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# *The New Eclecticism in Comparative Politics*

# الإكليكية الجديدة في السياسة المقارنة

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***Abstract:***

*Comparative Politics today is a broader and more eclectical field than ever before, in which many new concepts and ideas are allowed to shake old assumptions, but there are cognitive and methodological aspects that still have an impact on research more than they deserve. It is easy to conclude this by looking at comparative politics decisions in American universities or even through what is being done He published it in specialized journals, as many of the traditional concepts and assumptions in the field still dominate the studies, this matter stimulated many comparative political scholars to go beyond the usual research methods, in addition to the ideas and approaches that Time outdated it and the trend towards more eclectical research. This study examines the content of this new research direction and its cognitive and methodological positioning in the field of comparative politics.*

***Keywords:*** *Comparative Politics, Eclectical Analytic, Methodological Debates.*

**ملخص:**

السياسة المقارنة اليوم هي مجال دراسة أوسع وأكثر إكليكية (انتقائية) من أي وقت مضى، حيث يُسمح للعديد من المفاهيم والأفكار الجديدة بأن تزعزع الإفتراضات القديمة، ولكن هناك جوانب معرفية ومنهجية لا يزال لها تأثير على البحث أكثر مما تستحق، ومن السهل استنتاج ذلك من خلال الإطلاع على مقررات السياسة المقارنة في الجامعات الأمريكية أو حتى من خلال ما يتم نشره في المجلات المتخصصة، حيث لا تزال الكثير من المفاهيم والإفتراضات التقليدية في الحقل مسيطرة على الدراسات، ربما قد يكون الوقت قد حان لثورة معرفية أخرى في التفكير، هذا الأمر حفز الكثير من علماء السياسة المقارنة من أجل تخطي الأساليب البحثية المعتادة بالإضافة إلى الأفكار والمناهج التي تجاوزها الزمن والإتجاه أكثر نحو نمطية البحث الإكليكي. تبحث هذه الدراسة في محتوى هذا التوجه البحثي الجديد وتموضعه معرفيا ومنهجيا في حقل السياسة المقارنة.

**كلمات مفتاحية:**

السياسة المقارنة - التحليل الإكليكي - الجدالات المنهجية.

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## I- Introduction:

The current stage in comparative politics is considered a stage of interconnection with different theoretical perspectives and scopes of study. The revival of discussions during this stage resulted in a series of intertwined cognitive processes, the creation of new societies and the increasing transformation of political phenomena as well as the collapse of other systems and the rise had many effects In crystallizing the current debate in the field, the new political problems attracted the attention of scholars and led to the expansion and deepening of research, just as societies that had previously been ignored became the subject of interest of specialists in comparative politics. These major, rapid and successive political events had implications for scholars in the field of comparative politics in terms of Theoretical approaches and methodological methods, and in an attempt by comparative political scholars to precede the process of understanding on the theoretical construction and on the methodological rigor, the adoption of eclectical analysis was called for as a research method capable of coping with the complexity that characterizes the political phenomenon at the present stage.

Therefore, we present the following research problematic:

**Could the new eclecticism really constitute a different trend in comparative politics?**

**Hypotheses:**

This study revolves around two main assumptions, which are:

1- Methodological contradictions deepens the research disputes in comparative politics.

2- Eclectical Analytic represents a research trend that attempts to reconcile the various methods in comparative politics.

**Methodology:**

The study adopts an epistemological approach to examine the main features of Eclectic analytic in comparative politics.

