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A Lakatosian View of the Democratic Peace Research Program

James Lee Ray

The world's need for another review of recent research on the "democratic peace" is not apparent.¹ Another review by this author is particularly prone to redundancy.² But this chapter is not intended to provide a comprehensive review of work on the democratic peace; it gives particularly short shrift to those who are critical of it. I first review briefly Lakatos's methodology of scientific

¹ See, for example, Steve Chan, "In Search of Democratic Peace: Problems and Promise," *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 41, No. [XX] (May 1997), pp. 59–91; Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, "From Democratic Peace to Kantian Peace: Democracy and Conflict in the International System," in Manus Midlarsky, ed., *Handbook of War Studies*, 2d ed. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2000), pp. 93–128.

² James Lee Ray, "The Democratic Path to Peace," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (April 1997), pp. 49–64; James Lee Ray, "Does Democracy Cause Peace?" in Nelson W. Polsby, ed., *Annual Review of Political Science* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Annual Reviews, Inc., 1998), pp. 27–46; James Lee Ray, "On the Level(s), Does Democracy Correlate with Peace?" in John A. Vasquez, ed., *What Do We Know About War?* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 219–316.

This is a revised version of paper presented earlier at the conference on "Progress in International Relations Theory" (PIRT) in Scottsdale, Arizona, January 15–16, 1999, and at the annual convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C., February 16–20, 1999. It was written originally at the invitation of Mimi and Colin Elman, who have provided continual and valuable feedback on earlier versions. Katherine Barbieri, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Nils Petter Gleditsch, Bruce Russett, Richard Tucker, and John Vasquez have also provided useful comments. All the participants at the PIRT conference contributed to my education on these matters; Andrew Bennett, Robert Keohane, Steve Krasner, Randy Schweller, and Kenneth Waltz made particularly memorable criticisms. I should also acknowledge that I might have conveniently allowed even more telling comments by others to escape my attention.

research programs,³ pointing out some of its strengths and weaknesses in comparison to its main competitors. Then I turn to a description and analysis of the democratic peace research program, relying on Lakatosian concepts and guidelines. In the process, I focus on a recent innovation or modification of the program focusing on the axiom or basic assumption that all leaders of states (democratic or otherwise) have as a first priority holding onto their positions of leadership. Some of the implications of this basic axiom are considered, as is its potential for making it possible to subsume or even “falsify” more traditional approaches to international politics that rely instead on basic assumptions such as “states seek power,” or “states seek security.” Finally, having argued that the democratic peace research program does have the potential to “falsify” realism, I conclude with some recognition of the limits to this claim, as well as a discussion of some reasons to be optimistic about the future of this research program.

“Scientific Progress” According to Lakatos

Those of us who might be inclined to cling to the notion of the scientific enterprise as a noble pursuit of “truth” ought to consider, perhaps, the sobering implications of the fact that although Einstein is almost certainly this century’s paragon of scientific virtues, even his theories confront potentially debilitating anomalies.⁴ All theories face *some* anomalies, and to reject them all would lead to the nihilistic conclusion that no scientific theories are valid. But if one accepts as inevitable *some* falsifying evidence pertaining to *all* theories, how much is too much? As Kuhn shows, popular theories, or paradigms, can be

³ Imre Lakatos, “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes,” in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 91–197.

⁴ Brian L. Silver, *The Ascent of Science* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 441. “Almost every theory in history has had some anomalies or refuting instances; indeed no one has ever been able to point to a single major theory which did not exhibit some anomalies.” Larry Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1977), p. 27.

impervious to an amount of falsifying evidence that in retrospect seems rather astonishing.⁵ So Kuhn, as well as Lakatos, rejects simple falsifiability as the hallmark of scientific theories: "We cannot prove theories and we cannot disprove them either."⁶

If we accept Kuhnian interpretations, transitions between paradigms are at best a-rational, if not downright irrational. According to Kuhn (or at least according to some interpretations of Kuhn),⁷ such transitions occur as a result of a gestalt-shift within scientific communities. Taken to its logical extreme, Kuhn's philosophy seems to portray "science" as based on relatively prolonged periods of irrational, dogmatic attachment to predominant paradigms interspersed with equally irrational periods of "revolution" based more on psychological or sociological factors than on sober appraisals of new evidence as it comes along.⁸

Lakatos argues, in contrast, that scientific progress can be based on rational criteria. He "begins by denying that isolated individual theories are the appropriate units of appraisal; what ought to be appraised are clusters of interconnected theories or 'scientific research programs'."⁹ While stressing that these research programs cannot and should not be abandoned in the face of single or even multiple examples of contrary evidence, Lakatos is equally insistent that "we

⁵ Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

⁶ Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*; Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," p. 100.

⁷ "Kuhn changed his views several times. I have come across twenty-five different versions of Kuhn." Paul Diesing, *How Does Social Science Work?* (Pittsburgh, Penn.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991), p. 156.

⁸ John Losee, *A Historical Introduction to the Philosophy of Science*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 228.

⁹ Mark Blaug, "Kuhn versus Lakatos or Paradigms versus Research Programmes in the History of Economics," in Spiro J. Latsis, ed., *Method and Appraisal in Economics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 149–180, 155.

must find a way to eliminate *some* theories. If we do not succeed, the growth of science will be nothing but growing chaos."¹⁰

To escape this chaos, Lakatos suggests guidelines for moving beyond one research program onto **[into?]** another, more promising one. The candidate research program must not only contain "novel content." It must also account for all of the phenomena explained by its predecessor. In a restatement of this basic principle that has apparently been quite influential within the subfield of international politics, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita asserts that, "I subscribe strongly to the notion that progress is *best* made when one explanation is shown to supplant another... [K]nowledge in its most stringent sense and in its highest form is gained when one explanation is replaced with another, broader and apparently more accurate one."¹¹

As appealing as this idea is on simple, logical grounds, its Lakatosian form creates at least one fundamental problem. As Elman and Elman point out, "it is difficult to identify SRPs [scientific research programs], and to specify the elements of individual SRPs."¹² Latsis explains quite rightly that "a central distinction between [alternative] methodological approaches ... and [Lakatos's methodology of scientific research programs] concerns the *unit of appraisal*."¹³ Lakatos attempts to provide a more helpful unit of appraisal than Kuhn's

¹⁰ Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," p. 108 [(emphasis in original)?].

¹¹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Toward a Scientific Understanding of International Conflict—A Personal View," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (June 1985), pp. 121–36, 123 [(emphasis added)?].

¹² Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, "Progress in International Relations Theory," prepared for participants in "Progress in International Relations Theory: A Collaborative Assessment and Application of Imre Lakatos's Methodology of Scientific Research Programs," Scottsdale, Arizona, January 15–16, 1998, p. 20.

¹³ Spiro Latsis, "A Research Programme in Economics," in Latsis, *Method and Appraisal in Economics*, pp. 1–41. "Instead of appraising isolated hypotheses or strings and systems of hypotheses ... we now appraise an organic unity — a research programme." *Ibid*, p. 14.

“paradigms.” Unfortunately, it is not clear that “research programs” can be defined any more clearly or specifically than “paradigms.”

A Lakatosian Appraisal of “Democratic Peace”

Lakatos does tell us that “the classical example of a successful research program is Newton’s gravitational theory.”¹⁴ If we seize upon this definition by example — precisely because it is so much clearer than the abstract definitions provided by Lakatos — we might note with interest that “Newton said three fundamental things about gravity.”¹⁵ According to Newton, gravity exists; gravity is a universal force; and $F = (G \cdot m_1 \cdot m_2) / R^2$, where F = gravitational force, G = a gravitational constant, m_1 = the mass of a first body, m_2 = the mass of a second body, and R = the distance between m_1 and m_2 .

Is it possible to describe a “democratic peace research program” in roughly analogous terms? One possible argument in the affirmative is that the “hard core” (in Lakatosian terms) of such a program consists at least in part of three stipulations roughly analogous to the core of Newton’s gravitational theory. These would be that democracy exists; that its impact is universal; and that $P = (1 - [d_1 \cdot d_2]) / (R^e + 1)$, where P = the probability of war between two states, d_1 = the degree of democracy in State 1, d_2 = the degree of democracy in State 2, R = the distance between State 1 and State 2, and e = a geographic constant.

Obviously, while Newton’s formula includes all of those factors necessary to calculate the gravitational force between two bodies, this formula only specifies the impact of democracy on the probability of war between two states. Nevertheless, democratic peace theorists do argue that democracy has a uniform impact on the conflict-proneness of all states all the time, just as Newton argued that gravity has a universal impact. And while even its most enthusiastic advocates would not argue that the democratic peace proposition constitutes a social-science equivalent to Newton’s law of gravity, many do take

¹⁴ Lakatos, “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes,” p. 133; emphasis added.

