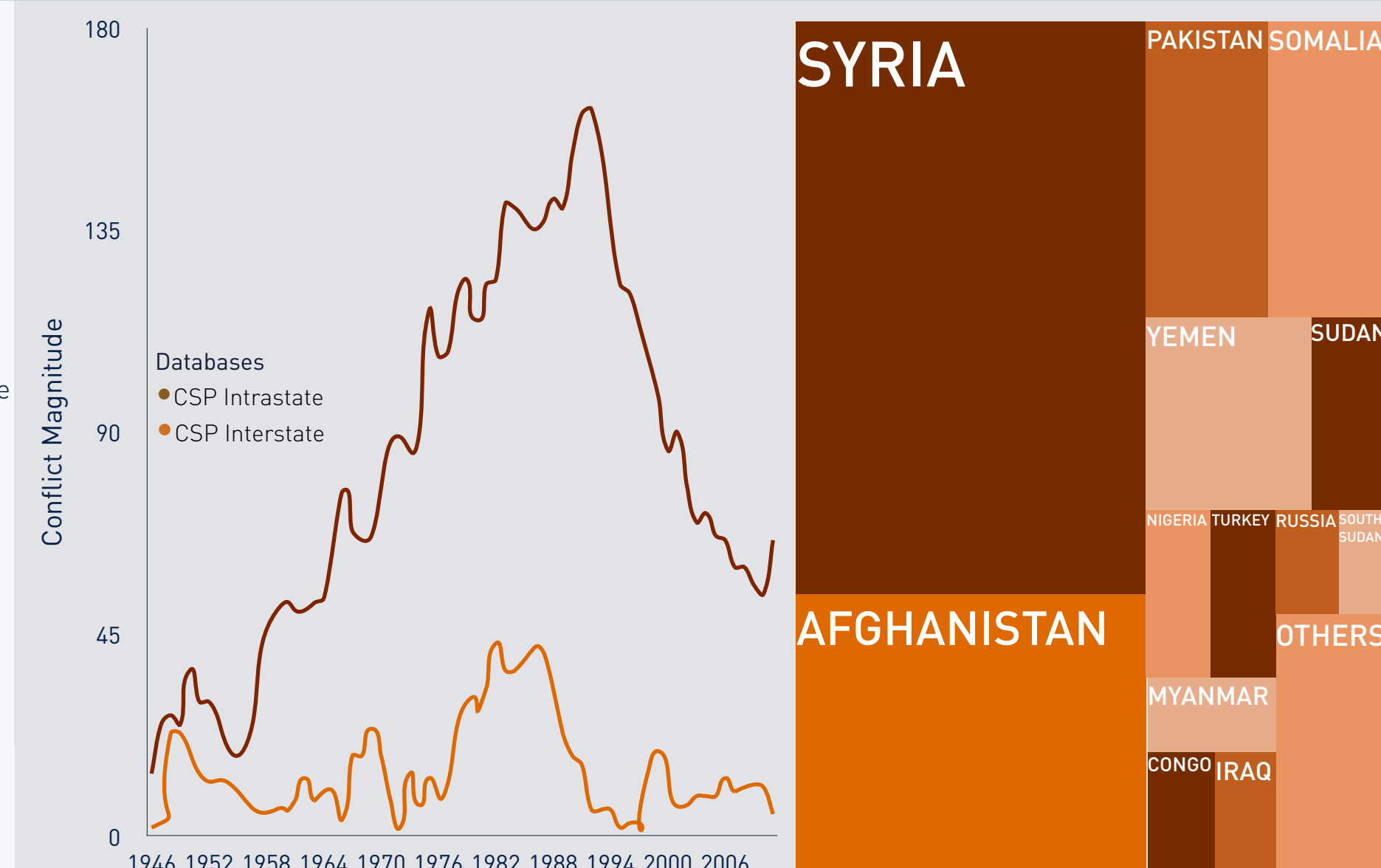
DECLINE OF CONFLICT

PREHISTORIC TIMES

The chances of dying a violent death were dramatically higher in pre-state societies than they are today.