**Axes:**

To answer the problematic and hypotheses we discuss the following axes:

- The New Eclecticism: Contemporary Roots
- Eclectical Analytic: The Meaning
- Analytic Eclecticism: advantages and Challenges
- Critical reading

## II- The New Eclecticism: Contemporary Roots

Post-behaviorism's critique of behavioralism was deeply grounded in an understanding of science at odds with that embraced by behavioralism. For post-behavioralists, science was unavoidably based on normative assumptions; thus, according to post-behavioralists, a

"value-free" political science (the kind of political science advanced by behavioralists) was not possible. Indeed, post-behavioralists asserted that to proclaim value neutrality was itself a normative stance (i.e., an assertion that a so-called value-free stance was better than its opposite). Post-behavioralism faulted behavioralism for not having acknowledged—and thus not having scrutinized—its own normative foundations and the ways in which those foundations shaped the direction of its research agenda. However, insofar as post-behavioralism was not a rejection of an empirically based science per se, Scholars hoped that post-behavioralism could elucidate behavioralism's logic and correct its lack of self-awareness regarding its own assumptions rather than become a repudiation of the gains made in political science's shift away from the early and less scientifically oriented methods of traditionalism. In later years, some scholars would come to regard post-behavioralism's legacy as opening up possibilities of a more "eclectic" application of research methods to the study of political phenomena (John T. Ishiyama, 2011, p. 09).

The new studies at this stage has received great deal of attention among political scientists, especially those who use more qualitative methodologies in their studies. But it is also becoming more popular in comparative politics. In some ways, these research directions are the hardest in comparative politics to determining the nature and cognitive structure of paradigm because it includes so many different scholars and so many different methodological approaches. This paradigm includes an eclectic group of scholars with a wide variety of research agendas. Despite their differences, there are some common notions in this line of research. As Pierson and Theda Skocpol (2002) argue, within this group of scholars, "Everyone seems to realize that theoretical eclecticism, multiple analytic techniques, and a broad comparative political research purview work best" (John T. Ishiyama, p. 26).

Since the beginning of the nineties of the twentieth century and up to the first quarter of the third millennium, political science in general and comparative politics in particular has been involved in a new phase of knowledge patterns which is Analytic Eclecticism, that is, analytical analysis. An intellectual position supports efforts to selectively utilize the cognitive structures that exist as an integral part of the competing paradigms of the research traditions, in order to construct complex arguments that affect the core problems of concern to scholars and political practitioners.

Eclecticism, connotes the coexistence of conflicting doctrines as if there were no conflict, as if one position were not an explicit critique of another. The aim is to ignore or overlook differences, to create balance and harmony, to close down the opening to unknown futures that (what came to be called) "theory" offered some twenty or thirty years ago. This "theory" has a long philosophical lineage from the past forward and including the critical theory to post structuralism and especially to deconstruction. What is at stake? is a certain relation to the possibility of (necessity for) movement, reevaluation, transformation in general, the future not as the logical outgrowth of the past and present, but as the indication of and relation to what has not been anticipated or programmed" . This opening to the unknown comes through the examination (even the exacerbation) of controversy, the study of incommensurability and unrepresentability, the probing of undecidability. The point for scholarly work is to force open and undermine the traditional boundaries of the disciplines so that they will begin to admit serious, critical, theoretical investigations within themselves and thus be receptive to their

own transformation and rethinking. In contrast, eclecticism is not only conservative but restorative; it seeks stability and reconciliation, not innovation. Although hardly a coherent movement now (we are not yet witnessing an "eclectic turn"), today's gesture towards eclecticism seems to have a clear resonance (Wallach, 2005, p. 116).

Eclectic analytic marked by three general features. First, it is consistent with an ethos of pragmatism in seeking engagement with the world of policy and practice, downplaying unresolvable metaphysical divides and presumptions of incommensurability and encouraging a conception of inquiry marked by practical engagement, inclusive dialogue, and a spirit of fallibilism. Second, it formulates problems that are wider in scope than the more narrowly delimited problems posed by adherents of research traditions; as such, eclectic inquiry takes on problems that more closely approximate the messiness and complexity of concrete dilemmas facing "real world" actors. Third, in exploring these problems, eclectic approaches offer complex causal stories that extricate, translate, and selectively recombine analytic components-most notably, causal mechanisms- from explanatory theories, models, and narratives embedded in competing research traditions (Katzenstein, 2010, p. 411).