¹⁵ Silver, *The Ascent of Science*, p. 43.

seriously the assertion that fully democratic states have not and will not fight interstate wars against each other. (This is one implication of the formula for calculating the probability of war between states presented above.) This argument, even in its most categorical form, is clearly an important source of inspiration for many adherents of the democratic peace research program.

For example Babst, widely recognized to have evoked initially the contemporary interest in the democratic peace proposition, concludes in his seminal article that “no wars have been fought between independent nations with elective governments between 1789 and 1941.”¹⁶ Rummel asserts that “violence will occur between states only if at least one is non-libertarian.”¹⁷ He explains in a later work that this is “an absolute (or ‘point’) assertion: There will be *no* violence between libertarian states. *One* clear case of violence or war unqualified by very unusual or mitigating circumstances *falsifies* the proposition.”¹⁸ Doyle, having conducted a reasonably thorough review of the history of all “liberal” states in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, concludes that “constitutionally secure liberal states have yet to engage in war with one another.”¹⁹ Having reviewed a list of putative exceptions to this rule, I concluded that “none of those cases is appropriately categorized as an international war between democratic states.”²⁰ In an impressively comprehensive review of all republican

¹⁶ Dean V. Babst, “A Force for Peace,” *Industrial Research*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (April 1972), pp. 55–58, 55. Earlier, Clarence Streit, *Union Now: A Proposal for a Federal Union of the Leading Democracies* (New York: Harpers, 1938), pointed out the tendency for democratic states to avoid war among themselves, but his book has had little apparent impact on more recent work.

¹⁷ R.J. Rummel, *Understanding Conflict and War*, Vol. 4: *War, Power, Peace* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1979), p. 277 <www2.hawaii.edu/~rummel/NOTE13.HTM>.

¹⁸ R.J. Rummel, “Libertarianism and International Violence,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (March 1983), p. 29.

¹⁹ Michael Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 205–235, 213.

²⁰ James Lee Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), p. 125.

states in the history of the world, including ancient Greece, medieval and Renaissance Italy, the Swiss Republics, and the last two centuries,²¹ Weart asserts that “the message of this book is that well-established democracies are inhibited by their fundamental nature from warring on one another. I could find no plain counterexample to this rule, even in remote historical locales.”²²

Nevertheless, the proposition at the heart of the hard core (so to speak) of the democratic peace research program in its more widely supported version is probabilistic rather than absolute in character. This proposition or hypothesis is that pairs of democratic states are *less likely* to fight interstate wars against each other than pairs of states that are not both democratic. Rummel was able to evaluate this hypothesis in a limited fashion, categorizing all dyads involved in war from 1816 to 1965 according to regime type, and establishing that none of these dyads was jointly democratic.²³ However, what he did not deal with was the relative *rate* of war involvement (except for a brief period from 1976 to 1980) for jointly democratic states as opposed to pairs of states that included at least one undemocratic state. Maoz and Abdolali were the first to focus on this issue; they are able to show that the absence of wars between democratic states in the time period on which they focus

²¹ Spencer Weart, *Never At War* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 293. There are 92 pages of footnotes in Weart’s book, almost all of which are devoted not to elaborations on the main text, but simply to a listing of sources consulted.

²² It was this sort of simple, descriptive evidence that evoked from Levy the declaration that “the absence of war between democracies comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations.” Jack S. Levy, “Domestic Politics and War,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Spring 1988), p. 662. He came to that conclusion before comprehensive statistical analyses regarding this pattern were completed. More recently, Levy observes that “the idea that democracies almost never go to war with each other is now commonplace. The skeptics are in retreat and the proposition has acquired a nearly law-like status.” Jack S. Levy, “The Democratic Peace Hypothesis: From Description to Explanation,” *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (October 1994), p. 352.

²³ Rummel, “Libertarianism and International Violence.”

(1817 to 1976) is statistically significant.²⁴ In what Rummel described as “the first book since my volume 4 of *Understanding Conflict and War* (1979) to explicitly test whether democracies don’t make war on each other,”²⁵ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman²⁶ analyze all dyads in Europe from 1815 to 1970 that became involved in a “serious dispute.”²⁷ They conclude that “democracies do abhor even low levels of violence toward one another.”²⁸ In the same year, there were two important contributions to the evidence in favor of the democratic peace proposition. Maoz and Russett analyzed 264,819 dyad-year observations from 1946 to 1986; they found that 17,876 of them could be categorized as jointly democratic, and that none of those jointly democratic dyad-years produced an interstate war. They found furthermore that this lack of wars in the jointly democratic category of dyad-years was statistically significant.²⁹ Similarly, Bremer focused on 199,573 dyad-years from 1816 to 1965, and reported that none of the 21,644 jointly-democratic-year observations revealed an interstate war, again a number “significantly” less than the “expected value.”³⁰

²⁴ Zeev Maoz and Nasrin Abdolali, “Regime Types and International Conflict, 1816–1976,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (March 1989), pp. 3–35.

²⁵ R.J. Rummel, *Power Kills* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers), p. 36.

²⁶ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, *War and Reason* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992).

²⁷ Charles Gochman and Zeev Maoz, “Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1976: Procedures, Patterns, and Insights,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (December 1984), pp. 585–616.

²⁸ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, *War and Reason*, p. 152.

²⁹ Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, “Alliance, Contiguity, Wealth, and Political Stability: Is the Lack of Conflict Among Democracies a Statistical Artifact?” *International Interactions*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1992), pp. 245–268.

³⁰ Stuart Bremer, “Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816–1965,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 1992), pp. 309–341. Actually, Bremer’s data do show one war between democratic states, but this anomaly is easily explained, as Bremer acknowledges, by a kind of coding error brought about by a time lag in the observation of regime type in his analysis.

Translating “Democratic Peace” into Lakatosian Terminology

Assertions about democracy’s existence and its power to prevent war between democratic states arguably constitute only the heart of the “hard core” of the democratic peace research program, in the Lakatosian sense of that term. It is possible to infer that a number of other principles are included in this hard core. Since Babst, Rummel, Maoz and Abdolali, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, Maoz and Russett, and Bremer all focus their analyses on states as actors, it is fair to conclude that “states are primary actors” in international politics is also a fundamental axiom for this program. States are not, however, the primary units of analysis for its adherents. The hard core of the democratic research program is distinguished from that for other programs by the fact that it calls for analyses focused on *pairs of states*. This is more than a bookkeeping matter or a merely technical adjustment.

One of the major problems with Waltz’s (1959) three images and the way the level of analysis problem has been generally conceptualized (Singer 1961) is that they leave out what is turning out to be the most important level.... The missing fourth image ... has been shown to be much more successful in guiding quantitative research than other levels.... Working at the dyadic level ... has been much more productive.³¹

Another principle incorporated into the hard core of the democratic peace research program that can be inferred from many of its early works asserts that “domestic political processes have important impacts on international interactions, and vice versa.” Its focus on domestic politics does distinguish the democratic peace research

³¹ John A. Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 194. Citations are to Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959; J. David Singer, “The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations,” in Klaus Knorr and Sydney Verba, eds., *The International System: Theoretical Essays* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961).

program from neorealism.³² But Waltz stipulates that he is mainly concerned about the operation of the international system, not the foreign policies of individual states, and certainly not interactions between pairs of states. And “neoclassical realists” such as Gideon Rose and Randall Schweller do emphasize the impact of “internal factors” on foreign policies.³³ However, there is one more principle at the hard core of the democratic peace research program that distinguishes it from its major competitors, having to do with its treatment of the relationship between domestic and international politics. That additional provision at the hard core of the program is discussed below.

Taking a cue from Elman and Elman, I would define the negative heuristic of the democratic peace research program as an injunction not to abandon or contradict any element of the hard core.³⁴

Perhaps the positive heuristic, or rules and guidelines for formulating the protective belt of auxiliary hypotheses, can be inferred from the activities of those defending the hard core of the democratic peace research program. One such guideline would be: “Develop definitions and operationalizations of democracy and war that can be applied consistently to controversial cases.” This rule is exemplified in works addressing whether or not there have been historical exceptions to the claim about the absence of wars between democratic states.³⁵ A larger group of analysts (discussed in more detail below, in a discussion of this program’s auxiliary hypotheses) has behaved as if it were adhering to two additional rules that arguably constitute its positive heuristic. One rule is: “develop hypotheses about important differences between democratic and autocratic regimes.” The second is

³² Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979).

³³ Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (October 1998), pp. 144–172; Randall L. Schweller, Chapter 9 in this volume.

³⁴ Elman and Elman, “Progress in International Relations Theory”; see also Elman and Elman, Chapters 1 and 2 in this volume.

³⁵ For example, work by Babst, Rummel, Doyle, Ray and Weart.

“focus those hypotheses on conflict and cooperation in general to deal with the statistical rarity of wars and democracies.”