HISTORY

Since the late Middle Ages, on average a shrinking proportion of the world population has died in conflict each year. Westphalian war has become less prevalent since the mid 20th Century, with not a single Great Power war since 1953. Size of bubble shows percentage of world population killed.
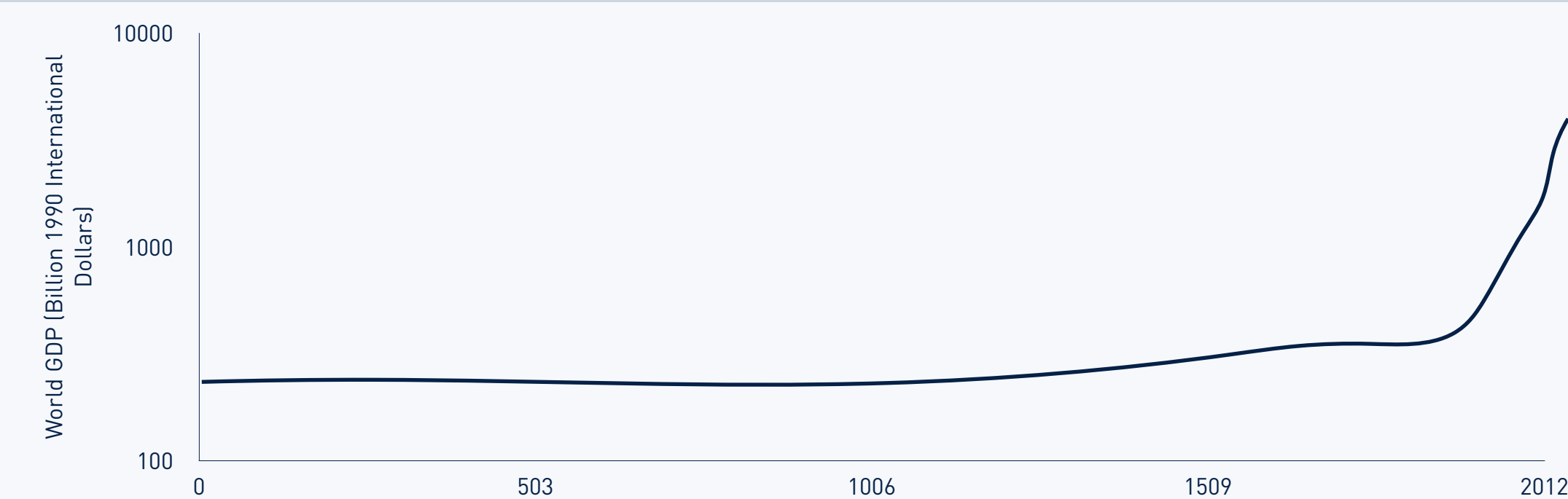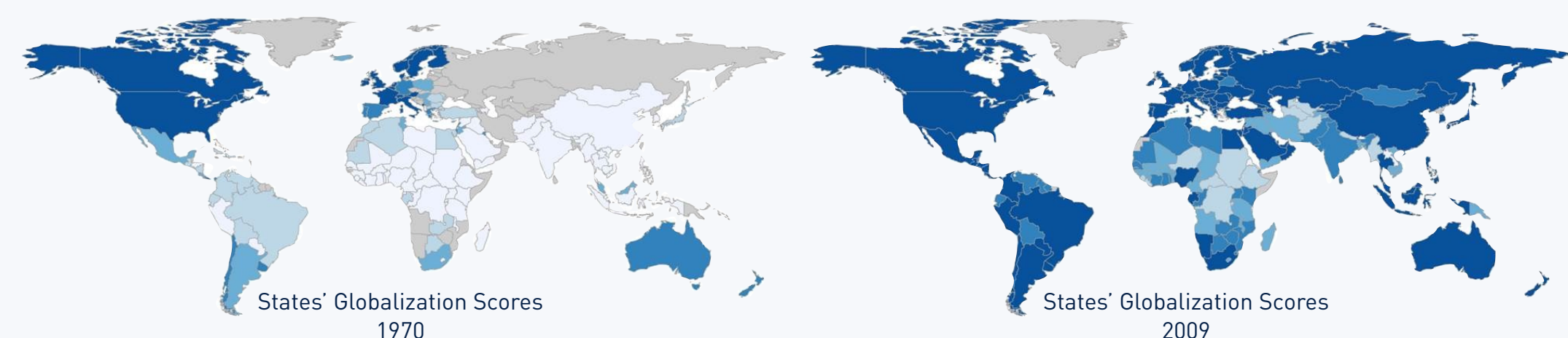
MODERN TIMES

