Security and International Relations by Edward A. Kolodziej (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Tyler Haupert
Pepperdine University

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A review by Tyler Haupert

For much of the second half of the twentieth century, the United States and the Soviet Union were engaged in a conflict now known as the Cold War. Never before had the human species possessed the ability, or the will, to end its entire existence. This monumental threat captivated and terrified much of the world for the better part of five decades only to end, seemingly, in the blink of an eye. History books are easily able to tell how it ended, but few are able to adequately explain *why*. Clearly, Premier Mikhail Gorbachev put many reforms into action, and soon thereafter the Soviet Union was no longer. Edward A. Kolodziej, author of *Security and International Relations*, does not focus on the incidents that occurred near the end of the Cold War. Rather, he searches for a security paradigm able to sufficiently recognize and explain the underlying causes of the event. Kolodziej asserts that no one train of security thought is completely consistent with the proceedings that led to the termination of the Soviet-American conflict. The author's unbiased delivery, legitimization of the Cold War as a paradigm test, and occasional, though possibly too infrequent, look at the future of security, make *Security and International Relations* a beneficial and enticing study.

By judging each security paradigm through the lens of Imre Lakatos' [1] rules for theory falsification, Kolodziej presents a genuinely fair discussion. The discussion follows Lakatos' guidelines for "naïve falsification" by testing "how well each of the seven schools of thought explain the rise and demise of the Cold War and the implosion of the

Soviet Union as the death blow to the post-World War II bipolar system." [2] By analyzing each paradigm through a common event, Kolodziej allows no advantages or disadvantages to any one party. Kolodziej's intention is to gain a greater understanding from the plethora of security viewpoints, not to disprove each theory, thereby expelling possible insight. However, if a school of thought were to prove false, in this situation, it need not completely invalidate the entire security arena. Kolodziej also utilizes Lakatos' "sophisticated" test for falsification by using each school of thought "to contest the other." [3] This design is the basis of *Security and International Relations*, as each of its theories is compared to and tested against its opponents. All too often, security theories are proven true using especially obliging incidents as tests. However, by standardizing his discussion, Kolodziej allows the beneficial *and* negative aspect of each school of thought an equal chance at being discovered.

The Cold War is not only the common test of theories in *Security and International Relations*, but is also shown to be the best test available. "Much of the history of the Cold War would appear to initially conform to the assumptions of [Thomas Hobbes, Carl von Clausewitz, and Thucydides]." [4] Kolodziej recognizes these three scholars as providing a basis for security theories. By conforming on some level to traditional schools of thought, the Cold War qualifies as a test for paradigms based on them. Kolodziej also cites the scientifically advanced characteristics of the Cold War as exposing the shortcomings of some inadequate classic security theories. Perhaps most importantly, the Cold War's global scope "engaged all of the actors and principal factors identified (albeit differently) by the security theories." [5] discussed by Kolodziej. This all-encompassing global quality

ensures that no aspect of a theory is at risk of being absent in the example of the Cold War. Kolodziej's choice to use this war demonstrates fairness among security theories.

The Cold War, along with being fair for this discussion, is complex enough to expose deficiencies in each theory. By comparing and contrasting, Kolodziej is able to present the strengths and weaknesses of each paradigm in direct relation to its competitors. The author purposely intertwines the theories throughout the discussion to prepare the reader for a conclusion that presents no clear winner. Rather than choose a single superior paradigm, Kolodziej asserts that, "security schools must engage with each other, if they are to keep pace with the actors they are studying." [6] The reader is not disappointed by this conclusion, because Kolodziej is sure to point out each weakness, strength, and similarity to its competitors that a certain theory possesses.

Perhaps the most engaging chapter in *Security and International Relations* is the section discussing Marxism. Although Kolodziej describes this school of thought's shortcomings when tested against the Cold War, he is able to display its relevance to the modern world of security. While other theories are discussed almost solely in relation to the Cold War and each other, Kolodziej describes the influence of Marxism on the world today. He asserts that "Marx's Phillippic against capitalism also inspires formidable challenges to the preservation and extension of the market system and the current international order on which it precariously rests." [7] This look at the current influence and significance of Marxism shows that a theory cannot be discarded because it does not fit perfectly with the standards of a test. Kolodziej goes on to discuss the large portion of the world that is currently developing in a manner very vulnerable to Marxist principles. By viewing

Marxism aside from the obviously contrasting events of the Cold War, Kolodziej gives the reader confidence in the validity of the theory.

However, one must wonder if the integrity of the conversation is lost when Kolodziej discusses Marx's socialism outside of the realm of the Cold War. This may very well be the fact of the matter, as Kolodziej gives Marxism an unfair advantage over other theories which are almost never discussed in relation to the world today. It is to be desired, not so much in the name of fairness, but rather to increase the beneficial ideas provided by Kolodziej's work, that he would include discussions for every theory linked to our world today. The author does not claim to present a work describing current day issues, thus, the book's lack of such discussions cannot be counted as a flaw. However, the section on Marx gives the reader an idea of the incredible insight that might be gained if each theory were applied to current global situations.

Beyond the lack of current theory application, the book's main flaw is Kolodziej's inclusion of a lengthy discussion of Behaviorism and Power Transfer. This section seems out of place and unhelpful among the other topics detailed. Kolodziej admits that "the capacity of PT research to capture historical contexts accurately and their relevance in explaining security behavior remains a serious drawback to this research program." [8] While Kolodziej does concede that Behaviorism and Constructivism "are better described as approaches than as paradigms" [9] it remains that the sections devoted to these theories, especially the section discussing Behaviorism, are out of place in *Security and International Relations*. Although PT is a useful tool for gathering and analyzing statistical data on a security situation, its lack of theoretical basis or human debate cause

it to feel foreign and inadequate in a discussion on security paradigms. Kolodziej may have been too ambitious in attempting to describe and analyze an approach so different from those preceding it.

Despite his lack of current day paradigm examples and the unbefitting discussion on Power Transfer, Kolodziej presents an innovative and effective work. He claims that a goal of his discussion is to "draw currently rival partisans into a constructive dialogue to cooperatively address the mounting security challenges of this century." [10] *Security and International Relations* achieves that goal by presenting opposing paradigms in a manner which allows them to challenge and compliment one another. The Cold War poses as the test by which a wide variety of security theories can be verified or falsified. The objective of these theories is to "identify generalizations across actor behavior that apply across time, space, and social circumstances." [11] Kolodziej's discussion is a noteworthy attempt to display these theories in an unbiased manner, thus allowing the reader to decide whether they meet their objective or fall short. Kolodziej hopes that what remains after the paradigms are vigorously tested, "is provisionally reliable knowledge about security." [12] Through this discussion he attempts to provide readers with the tools necessary to find the "why" rather than the "how" not only for the Cold War, but for all security issues to come.

References

1. Renowned Hungarian physicist and philosopher who expanded on Karl Popper's theory of falsification

2. Kolodziej, E. (2005). Security and International Relations (Themes in International Relations). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 44.

3. Ibid, 44.

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4. Ibid, 79.

5. Ibid, 81.

6. Ibid, 318.

7. Ibid, 207.

8. Ibid, 247

9. Ibid, 227.

10. Ibid, 317.

11. Ibid, 308

12. Ibid,308.