A LAKATOSIAN RECONSTRUCTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEACE RESEARCH PROGRAM

It would be comforting for supporters of the democratic peace thesis to conclude that because of the increasing number of democratic states in the world in the last couple of decades, the statistical rarity of wars and democracies is becoming less problematic. However, it is not clear that such a conclusion is warranted, at least for the time period up to the early 1990s. For the analyses presented in Table 6-1, pairs of states are categorized by regime type according to democracy and autocracy scales ranging from 0 to 10. Specifically, each state's autocracy score for each year is subtracted from its democracy score, and if the result is equal to or greater than 6, that state is categorized as democratic. If each state in the pair has a score of 6 or greater, the pair is categorized as jointly democratic. Each pair of states is also categorized annually according to whether or not one state *initiated* an interstate war against the other during each year observed.

Table 6-1 does indicate that there has been, from 1816 to 1992, a “significant” relationship between the regime type of pairs of states and the likelihood that they will get involved in interstate wars with each other. It further shows that there has been, since 1965 (the end point in time focused on by Bremer), a significant increase in the number of jointly democratic dyad-year observations to work with (even though I have adopted a somewhat more stringent criterion than Bremer did).³⁶ However, the *proportion* of jointly democratic dyad-years, as well as the proportion of non-zero observations of interstate war, are both somewhat lower than in Bremer's study. So, in spite of the significantly increased number of democratic states in the world and the occurrence of several interstate wars since 1965, Table 6-1 suggests (like Bremer's analysis for a shorter time period) that from 1816 to 1992, there would have been only about nine wars between democratic states had they fought at the same rate as states in general.

³⁶ Bremer, “Dangerous Dyads.”

Table 6-1. Cross-Tabulation of Regime Type and Interstate War Involvement, Standard Dyadic Hypothesis, 1816–1992 (annual observations, all independent states).

Involved in an Interstate War?	Jointly Democratic Dyads	Not Jointly Democratic Dyads
No	38,878 (100.00%)	385,723 (99.9730%)
Yes	0 (0.00%)	104 (0.0269%)
	N=424,705 *FET p < .000	

NOTES: Data on regime type are from the Polity III data set as described in Keith Jagers and Ted Robert Gurr, "Transitions to Democracy: Tracking Democracy's Third Wave with the Polity III Data," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (November 1995), pp. 469–482. These data are available in Keith Jagers and Ted Robert Gurr, *Polity III: Regime Change and Political Authority, 1800–1994* (computer file), 2d ICPSR version (Boulder, Colo., and College Park, Md.: Keith Jagers and Ted Robert Gurr, producers, 1995; Ann Arbor, Mich.: Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), distributor, 1996).

For states involved in an interstate war in a given year, regime scores were taken instead of Polity IIIID in order to take advantage of the more specific information regarding the time of regime changes available in that data set. See Sara McLaughlin, Scott Gates, Håvard Hegre, Ranveig Gissner, and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Timing and Changes in Political Structures," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (June 1998), pp. 231–242. Data on war provided by Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Resort to Arms* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1982); Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Correlates of War Project: International and Civil War Data, 1816–1992* (computer file), Study no. 9905, 1994, ICPSR version (J. David Singer and Melvin Small, producers, 1993, distributed by ICPSR, 1994).

Correlates of War sources such as Small and Singer (1982) provide only lists of states involved on each side of multilateral wars, rather than information regarding which states on each side were actually involved in military conflict with each other. The data on interstate wars in this table were modified to reflect actual interaction between states involved in multilateral interstate wars on the dyadic level of analysis. See James Lee Ray, "Identifying Interstate War Initiators on the Directed Dyadic Level of Analysis," prepared for delivery at the annual conference of the Peace Science Society, Ann Arbor, Michigan, October 8–10, 1999.

*Fisher's Exact Test, 1-sided.

Thus debates about individual cases will continue to be of some importance to evaluations of the democratic peace research program, because even a small number of wars between democratic states would wipe out entirely the difference between the rate of warfare among democratic states and the rate among states in general. This will be especially true if, as seems likely in the near future, there are interstate wars between such arguably democratic states as Greece and Turkey, Greece and Albania, or India and Pakistan. Ray has provided analyses of crucial cases, as has Owen.³⁷ Weart's efforts to extend the scope of research for relevant cases far back into history are likely to be quite important to this aspect of the debate regarding the democratic peace research program.³⁸

Lakatos points out that when Newton's gravitational theory was first introduced, it was submerged in an "ocean of 'anomalies'," which "Newtonians turned into 'corroborating instances.'"³⁹ Similarly, Einstein's theory of relativity at first produced implications — such as that the universe is expanding — that even "Einstein himself distrusted."⁴⁰

In a roughly analogous fashion, the democratic peace research program has proven capable of turning anomalies or apparently disconfirming evidence into strengths and corroborating instances.

³⁷ James Lee Ray, "Wars Between Democracies: Rare, or Nonexistent?" *International Interactions*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1993), pp. 251–276; Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict*; John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1994), pp. 87–125; John M. Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War: American Politics and International Security* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997).

³⁸ Weart, *Never At War*.

³⁹ Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," p. 133.

⁴⁰ Craig J. Hogan, Robert P. Kirshner, and Nicholas B. Suntzeff, "Surveying Space-time with Supernovae," *Scientific American*, Vol. 280 (January 1999), pp. 46–51, 47. Einstein tried to resolve this anomaly in a manner that appears to be ad hoc: he added a "cosmological constant" to his system of equations. In retrospect, however, this seems a progressive innovation. Lawrence M. Krauss, "Cosmological Antigravity," *Scientific American*, Vol. 280 (January 1999), pp. 52–59.

Spiro and Ray, for example, pointed out problems with the early evidence regarding peace among democratic states having to do with interdependent observations and the resulting difficulty created for the interpretation of significance tests.⁴¹ Russett crafted an effective early response to this critique with an analysis focused on dyads observed over the length of their existence, rather than yearly, thus eliminating much of the interdependence from observations relied upon to establish the statistical significance of the absence of war between democratic states.⁴² Problems with the interdependence of observations (as well as the dichotomous and skewed nature of the dependent variable in many democratic peace analyses) have evoked a series of papers culminating in a paper by Beck, Katz, and Tucker that concludes that, “democracy inhibits conflict ... even taking duration dependence into account.”⁴³

Farber and Gowa presented an influential critique to the effect that peace among democracies during the Cold War era was produced by the common interests those states had in opposition to Communist states during that prolonged confrontation.⁴⁴ Even before Farber and Gowa developed this argument, several studies had shown that even

⁴¹ David E. Spiro, “The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1994), pp. 50–86; Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict*.

⁴² Bruce Russett, “Correspondence: And Yet It Moves,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Spring 1995), pp. 164–175.

⁴³ Nathaniel Beck, Jonathan N. Katz, and Richard Tucker, “Taking Time Seriously: Time-Series-Cross-Section Analysis with a Binary Dependent Variable,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (October 1998), p. 1260. Dixon asserts that “the Beck studies have collectively undertaken about two dozen event history or otherwise robust estimations to test the stability of previously published findings supporting the democratic peace, and in every single case these new estimates corroborate earlier results showing that jointly democratic dyads are less likely to engage in militarized conflict.” William J. Dixon, “Dyads, Disputes and the Democratic Peace,” in Murray Wolfson, ed., *The Political Economy of War and Peace* (Boston, Mass.: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998), pp. 103–126, p. 107.

⁴⁴ Henry S. Farber and Joanne Gowa, “Politics and Peace,” *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (Fall 1995), pp. 123–146.

controlling for “common interests” as reflected in alliance ties, joint democracy exerts a pacifying effect on relationships between states.⁴⁵ More recently, Maoz focused even more specifically on this issue and provided systematic empirical evidence that “democracy, rather than alliance, prevents conflict and war. Nonaligned democracies are considerably less likely to fight each other than aligned democracies. Two states that share common interests but do not share a democratic system are considerably more likely to fight each other than democracies that do not show an affinity of interests.”⁴⁶

On a more intuitive level, proponents of the democratic peace research program pointed out that the Farber-Gowa thesis cannot account for the numerous violent Cold War conflicts and wars among Communist states that also had “common interests,” nor three wars during the same period among states in the “Free World” (the Football War in 1969, the clash between Turkey and Cyprus in 1974, and the conflict over the Falkland Islands in 1982 between England and Argentina). None of these conflicts and wars constitutes an anomaly for the democratic peace research program; they are instead corroborating instances.⁴⁷

Perhaps the most visible attack on the democratic peace research program, by Mansfield and Snyder, asserts that while clearly democratic states may not fight wars against each other, states undergoing a *transition* to democracy are disproportionately war-

⁴⁵ Bremer, “Dangerous Dyads”; Maoz and Russett, “Alliance, Contiguity, Wealth, and Political Stability”; Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, “Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1817–1976,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 87, No. 3 (September 1993), pp. 624–638.