## III- Eclectical Analytic: The Meaning

In an essay that is now a classic piece in understanding postmodern culture, Jean-François Lyotard wrote: "Eclecticism is the degree zero of contemporary general culture. The boundaries have become blurred in both positive and negative senses. Geographical borders are becoming loosened by virtue of easy communication via cyberspace and the emergence of communities such as the European Union, cultural boundaries are being blurred through international capitalism, and temporal boundaries of the past are being violated through the increases in our knowledge and imagination. Almost a quarter century after Lyotard described the present era as the time of eclecticism, the world has become more global, and the demand for cross-, inter-, and multi-cultural knowledge has become stronger than ever (Park, 2009, p. 01).

Political science is an eclectic discipline. Some analytical approaches have the primary goal of generalization; others, of understanding particular cases. Either way, assertions of repetition are useful for political analysis, which cannot be judged only in terms of empirical accuracy but in terms of the insight gained. In the last instance, meeting the standard of empirical accuracy requires point-by-point descriptions of reality. The use of repetition does not produce a mirror of reality but is a key step in achieving analytical goals. Replication and recurrence are useful in motivating and guiding the search for causal patterns: common or parallel causes or diffusion. Homogenization is an inescapable assumption of repetition for making cases viable analytical units, and reproduction is central for understanding continuity of political life and the endurance of political structures (Robert Goodin, 2006, p. 487).

Following this line of thinking, Supporters of the study of political phenomena continue to adhere to certain models on the basis of specific sets of preconceived assumptions that others do not share, as they ask research questions and set limits for investigations as they evaluate the outputs and outcomes of research in a way that reflects those assumptions, and based on the ontological and epistemological principles established by the cognitive foundations based on Certain rules form sets of theories that prioritize certain types of causal factors rather than others, and in doing so, model followers over time discover new facts and generate

increasingly complex arguments, but this concept is only progress by followers of a particular model, no development is made. For progress that is acknowledged or appreciated either through explicit specialization or from outside academics looking to scholars for usable knowledge, and instead the academic discourse risks dominating scholarly discussions of reference at the expense of addressing the complexities and chaos of everyday research problems.

The aim is more than show that paradigm-bound scholar has come up short. that it is possible, indeed necessary, for scholars to resist the temptation to assume that one or another research tradition is inherently superior for posing and solving all problems, and we maintain that we can and should do a better job of recognizing and delineating relationships between concepts, observations, and causal stories originally constructed in different analytic perspectives. At the same time, going 'beyond paradigms' does not mean discarding or ignoring the work being done by adherents of those paradigms. It means exploring substantive relationships and revealing hidden connections among elements of seemingly incommensurable paradigm-bound theories, with an eye to generating novel insights that bear on policy debates and practical dilemmas. This requires an alternative way of thinking about the relationships among assumptions, concepts, theories, the organization of research, and real-world problems. We call this alternative analytic eclecticism (Sil Rudra, Beyond paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics, 2011, p. 02).

If there is a deficiency in the research related to the shortcomings of paradigm-bound research or to make reference to eclectic approaches. However, the argument is distinctive in its effort to create a more coherent and systematic understanding of what constitutes analytic eclecticism, how it engages and integrates existing strands of scholarship, and what value it adds to academic and policy debates. This is more than a call for pluralism and tolerance. And it is more than a plea for more policy-oriented research at the expense of theory. Analytic eclecticism is about making intellectually and practically useful connections among clusters of analyses that are substantively related but normally formulated in separate paradigms. It rests on a pragmatic set of assumptions, downplays rigid epistemic commitments, and focuses on the consequences of researches for concrete dilemmas (Sil Rudra, p. 03).

The eclectical analysis method provides ideas from a variety of contemporary thinkers and theories, and in the field of comparative politics it actually offers comparative studies that are systematically and objectively varied, and it relies on employing multidisciplinary approaches and divides research interests between history, politics, society and economics in order to study the complexity of the human experience in a more comprehensive manner. Instead of artificially confining studies to a narrow and lonely interpretive field, the eclectical analysis gives an opportunity for each discipline to present an explanatory dimension to the rest of the disciplines. It rests on a pragmatic set of assumptions, down plays rigid epistemic commitments, and focuses on the consequences of research for concrete dilemmas.