Despite the precipitous decline in war, interstate tensions still exist and intrastate conflict continues to take its toll on societies worldwide. Size of box shows battle deaths in 2012.
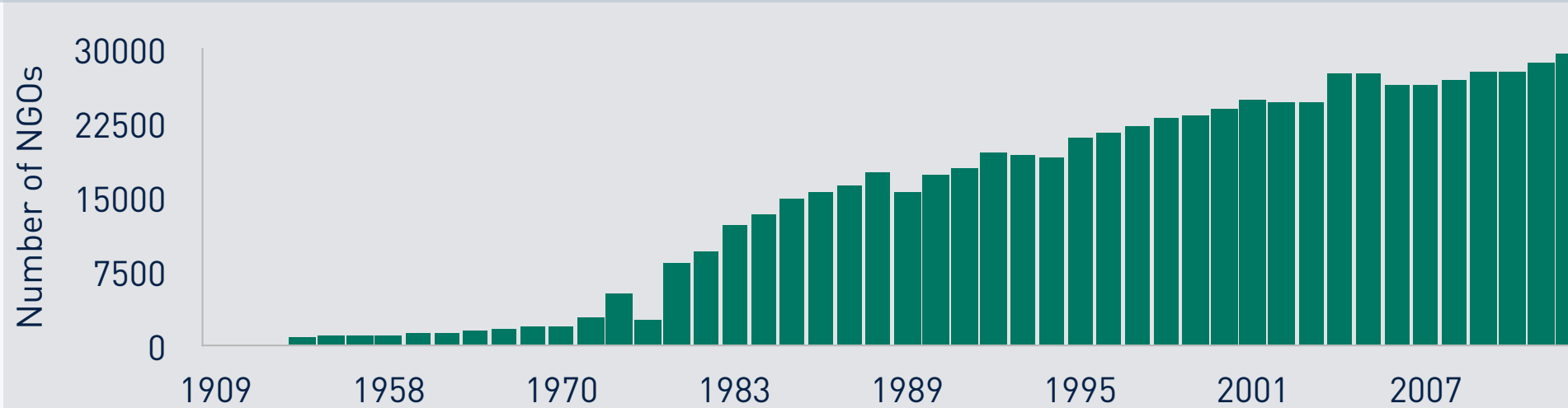
DRIVERS OF PEACE

ECONOMY

As wealth increases, we have lower incentives to wage war. Peace has proven profitable.