⁴⁶ Zeev Maoz, “The Controversy over the Democratic Peace: Rearguard Action or Cracks in the Wall?” *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer 1997), p. 176. See also Zeev Maoz, “Realist and Cultural Critiques of the Democratic Peace: A Theoretical and Empirical Re-Assessment,” *International Interactions*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1998), pp. 38–44.

⁴⁷ Maoz, “The Controversy over the Democratic Peace”; Ray, “Does Democracy Cause Peace?”

prone.⁴⁸ In response, at least one analysis has created some doubt that such a national-level patterns exists.⁴⁹ Maoz, however, acknowledges that there is a relationship between regime transitions and conflict, but argues that transitions from autocracy to “anocracy” or from “anocracy” to autocracy are even more likely to produce conflict than changes to or from democracy.⁵⁰ These changes bring about conflict because of the response they evoke from states in their immediate environment. Similarly, Oneal and Russett,⁵¹ Oneal and Ray,⁵² and Thompson and Tucker⁵³ all provide evidence that suggests that the national-level relationship between regime transitions and conflict involvement can be subsumed under a dyadic-level pattern brought about by the fact that states undergoing a transition to democracy will experience an increase in conflict only if many or most of their neighbors are undemocratic. It is this increase in “political distance” between themselves and their neighbors, in other words, that may bring about increases in the amount of conflict for states undergoing a transition to democracy. Thus the evidence pertinent to this apparent national-level anomaly regarding democratic transitions and conflict has been shown to conform to and support the idea that regime type has an important impact on inter-state, dyadic relationships.

⁴⁸ Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, “Democratization and War,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 3 (May/June 1995), pp. 79–97. Appearing as it did in a policy-oriented journal, such an argument was obviously intended to discourage policies inspired by the democratic peace proposition that were designed to bring about such transitions.

⁴⁹ Andrew Enterline, “Driving While Democratizing (DWD),” *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Spring 1996), pp. 183–196.

⁵⁰ Maoz, “Realist and Cultural Critiques of the Democratic Peace,” p. 51.

⁵¹ John R. Oneal and Bruce M. Russett. “The Classical Liberals Were Right: Democracy, Interdependence, Democracy and International Conflict, 1950–1985,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (June 1997), pp. 267–293.

⁵² John R. Oneal and James Lee Ray. “New Tests of Democratic Peace: Controlling for Economic Interdependence, 1950–1985,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (December 1997), pp. 751–775.

⁵³ William Thompson and Richard Tucker, “A Tale of Two Democratic Peace Critiques,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (June 1997), pp. 428–454.

Table 6-2. A Sample of Auxiliary Hypotheses Regarding the Impact of Regime Type on Interstate Interactions

1. Democratic pairs of states are less likely to become involved in serious militarized disputes with each other. Bremer 1993; Maoz and Russett 1992; 1993; many others
2. Democratic states are more likely to ally with each other. Siverson and Emmons 1991; Simon and Gartzke 1996; Weart 1998
3. Democratic states are more likely to join democratic counterparts in ongoing wars. Raknerud and Hegre 1997
4. Democratic states are more likely to trade with each other. Polachek 1997; Bliss and Russett 1998
5. Democratic states are more likely to form long-lasting "leagues" (permanent intergovernmental organizations [IGOs]). Weart 1998
6. Democratic alliances last longer. Gaubatz 1996; Bennett 1997; Reed 1997
7. Democratic states in disputes are more likely to accept mediation. Dixon 1993; Raymond 1994
8. The probability of peaceful resolution of disputes is proportional to the degree of democracy in the least democratic state. Dixon 1994
9. Democratic states are more likely to obey international law. Simmons 1998; Slaughter 1995
10. Democratic states are more likely to win wars in which they participate. Lake 1992; Stam 1996

Considerable additional evidence regarding the progressivity of the democratic peace research program involves a series of auxiliary hypotheses aimed in part at dealing with the statistical rarity of interstate wars and democracies. A sample of these hypotheses is listed in Table 6-2.

Many studies have analyzed data on militarized interstate disputes generated by the Correlates of War project.⁵⁴ Maoz and Abdolali reported that democratic pairs of states are less likely than pairs of states that are not jointly democratic to become involved in these disputes; that basic finding has been reinforced several times over.⁵⁵ Confidence in this finding is in turn increased by analysts such as Rousseau, Gelpi, Reiter, and Huth who report that “democratic states are clearly less likely to initiate force against other democracies” within the context of international crises in the twentieth century.⁵⁶ It is now “generally accepted” that “pairs of democracies are much less likely than other pairs of states to fight or threaten each other even at low levels of coercive violence.... That is particularly important as war[s] are relatively rare events in international history, and thus present

⁵⁴ “Militarized interstate disputes are united historical cases of conflict in which the threat, display or use of military force short of war by one member state is explicitly directed towards the government, official representatives, official forces, property, or territory of another state.” Daniel M. Jones, Stuart A. Bremer, and J. David Singer, “Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1992,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Fall 1996), pp. 163–213, p. 163.

⁵⁵ Maoz and Abdolali, “Regime Types and International Conflict, 1816–1976”; Maoz and Russett, “Alliance, Contiguity, Wealth, and Political Stability”; Maoz and Russett, “Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1816–1976”; Stuart Bremer, “Democracy and Militarized Interstate Conflict, 1816–1965,” *International Interactions*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1993), pp. 231–250; Katherine Barbieri, “Economic Interdependence: A Path to Peace or a Source of Interstate Conflict?” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 33, No. 1 ([XXX] 1996), pp. 29–40; John R. Oneal, Frances H. Oneal, Zeev Maoz, and Bruce Russett, “The Liberal Peace: Interdependence, Democracy and International Conflict, 1950–85,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (February 1996), pp. 11–28; Oneal and Ray, “New Tests of Democratic Peace”; Oneal and Russett, “The Classical Liberals Were Right”; Bruce Russett, John Oneal, and David R. Davis, “The Third Leg of the Kantian Tripod for Peace,” *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Summer 1998), pp. 441–467.

⁵⁶ David L. Rousseau, Christopher Gelpi, Dan Reiter, and Paul K. Huth, “Assessing the Dyadic Nature of the Democratic Peace, 1918–88,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (September 1996), p. 521; Michael Brecher, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, and Sheila Moser, *Crises in the Twentieth Century, Handbook of International Crises*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, UK: Pergamon, 1988).

greater difficulty for establishing strong generalizations.⁵⁷ This finding is also important because “any theory of war must account for the fact that virtually all wars broke out of militarized disputes.”⁵⁸ In fact, this is probably the most important auxiliary hypothesis generated by the democratic peace research program.

But there are many others, focusing for example on the impact of regime type on war outcomes. Lake argues that democratic states are more likely to win the wars in which they become involved.⁵⁹ Stam seconds that argument.⁶⁰ Siverson provides evidence that wars initiated by democratic states tend to be less costly in terms of battle deaths.⁶¹ This in turn suggests that democratic states may be more likely to win wars at least in part because they select their targets more prudently, rather than or at least in addition to the fact that they are better able to mobilize resources (as Lake suggests, as well as Schultz and Weingast), or because their soldiers fight with more determination because of the relative legitimacy of democratic regimes.⁶² Perhaps, too, democracies fare relatively well in wars because they have a tendency to cooperate with each other when conflicts or wars break out. According to Bremer, democratic states are more likely to join ongoing

⁵⁷ Russett and Starr, “From Democratic Peace to Kantian Peace.”

⁵⁸ Maoz, “Realist and Cultural Critiques of the Democratic Peace,” p. 46.

⁵⁹ David Lake, “Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (March 1992), pp. 24–37.

⁶⁰ Allan C. Stam III, *Win, Lose, or Draw: Domestic Politics and the Crucible of War* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

⁶¹ Randolph M. Siverson, “Democracies and War Participation: In Defense of the Institutional Constraints Argument,” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (December 1995), pp. 481–489.

⁶² Stam, *Win, Lose, or Draw*; see also Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam III, “Democracy and Battlefield Military Effectiveness,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (June 1998), pp. 259–277; Lake, “Powerful Pacifists”; Kenneth A. Schultz and Barry Weingast, *The Democratic Advantage: The Institutional Sources of State Power in International Competition* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1996).

wars.⁶³ They are also more likely to join on the side of their democratic counterparts.⁶⁴ These findings are important in general and to the democratic peace research program in particular because they reveal important connections between regime type and conflict. They may also help account for the apparent reluctance of democratic states to initiate wars against other democratic states, for reasons discussed below.