It challenges the analytic boundaries derived from paradigmatic assumptions, and refuses to carve up complex political phenomena solely for the purpose of making them more tractable to a particular style of analysis. Instead, it identifies important substantive questions that have relevance for the real world, and it integrates empirical observations and causal stories that are posited in separate paradigm-bound theories or narratives. In doing so, analytic

eclecticism holds forth the promise of richer explanations. It also offers a means to reduce the gap between the practical knowledge required by policymakers and everyday actors, and the research products generated by academic disciplines and subfields. Since it depends heavily on the theoretical and empirical work generated within paradigms and research traditions, analytic eclecticism does not seek to displace them. The goal is not to synthesize, subsume, or replace paradigms. It is to demonstrate the practical relevance of, and substantive connections among, theories and narratives constructed within seemingly discrete and irreconcilable approaches.

## IV- Analytic Eclecticism: advantages and Challenges

In the lead article of an important symposium on the future of comparative politics (World Politics, October 1995, p. 4), Peter Evans offered a strong defense of what he calls the "eclectic, messy center" in our field, located between the alternatives of general theory and deep immersion in specific cases, The argue is that new developments in comparative politics challenge us to build a "disciplined, rigorous center." This center should emerge from the interaction between, on the one hand, recent innovations in theory and method, and, on the other hand, approaches and tools that have traditionally been the distinctive strengths of comparative politics scholars (Collier, 1999, p. 01).

There are three basic building blocks for building this research orientation in comparative politics, first by establishing dialogue between quantitative and qualitative methods, second by innovation the tradition of comparative historical analysis, third by interaction between research that depends on theory and inductive learning from cases that can result from field research. Concerning the methodological dialogue, many scholars have expressed that the advanced tools for analyzing a small number of cases which constitute a comparative method are not just a stop on the way to reaching advanced quantitative techniques. Instead, objectively, we find in some literature and research a series of studies that scientists move from Statistical studies refer to small studies and not vice versa, moreover, methodologically speaking, writing on the comparative method generates value insights in itself, and the small and limited comparison remains indispensable in comparative politics, and creative dialogue with quantitative researchers pushes work on the comparative method in Productivity trends including new perspectives on defining the world of cases, case selection, designing contextual comparisons and conducting Causal assessment.

While the comparativists engage in this methodological dialogue they should not continue to hear warnings from some areas of research including the comparative politics, it is clear that advanced statistics do not provide all the answers to methodological questions more than the comparative method. We need the methodological tools for each of the statistical traditions and the case studies with a small number, and the insights drawn from each can help reinforce the other's approach. This dialogue is an essential component of a rigorous and disciplined center in comparative politics. As for the tradition of comparative historical analysis is very similar to a great innovation, this tradition has been expanded and consolidated through dozens of valuable studies published in the 1990s, which use ambitious comparisons to address issues of great political and normative importance, These new studies are particularly interesting because they respond to the acute methodological criticism that has emerged in the field of historical sociology, and we find a critique, for example, of the types

of explanatory claims involved in the overall structural focus of comparative and historical studies, as well as of the causal procedures of those who rely on comparative methods in light of the growing interest in studies. Historical comparison of such methodological issues, including focusing on accurate foundations and new understanding as well as the use of multiple causal assessment strategies.

Fruitful discussions have been held about the interplay between theoretically informed research and the rich knowledge of cases that can create opportunities to extract new ideas. This knowledge of cases not only serves hypotheses testing but is also an indispensable source for new concepts and innovative research agendas. Multifaceted between cases, theoretical services and support in many aspects, which emphasizes the consolidation of the theoretically driven research schedule in the field research and field-based knowledge, and against this background scholars seeking to establish a disciplined center in comparative politics face a critical challenge in strengthening this interaction The multi-faceted between case study and theory building, and rigorous training in field methodology and inductive research strategies, it is often not given sufficient attention in methodology courses in political science and may provide useful models for training researchers in comparative politics (Collier, pp. 02-04)