States' Globalization Scores 1970

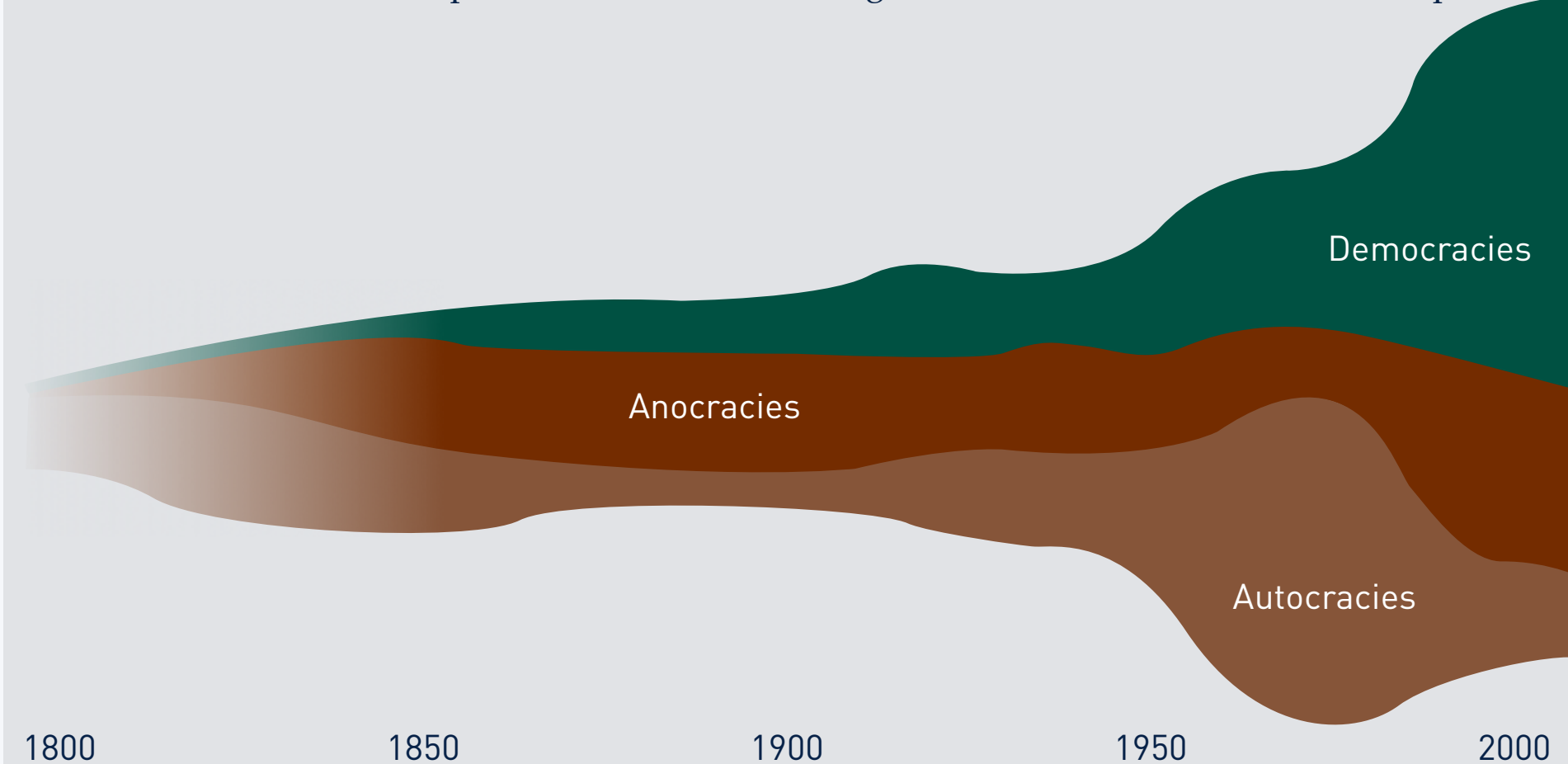States' Globalization Scores 2009

We are more interconnected than ever. When we hurt friend or foe, we hurt ourselves. Darker shade of blue indicates higher globalization score.
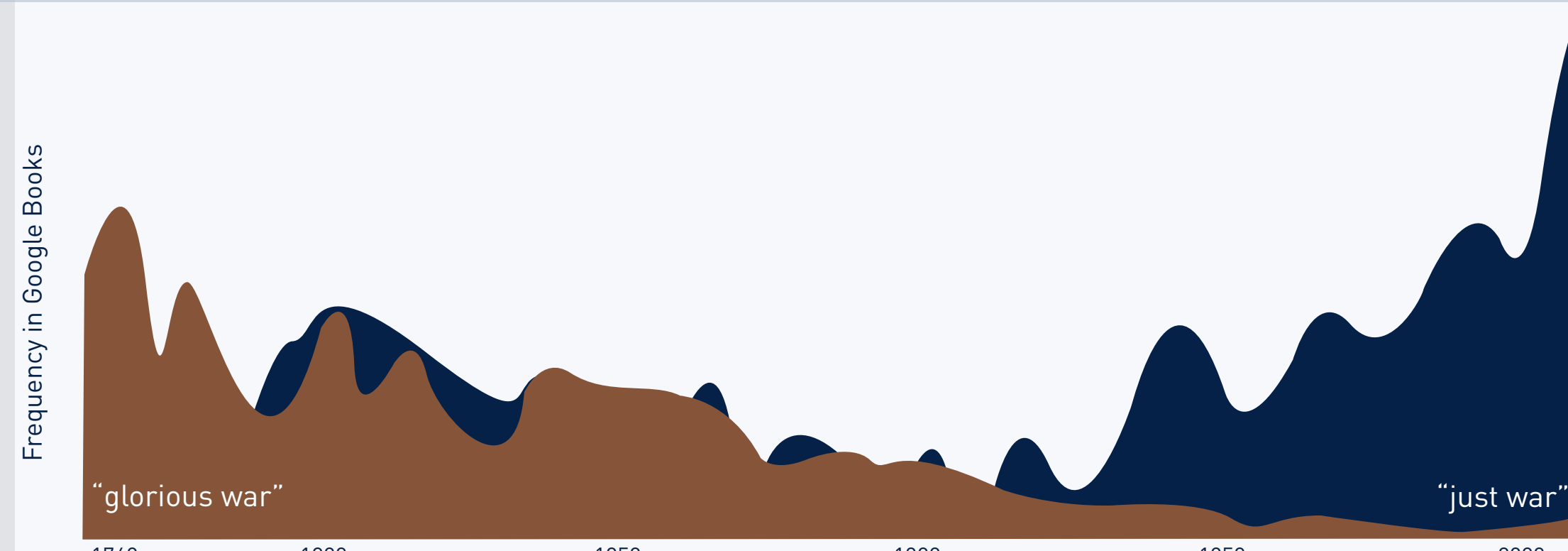
GOVERNANCE

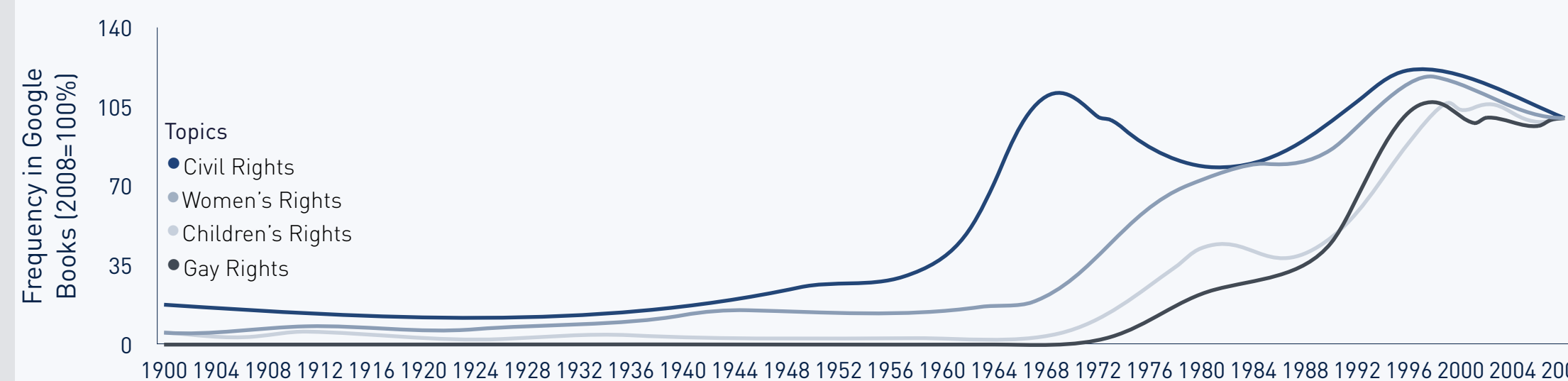International NGOs have exploded in number, fostering new coordination mechanisms for peace.

The spread of democracy marks the rise of a form of governance less vulnerable to intrastate conflict.

VALUES

The concept of 'just war' has become dominant in discourses about war and peace, replacing the notion that war is a 'glorious' endeavor.

The 20th Century heralded the individual rights revolution, illustrating the increased value placed on human lives.

AUTHORS
Tim Sweijs, Joshua Polchar

The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies
www.hcss.nl • Knowledge for Security