Another strand of research suggesting important linkages between democracy and interaction among states focuses on cooperative behavior outside the context of ongoing serious disputes or wars. Siverson and Emmons assert that democratic states have been more likely to ally with one another than with other kinds of states throughout most of the twentieth century.⁶⁵ Simon and Gartzke disagree to some extent; nevertheless their data show that democratic regimes were more likely to ally with each other during the Cold War.⁶⁶ Several analysts provide evidence that shows quite convincingly that alliances among democratic states are likely to last longer than

⁶³ Stuart Bremer, "Are Democracies Less Likely to Join Wars?" prepared for delivery at the 1992 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, April 6, 1992.

⁶⁴ Arvid Raknerud and Håvard Hegre, "The Hazard of War: Reassessing the Evidence for the Democratic Peace," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (November 1997), pp. 385–404. Also germane to this point would be Babst's emphasis on the fact that none of the sizeable number of democratic pairs of states involved in World War I and World War II fought against each other. Babst, "A Force for Peace." Mousseau shows that democratic states are more likely to collaborate with each other in the initial stages of militarized disputes. Michael Mousseau, "Democracy and Militarized Interstate Collaboration," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (February 1997), pp. 73–87.

⁶⁵ Randolph M. Siverson and Juliann Emmons, "Birds of a Feather: Democratic Political Systems and Alliance Choices in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 1991), pp. 285–306.

⁶⁶ Michael W. Simon and Eric Gartzke, "Political System Similarity and the Choice of Allies," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (December 1996), pp. 617–635.

alliances between autocratic states, or between autocratic and democratic states.⁶⁷

Alliances can be viewed at least in part as preparation for war (even if they are intended to avoid the war that is being prepared for). Democracies show a tendency to cooperate in broader contexts, too, more divorced from ongoing conflicts and wars, or in preparation for war. Polachek and Bliss and Russett provide evidence that democracies trade more with each other than autocracies, even if such factors as size of economy, distance, and relative costs are controlled for.⁶⁸ This and the possible propensity of democracies to be disproportionately likely to ally with each other bring to mind a basic finding from Weart's panoramic, exhaustive review of the history of republics since ancient Greece. One of his most basic conclusions is that "republics and only republics tend to form durable, peaceful leagues."⁶⁹ Perhaps the European Union (EU), as well as NATO with its elaborate institutional structure, are exemplary of clear historical tendencies in the behavior of democratic states, rather than unique or idiosyncratic to the Cold War era. Waltz declares that "we must wonder how long NATO will last as an effective organization. As is often said, organizations are

⁶⁷ Kurt Taylor Gaubatz, "Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations," *International Organization*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Winter 1996), pp. 109–139; D. Scott Bennett, "Testing Alternative Models of Alliance Duration, 1816–1984," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (July 1997), pp. 846–878; William Reed, "Alliance Duration and Democracy: An Extension and Cross-Validation of 'Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations'," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (July 1997), pp. 1072–78; Weart, *Never At War*, p. 65.

⁶⁸ Solomon W. Polachek, "Why Do Democracies Cooperate More and Fight Less? The Relationship Between International Trade and Cooperation," *Review of International Economics*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (August 1997), pp. 295–309; Harry Bliss and Bruce Russett, "Democratic Trading Partners: The Liberal Connection," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (November 1998), pp. 1126–47.

⁶⁹ Weart, *Never At War*, p. 267. He defines a "league" as "an association among several political units with approximately equal privileges and with shared institutions such as a joint treasury and a court or assembly that adjudicates disputes between members under mutually accepted rules or laws." *Ibid.*

created by their enemies."⁷⁰ The jury is still out on this issue, but perhaps the democratic peace research program provides a more valid insight into the bases and prospects for NATO (as well as the EU) than does neorealism.

Thus auxiliary hypotheses related to the democratic peace research program have emphasized the ability of jointly democratic states to avoid serious military conflict, to cooperate in conflicts with autocratic states, and to cooperate with each other on longer-term bases. They have also shown systematic tendencies to resolve the conflicts that do arise among them in a peaceful manner. Dixon, for example, provides evidence that democratic states are more likely to be amenable to third-party mediation when they are involved in disputes with each other.⁷¹ He also shows that the probability that disputes between states will be resolved peacefully is positively affected by the degree of democracy exhibited by the least democratic state involved in that dispute,⁷² and that disputes between democratic states are also significantly shorter than disputes involving at least one undemocratic state.⁷³ Similarly, Mousseau finds that serious militarized disputes between states are more likely to be resolved by compromise if the original disputants are

⁷⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1993), p. 75; John Mearsheimer expresses similar skepticism about the post-Cold War future of NATO; John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990), pp. 5-56; John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 5-49.

⁷¹ William J. Dixon, "Democracy and the Management of International Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 37, No. [XX] (March 1993), pp. 42-68.

⁷² William J. Dixon, "Democracy and the Peaceful Settlement of International Conflict," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (March 1994), pp. 14-32. This finding is based on data generated by Alker and Sherman rather than the MID data set generated by the Correlates of War project. Hayward Alker and Frank L. Sherman, "International Conflict Episodes, 1945-1979," data file and codebook (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1986).

⁷³ Dixon, "Dyads, Disputes and the Democratic Peace."

democratic.⁷⁴ Eyerman and Hart provide evidence indicating that one reason for democracy's impact in this regard has to do with the ability of democratic regimes to communicate intent and commitment more effectively.⁷⁵ This evidence supports a formal argument by Fearon.⁷⁶

In related research, Raymond reports that democratic states are more likely to agree to arbitration over mediation as a means of resolving disputes.⁷⁷ "Arbitration is a method of settling disputes between States in accordance with law, as distinguished from political and diplomatic procedures of mediation and conciliation."⁷⁸ These findings point the way, then, toward an emerging strand of research labeled "democratic legalism," based on the thesis that "democracies are more likely to comply with international legal obligations."⁷⁹ Some time ago, Henken argued that "in general...democracies have tended

⁷⁴ Michael Mousseau, "Democracy and Compromise in Militarized Interstate Conflicts, 1816–1992," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (April 1998), pp. 210–230.

⁷⁵ Joe Eyerman and Robert A. Hart, Jr., "A Empirical Test of the Audience Cost Proposition," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (December 1996), pp. 597–616.

⁷⁶ James D. Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 3 (September 1994), pp. 577–592.

⁷⁷ Gregory A. Raymond, "Democracies, Disputes, and Third-Party Intermediaries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (March 1994), pp. 24–42; Gregory A. Raymond, "Demosthenes and Democracies: Regime-Types and Arbitration Outcomes," *International Interactions*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1996), pp. 1–20.

⁷⁸ International Law Commission 1952, cited by Raymond, "Democracies, Disputes, and Third-Party Intermediaries," p. 28.

⁷⁹ Beth A. Simmons, "Compliance with International Agreements," in Nelson W. Polsby, ed., *Annual Review of Political Science* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Annual Reviews, 1998), pp. 75–93; see also Anne-Marie Slaughter, "International Law in a World of Liberal States," *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Spring 1995), pp. 503–538. "The distinctive contribution of democratic legalism is its expectation of systematic differences between liberal democracies and nondemocracies." Simmons, "Compliance with International Agreements," p. 85.

to observe international law more than do others.”⁸⁰ Like many other auxiliary hypotheses related to the democratic peace research program, this one has also shown important signs of sparking productive research efforts leading to the generation of systematic and supportive evidence.⁸¹

One might question the progressivity in the Lakatosian sense of these auxiliary hypotheses on the grounds that they are merely elaborations on the basic point that democratic states have peaceful relationships with each other, or that they point merely to within-path variables that intervene in the process leading from regime type to peace. In short, such an argument would imply that these auxiliary hypotheses fail to provide “novel content” that makes a program progressive, according to Lakatos.

I would argue, however, that these auxiliary hypotheses are more substantial than mere re-statements of the basic point that democratic states avoid interstate war with each other, or trivial assertions focusing on obvious intervening factors. They are all, to be sure, closely related in a logical and theoretical way to the absence of war between democratic states. But these close relationships between the basic democratic peace proposition and auxiliary hypotheses generated by advocates of the democratic peace research program are more fairly viewed as indications of theoretical coherence, I would argue, than of redundancy. The auxiliary hypotheses arising out of the democratic peace research program focus on and provide explanations for a wide variety of international phenomena such as alliances, war outcomes,

⁸⁰ Louis Henken, *How Nations Behave: Law and Foreign Policy*, 2d ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 63; cited by Lori Fisler Damrosch, “Use of Force and Constitutionalism,” *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, Vol. 36, Nos. 1 & 2 (1997), pp. 449–472. See also Lori Fisler Damrosch, “Constitutional Control Over War Powers: A Common Core of Accountability in Democratic Societies?” *University of Miami Law Review*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (October 1995), pp. 181–199.

⁸¹ Simmons, “Compliance with International Agreements”; Harold K. Jacobson and E.B. Weiss, “Compliance With International Environmental Accords: Achievements and Strategies,” presented at Harvard University Seminar, Law and International Relations, February 5, 1997.

economic integration, trade relationships, compliance with international law, and sub-war conflict resolution. Furthermore, they do this with an emphasis on regime type, and especially the impact of democracy, in a manner that justifies the categorization of many or most of these auxiliary hypotheses as “novel content” in the Lakatosian sense. These relationships escape prediction by neorealism, which tends to de-emphasize internal factors at least on a theoretical level, and even by realism, which can and does take into account domestic factors in some of its incarnations.⁸² What neither neorealism nor realism do is emphasize the crucial distinction between democratic and autocratic regimes in the systematic manner characteristic of the democratic peace research program.⁸³ Just how systematic this emphasis is, at least potentially, is the point to which we now turn.

⁸² Miriam Elman, for example, argues that “realists acknowledge that both domestic and international factors play a role in determining state behavior.” Miriam Fendius Elman, ed., *Paths to Peace: Is Democracy the Answer?* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997), p. 8. Colin Elman even suggests that “where neorealist scholars do see unit-level influences as important, they should take steps to integrate those variables into the neorealist framework in a systematic fashion.” Colin Elman, “Horses for Courses: Why *Not* Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy?” *Security Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Autumn 1996), pp. 7–53, 40. See also Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy”; and Schweller (Chapter 9 in this volume).

⁸³ Schweller does develop a rather “realist” analysis of power transitions in an account that emphasizes the impact of democracy. Randall L. Schweller, “Domestic Structure and Preventive War: Are Democracies More Pacific?” *World Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (January 1992). However, in so doing he explicitly acknowledges that he has “abandon[ed] the structural-realist assumption that all states react similarly to external pressures,” and accepts an “auxiliary second-image hypothesis” regarding the impact of democracy (*ibid.*, p. 267). This work might be categorized either as a degenerative ad hoc shift within the realist program (since Schweller provides no logical or axiomatic basis for his unrealist-like emphasis on the importance of democracy), or a progressive even if rather a-theoretical foreshadowing of tendencies in the democratic peace research program that were still mostly latent at the time his article appeared.

*The Hard Core of the Democratic Peace Research Program,
Revisited*

Although advocates of the democratic peace research program are typically critical of realist approaches to international politics, and the most enthusiastic critics of that program quite often favor a more realist point of view, in fact that program is not at all inalterably or totally opposed to, nor is it entirely inconsistent with, realist principles and ideas. On the contrary, papers central to the development of the democratic peace research program have all generated important evidence regarding the impacts on interstate conflict behavior of such factors as geographic contiguity, alliance ties, major power status, and capability ratios.⁸⁴ This feature of the democratic peace research program is so central to its character, in fact, that one of its leading proponents points out that “an amazing...by-product of the democratic peace research program is that it has generated more empirical support for...propositions derived from realist perspectives of world politics than any other research program.”⁸⁵ Obviously inspired by similar notions, Russett, Oneal and Davis declare that “it would be foolish to try to explain the incidence of militarized disputes without also looking at the effects of such *realpolitik* influences as relative power and alliances.”⁸⁶

⁸⁴ See, for example, Maoz and Russett, “Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1817–1976”; Bremer, “Dangerous Dyads”; Bremer, “Democracy and Militarized Interstate Conflict, 1816–1965”; Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993); Oneal, Oneal, Maoz and Russett, “The Liberal Peace”; Oneal and Russett, “The Classical Liberals Were Right”; Oneal and Ray, “New Tests of Democratic Peace”; and Russett, Oneal, and Davis, “The Third Leg of the Kantian Tripod for Peace.”

⁸⁵ It is important to note, in light of the argument to be developed here, that Maoz also asserts that “realist critiques create the impression that political realism and democratic peace are mutually exclusive. This is hardly the case.” Maoz, “The Controversy over the Democratic Peace,” p. 193.

⁸⁶ Russett, Oneal, and Davis, “The Third Leg of the Kantian Tripod for Peace,” p. 453.

In addition, “if we analyze the differences between the realpolitik variant of the interaction game presented in *War and Reason* and the domestic variant, we see that they share six basic assumptions.... The *only* difference between the two variants on the level of basic assumptions is reflected in the seventh basic assumption.”⁸⁷ The domestic variant’s seventh assumption incorporated into Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman’s interstate interaction game posits that national leaders will attempt to maximize utility within both an international and a national context.⁸⁸ (The realpolitik version assumes leaders focus exclusively on the international context.) That seventh assumption in the domestic variant turns out to be an important basis for the derivation of the democratic peace proposition from Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman’s model. Related work provides evidence in support of the arguments that regimes that initiate and lose interstate wars are at an especially high risk of being replaced, and that losing a war is a particularly risky proposition for leaders of democratic states.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict*, p. 39 (emphasis **added/in original?**). According to Keohane, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981), is among “the finest work” in the realist genre. Robert O. Keohane, “Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond,” in Ada Finifter, ed., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline* (Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1983), pp. 541–78, at 512. Alexander Wendt, “The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory,” *International Organization*, Vol. 41, No. [XX] (Summer 1987), p. 351, sees Bueno de Mesquita’s 1985 article, “Toward a Scientific Understanding of International Conflict,” as “the definitive discussion of the philosophy of science underlying neorealism.” In my view, these are both fundamentally erroneous perceptions. Nevertheless, they serve to highlight the potential compatibility of realism and neorealism on the one hand, and the democratic peace research program on the other, that I want to emphasize here.

⁸⁸ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, *War and Reason*.

⁸⁹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Randolph Siverson, and Gary Woller, “War and the Fate of Regimes: A Comparative Analysis,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 86, No. 3 (September 1992), pp. 638–646; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph Siverson, “War and The Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. [XX] (December 1995), pp. 841–853.

All of the auxiliary hypotheses discussed in this chapter rely on the distinction between democratic and autocratic regimes as a key explanatory factor. Most have been examined in a systematic empirical fashion, and have survived such scrutiny. Nevertheless, all of the empirical regularities involving the relationship between democracy and the range of other international political phenomena we have discussed could be of limited theoretical importance. Even considering their weight and scope, a Lakatosian might reasonably argue that those regularities (even the absence of war between democratic states) do not constitute a sufficient condition for categorizing the democratic peace research program as progressive. As Waltz points out, finding anomalies and patching them up, so to speak, by adding additional explanatory factors is not theory construction. "A theory is not a mere collection of variables. If a 'gap' is found in a theory, it cannot be plugged by adding a 'variable' to it. To add to a theory something that one believes has been omitted requires showing how it can take its place as one element of a coherent and effective theory."⁹⁰

A Lakatosian reconstruction of the history of the democratic peace research program can show that it is able to plug a significant gap left by realism (and perhaps by neorealism), and to do so in a logical, axiomatically-based manner.⁹¹ The gap at issue here, having to do with all the systematic differences between democratic and autocratic regimes, can be filled in a theoretically coherent way if we impute a key additional item to the "hard core" of the democratic peace research program. The roots of this additional "hard core" principle in contemporary work on the democratic peace can be traced to Rummel, who postulates that in all states "there are two classes, those with

⁹⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, "Evaluating Theories," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (December 1997), p. 916.

⁹¹ Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems*, p. 157, points out that Lakatos argues that there need be no resemblance at all between "reconstructed" history as developed by philosophers of science and the "actual exigencies of the case under examination." Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems*, p. 169. My reconstruction clearly attributes more coherence to the development of the democratic peace research program than would a more prosaic, descriptively accurate one.

authoritative roles and those without."⁹² Rummel contributes further to the development of the hard core principle proposed here by declaring that "intense violence will occur only if there is an expectation of success."⁹³ Ray argues that "the basic realist argument that foreign policymakers will make decisions that are in the 'national interest' has always implied a quite 'unrealistic' tendency of national leaders and foreign policymakers to be altruistic."⁹⁴ He concludes that it would be "more realistic...to assume instead...that 'political elites wish to attain and stay in office'," and that "democracies...avoid wars against other democratic states not necessarily because of normative convictions about how political conflicts ought to be resolved, nor because they are unable to overcome political, structural obstacles in the way of such policies, but because they feel that fighting such wars might be harmful to their chances of staying in power."⁹⁵ A basic assumption of a formal model developed by Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson asserts that "foreign policy leaders, like all politicians, choose actions with an eye toward staying in power."⁹⁶

This assumption is arguably more fundamental than assumptions such as "states seek power," or "states seek security," because it subsumes such assumptions. Obviously the leader of a state is unlikely

⁹² R.J. Rummel, *Understanding Conflict and War*, Vol. 3: *Conflict in Perspective* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1977), p. 104.

⁹³ Rummel, *Understanding Conflict and War*, p. 263.

⁹⁴ Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict*, p. 39.

⁹⁵ Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict*, pp. 39–40.

⁹⁶ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph M. Siverson, "Inside-Out: A Theory of Domestic Political Institutions and the Issues of International Conflict," unpublished manuscript 1996. "In our game, it is common knowledge that each incumbent prefers to retain office above all else." Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph M. Siverson, "Nasty or Nice? Political Systems, Endogenous Norms, and the Treatment of Adversaries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (February 1997), pp. 175–199, 183. The implications of this model for the democratic peace research program are discussed more directly in Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James D. Morrow, Randolph Siverson, and Alastair Smith, "An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 93, No. 4 (December 1999), pp. 791–807.

to retain office if the state is invaded, occupied, annexed, or even, as we have seen, simply defeated. So, preserving the territorial integrity, political independence, and power of the state is a pressing concern for all state leaders, as realists and neorealists rightly imply.

But the democratic peace research program does not take this concern into account by anthropomorphizing, reifying, or personifying the state. That the democratic peace assumption about leaders of states is more descriptively accurate than the basic realist or neorealist assumption about states (there is clearly less distortion and abstraction involved in the personification of a person) is a virtue of debatable importance. "In making assumptions about men's (or states') motivations, the world must be drastically simplified.... Descriptions strive for accuracy; assumptions are brazenly false."⁹⁷

What is more clearly useful about this assumption regarding the pervasive desire of political leaders to stay in power is that it emphasizes and provides theoretical purchase on the extent to which leaders involved in international interactions must play a "two-level game."⁹⁸ "When national leaders must win ratification...from their constituents for an international agreement, their negotiating behavior reflects the simultaneous imperatives of both a domestic political game and an international game."⁹⁹ According to realism or neorealism, "states" seek power or security. According to democratic peace theory, leaders of states are vitally concerned about their state's power and security, but they are *also* fundamentally concerned about their own

⁹⁷ Kenneth H. Waltz, "Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. [XX] (Summer 1990), p. 27. See also Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 117–118.

⁹⁸ "Buena de Mesquita and Siverson...outline domestic or endogenous institutional constraints based on the nature of the selectorate and the size of the winning coalition (somewhat akin to Putnam's 1988 argument concerning two level games...)." Russett and Starr, "From Democratic Peace to Kantian Peace." The reference here is to Buena de Mesquita and Siverson, "Nasty or Nice?"; Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 427–460.

⁹⁹ Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics," abstract.

personal political fortunes. To stay in power, political leaders must deal successfully with their opponents outside the state, *and* inside the state. They continually play a two-level game.

In the Lakatosian view, then, there is another provision at the “hard core” of the democratic peace research program not mentioned above. It is the assumption that a primary goal of leaders of states is to stay in power.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of the Revised Hard Core

One of the potential drawbacks of such an assumption is that it makes the basic democratic peace model more complicated than its realist or neorealist counterparts. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the democratic peace model is less parsimonious. “Parsimony,” according to King, Keohane, and Verba, is “a judgment, or even an assumption, about the nature of the world: it is assumed to be simple.”¹⁰⁰ This definition of parsimony deviates considerably from common usage of the term. Parsimony as typically discussed by social scientists quite clearly is *not* an assumption about the world. It is rather a characteristic of models shorn of complexity that is unnecessary to accomplish the explanatory task at hand. It is deemed desirable by analysts because of an assumption that the world works in simple ways. It is that assumption which is designated by King, Keohane and Verba, awkwardly in my view, as “parsimony.”

While King, Keohane and Verba are skeptical about the virtues of “parsimony” as they define it, they endorse wholeheartedly the pursuit of “leverage,” or “explaining as much as possible with as little as possible.”¹⁰¹ But leverage defined in this way is exactly what is accomplished by parsimonious models, defined as models that are as simple as possible while still accomplishing the explanatory task at hand. King, Keohane and Verba tend to use “parsimony” and

¹⁰⁰ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 20.

¹⁰¹ King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*, p. 29.

“simplicity” as synonymous.¹⁰² But if “parsimony” means nothing more than “simplicity,” it is a fancy word with no real advantages over the much simpler one, and therefore serves no real purpose.

In other words, to give parsimony a meaning different from “simplicity,” and therefore a reason to exist, it should be thought of as effective simplicity, that is, a characteristic of explanatory models that are no more complicated than they need to be. Such a definition implies that a model cannot be *too* parsimonious; if a model is too simple to deal with the phenomena to be accounted for, it ceases to be parsimonious, even though it may be simple.

The assumption about leaders desiring to stay in power, and the resulting necessity to focus on both domestic and international political considerations, is sufficiently complicating that it may be impractical or intractable as a basis for system-level theorizing of the Waltzian type. It may well be better suited to theories regarding pairs of states, or the typically relatively small sets of states involved in conflicts (such as multilateral wars).¹⁰³

¹⁰² For example, they assert at one point that “to maximize leverage, we should attempt to formulate theories that explain as much as possible with as little as possible. Sometimes this formulation is achieved via parsimony, but sometimes not. We can conceive of examples by which a slightly more complicated theory will explain vastly more about the world.” King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*, pp. 104–105.

¹⁰³ In other words, this writer is not yet persuaded that the democratic peace research program poses a direct challenge to neorealism conceived as a model dealing only with the international political system as a whole as the principal unit of analysis. Several analysts such as Sara McLaughlin, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Håvard Hegre; Crescenzi and Enterline; and Maoz investigate the relationship between the distribution of regime types and conflict in the international system, but the logical bases of these analyses, or the transfer of basically dyadic-level thinking to the level of the international system, seem problematic. Nevertheless, Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith may point the way to system-level theorizing in which the distribution of regime types in the system plays an explanatory role similar to that played by the distribution of power in neorealist accounts. Sara McLaughlin, “Endogeneity and the Democratic Peace,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the Peace Science Society, Houston, Texas, October 25–27, 1996; Nils Petter Gleditsch and Håvard Hegre, “Peace and Democracy: Three Levels

Another possible objection to the definition of the “hard core” devised here, especially with its emphasis on the assumption regarding the desire of leaders to stay in power, is that it tends to “privilege” rational choice–based structural versions of the democratic peace idea over the approach based on norms and cultural considerations. However, while the democratic peace research program as pictured here may well emphasize structural and rational factors and accounts more than cultural or normative ones, it is not incompatible with the latter arguments.

For example, Spencer Weart, one of the major proponents of the cultural argument regarding the pacifying force of democracy, argues that:

The political culture of republican leaders brings them to follow as a rule of thumb the expectation that in disputes with foreign leaders who share their principles, they will be able to negotiate a satisfactory solution. It is not idealism that makes them follow this practice. Getting objective information about how foreign rivals are likely to behave is so difficult that rules of thumb can be the most efficient way to cut through the clutter of international relations.¹⁰⁴

Thus culture is seen by Weart as a kind of “signaling” device and a source of information between potentially conflicting states, in a way that is quite consistent with democratic peace arguments within a

of Analysis,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (April 1997), pp. 283–310; Mark J.C. Crescenzi and Andrew J. Enterline, “Ripples from Waves? A Systemic, Time-Series Analysis of Democracy, Democratization, and Interstate War,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (January 1999), pp. 75–94; Zeev Maoz, “Democratic Networks: Connecting National, Dyadic, and Systemic Levels-of-Analysis in the Study of Democracy and War,” in Zeev Maoz and Azar Gat, eds., *War in a Changing World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), pp. 143–182. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James D. Morrow, Randolph Siverson, and Alastair Smith, “Peace Through War? Evolutionary Consequences of Democratic War Behavior,” paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 23–25, 1998.

¹⁰⁴ Weart, *Never At War*, p. 295.

rational choice framework in, for example, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman.¹⁰⁵

Maoz points out that findings such as those by Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, that disputes between democracies are more likely to end in draws or negotiated settlements, can be interpreted as evidence in favor of both cultural and structural arguments.¹⁰⁶ Farber and Gowa argue that norms may in fact be difficult to distinguish from interests, or at least that adherence to norms may be motivated by interests as much as by internalized values.¹⁰⁷ In addition, such prominent proponents of the cultural version of the democratic peace proposition as Oneal and Russett are quite willing to take into account considerations of the “expected utility” of states involved in conflicts, and to develop a theoretical structure based in part on those considerations.¹⁰⁸ “In short, the distinction between the cultural and the structural explanation of democratic peace does not seem either stark or crucial.”¹⁰⁹ The reconstruction of the democratic peace research program here may lean in the direction of favoring the structural or strategic version of the democratic peace argument, but it certainly does not discard cultural factors or arguments.

The main advantage of the program as defined (and reconstructed here), especially with the principle added to its hard core that has to do with the priority national leaders give to staying in power, is that it facilitates the incorporation of domestic political considerations into accounts and explanations of interstate interactions. Furthermore, the democratic peace model as construed here takes into account these

¹⁰⁵ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, *War and Reason*; see also Kenneth A. Schultz, “Domestic Opposition and Signaling in International Crises,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. [XX] (December 1998), pp. 829–844.

¹⁰⁶ Maoz, “Realist and Cultural Critiques of the Democratic Peace,” p. 13; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, *War and Reason*.

¹⁰⁷ Farber and Joanne Gowa, “Politics and Peace,” pp. 125–126.

¹⁰⁸ John R. Oneal and Bruce Russett, “Escaping the War Trap: Evaluating the Liberal Peace Controlling for the Expected Utility of Conflict,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Toronto, 1997.

domestic political considerations, as well as the importance of the distinction between democratic and autocratic regimes, not just because they have been found empirically to have important impacts on interstate interactions. The basic principle focusing on the desire of leaders to stay in power allows the integration of domestic and international political considerations affecting interstate interactions *in a theoretically coherent fashion*. That is, the integration of domestic and international factors is provided an axiomatic, theoretical base.

At the same time, this reconstruction of the democratic peace research program does not constitute co-optation of the program by a rational choice approach. It represents instead an attempt to integrate the work of rational choice theorists such as Bruce Bueno de Mesquita with more empirically oriented analysts as Zeev Maoz, John Oneal, and Bruce Russett, as well as such historically minded advocates of the democratic peace proposition as Spencer Weart. While not based on full agreement, certainly, with all of Stephen Walt's criticisms of rational choice approaches, the democratic peace research program as defined here does could serve as a good example in support of Walt's conclusion that as the "natural sciences profit from the fruitful collaboration of theoreticians and experimentalists." Research on international conflict can benefit from a closer integration of formal theoretical ideas with an axiomatic basis and statistical analyses of aggregate data.¹¹⁰

Conclusion

The central point of Lakatos's essay is that in comparing two research programs, T, and T', if T' "has excess empirical content over T...explains the previous success of T...and some of the excess content of T' is corroborated," then T has been "falsified."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict*, p. 37.

¹¹⁰ Stephen M. Walt, "Rigor, or Rigor Mortis? Rational Choice and Security Studies," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Spring 1999), p. 48.

¹¹¹ Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," p. 116.

The democratic peace research program does provide “excess empirical content” over its realist and neorealist predecessors. The finding regarding the absence of war between democratic states is the most central example of this. But the auxiliary hypotheses discussed in this chapter are also based on the distinction between democracies and autocracies in a way that makes most of the patterns they point to unlikely to be discerned or discovered by realist or neorealist approaches. For example, Gelpi and Griesdorf examine serious disputes in the twentieth century, and find, as realists would expect, that relative power has an important impact on the outcomes of such disputes.¹¹² That is, the more powerful state usually wins such disputes. “But among democracies, relative power has no such effect; the weaker side is more likely to get its way.”¹¹³ Similarly, Werner and Lemke analyze the behavior of states that joined ongoing militarized disputes from 1816 to 1986, and report that “power concerns matter only to autocracies: democracies do not seem to base their alignment on the power of the sides in the dispute.”¹¹⁴

The democratic peace research program also “explains the previous success of T.” That is, it takes into account and accommodates important realist (and perhaps neorealist) principles and hypotheses. Its basic assumption — that leaders desire above all to stay in power — recognizes the crucial extent to which this leads them to be vitally concerned about their states’ power and/or security. However, at the same time the democratic peace research program offers a basis for establishing priorities among all the diverse policies that might be expected to achieve those “national interests.” That is to say, national leaders can be expected to select among that broad array of options

¹¹² Christopher Gelpi and Michael Griesdorf, “Winners and Losers: Democracies in International Crisis, 1918–1988,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 1997.

¹¹³ Russett and Starr, “From Democratic Peace to Kantian Peace.”

¹¹⁴ Suzanne Werner and Douglas Lemke, “Opposites Do Not Attract: The Impact of Domestic Institutions, Power, and Prior Commitments on Alignment Choices,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (September 1997), p. 529.

that may be perceived to be in “the national interest,” and to interact in ways that reflect the fact that they are playing the two-level game emphasized by the democratic peace research program.

Thus the democratic peace research program has excess empirical content over realism or neorealism. It has a “hard core” that is compatible with but also capable of subsuming basic realist or neorealist assumptions regarding states seeking power or security. Much of the excess content of the democratic peace research program has been corroborated repeatedly and consistently in all the research devoted to the basic democratic peace proposition and a wide array of auxiliary hypotheses. In other words, according to Lakatosian principles, it would be fair to conclude that realism and/or neorealism have been “falsified.”

This is a limited claim. In the Lakatosian sense, strictly speaking, one model or approach or program might be considered “falsified” by another that was only marginally different, as long as the marginal difference allowed that alternative program to develop excess empirical content that could be corroborated. This would not necessarily indicate that the “falsified” program had been fundamentally discredited, by any means. On the contrary, in the type of situation we are envisioning here, the original “falsified” program might still be considered vastly more important for the contributions it has made toward scientific progress and understanding than the program which has “falsified” it. The new program might be an improvement, even if only adjusted in a relatively marginal fashion.

Furthermore, it would arguably be equally reasonable to see what has happened in the still evolving relationship between realism and the democratic peace research program as not necessarily the “falsification” of realism, but a modification of it, or a melding of at least some realist principles with fundamental “liberal” or “neoliberal” ideas leading toward the emergence of some kind of hybrid. Whether this hybrid might be referred to as “realist liberalism,” or “liberal realism” is surely more an issue of academic politics than of substance. The extent to which various realists or democratic peace advocates will be comfortable with this hybrid as it is described here will vary widely, and whether or not this hybrid turns out to have lasting importance

will depend on developments within the field of international politics in the coming years.¹¹⁵

It is especially necessary to be modest in claims that the democratic peace research program has “falsified” realism or neorealism, in light of the argument that realism is a broader approach, and that the democratic peace research program has confined its explanatory efforts to a much narrower range of phenomena. In fact, it could reasonably be argued that the democratic peace approach is too narrow to qualify as a “research program” at all. From this point of view, the claims on behalf of the democratic research program in this paper are made in a fashion too insensitive to Lakatos’ dictum that “it is a succession of theories and not one given theory which is appraised as scientific.”¹¹⁶

In the context of a debate regarding a Lakatosian appraisal of realism or neorealism, Waltz argues that “political scientists generally work from two different paradigms: one behavioral, the other systemic.”¹¹⁷ The term “behavioral” generally connotes or is even equated with the rubric “quantitative.” In a comprehensive review of the democratic peace literature, Chan notes that the democratic peace research program “is based on quantitative methods. Indeed, the democratic peace research proposition is arguably one of the most robust generalizations that has been produced to date by this research tradition.”¹¹⁸ In short, it is possible that the “quantitative research program” would be a unit of appraisal more congruent with the notion of “program” as developed by Lakatos. Unfortunately, at this point space limitations (not to mention limitations in time, energy,

¹¹⁵ “Lakatos wants to account for science as a rational process, but it turns out that the rationality of choices between rival research programs can be decided only with hindsight.” Andrew Belsey, “Review of *Whys and Ways of Science* by Peter J. Riggs,” *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (June 1996), pp. 335–338, 335. “[Lakatos] denies that anything except retrospective autopsies of long-dead scientific controversies can produce a reliable assessment.” Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems*, p. 232.

¹¹⁶ Lakatos, “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes,” p. 132.

¹¹⁷ Waltz, “Evaluating Theories,” p. 913.

¹¹⁸ Chan, “In Search of Democratic Peace,” p. 60.

knowledge, and inclination) preclude the development of a Lakatosian comparison of the quantitative research program with its competitors.

Instead, let us focus in closing on what this writer would like to believe are two “straws in the wind” that may indicate future trends in research on international politics. In a consideration of the future impact of the expansion of NATO, a prominent proponent of the democratic peace proposition and a co-author blend realist and liberal principles in a manner that demonstrates the extent to which they can be integrated, but also the extent to which a democratic peace accounting of this type supersedes a more purely realist analysis.¹¹⁹ In addition, the prominent advocate of realist analysis, Joseph Grieco, has recently initiated research on a theme suggesting that “democracies may have unique problems in security affairs.”¹²⁰ In this work, he emphasizes the impact of regime type on interactions between states. At the same time, he stresses the potentially beneficial impact of “force-intensive crisis strategies” in a classically realist manner. These two papers, perhaps, exemplify maturation within the democratic peace research program, as well as its ability to be combined with, or possibly even to subsume the realist program.

¹¹⁹ Bruce Russett and Allan C. Stam, “Courting Disaster: An Expanded NATO vs. Russia and China,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 113, No. 3 (Fall 1998), pp. 361–382.

¹²⁰ Joseph M. Grieco, “Democratic States and Repetitive Military Challenges, 1918–1994,” poster session materials at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, 1998, Abstract.