There are many studies be seen as illustrative of what Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein (2010) have labelled 'analytical eclecticism'. Taking inspiration by a research argument that paradigms can be a 'hindrance to understanding', Drawing on a number of examples of studies that have combined different approaches, Sil and Katzenstein make a strong and persuasive case for a combinatorial approach. They argue that studies based on a single theoretical lens involve trade-offs, and can produce enduring blind spots unless accompanied by complementary, countervailing efforts to recomplexify problems. The word 'eclecticism' may be synonymous with indiscriminate and ragtag. But Sil and Katzenstein's purpose is to emphasize taking the best from a variety of different approaches, methods or styles. They see analytical eclecticism's value-added as 'a more open-ended analysis that can incorporate the insights of different paradigm-bound theories (Haughton, 2016, p. 74).

The modern political science likes to see itself as an enterprise where researchers choose freely among different methods for the sake of the advancement of knowledge. Adam Przeworski, for example, a prominent figure in comparative politics and in democratization studies, calls his method eclectic and opportunistic. He stated that he does not take "theorems" too seriously. "Whenever the structure of the problem is sufficiently clear, I rely of deductive arguments. Whenever systematic empirical evidence exists, I bring to bear the "facts". But I also do not shy from trusting authorities, looking for intuitions in particular historical events, or simply asserting prior beliefs" (see- Przeworski, Adam, 1999, p 25) He calls himself "methodological opportunist who believes in doing or using whatever works. If game theory works, I use it. If what is called for is a historic account, I do that. If deconstruction is needed, I will even try deconstruction. So I have no principles" (see- Kohli, Evans, Katzenstein, Przeworski et al., 1995, p.16). Researchers so far have taken these claims at their face value; some have even suggested that their colleagues follow similar theoretical and methodological eclecticism (Dexter and Sharman 2001, p.493), It suggests that despite the full academic freedom to choose among different research techniques and methods of

interpretation, most scholars prefer to stick with limited number of instruments (Mitropolitski, 2014, pp. 01-02).

Table n°1 summarizes the evolution of comparative politics in terms of its substantive foci and dominant comparative methods. This evolution has in part been reflected in the patterns of research, large questions addressed in the field including the establishment and maintenance of political institutions, patterns of violent and non-violent political behaviour, the relationship between institutions and political performance, the variable protection of human rights, and the interplay between domestic and international variables map onto the history of the field detailed in column two of the table.

| Period | Substantive focus | Comparative method |
|---|---|---|
| Public law phase Inter-war period | Institutional design and political order. **Objects of inquiry:** presidential vs. parliamentary regimes, federal vs. unitary systems, political party organizations, legal and legislative instruments, democratic, fascist, and socialist regimes. | **Few and single-country studies**: Descriptive history Formal and configurative analysis. **Basic unit of analysis:** individual countries (mostly in Europe and North America). |
| Behavioural revolution 1940s–1960s | **Political behavior:** Explaining patterns of political development, including democracy, political instability, and political violence. **Objects of inquiry:** interest groups, parties, elections, decision making, rules of the game, the military, peasants, students, and workers | **Many-country comparisons:** Cross-national indicators Quantitative analysis Search for covering laws and universal generalizations **Basic unit of analysis:** individuals and individual countries (global and regional samples) |
| Institutional revival 1970s and 1980s | Relationship between institutions and political actors **Objects of inquiry:** democracy and democratic transition, revolution, economic and political dependency, political protest, public policy mechanisms and outcomes, and the welfare state | Few-country comparisons Qualitative and quantitative techniques, Inferences limited to similar countries outside scope of comparison **Basic unit of analysis:** individuals and individual countries (global and regional samples) |
| **New eclecticism 1990s until present** | Individual, institutional, and cultural foundations of politics **Objects of inquiry:** democratic transition, institutional design, social movements, globalization (economic, political, and cultural dimensions), transnational networks, political and cultural diffusion, terrorism, human rights, international law, environment | Many-, few-, and single- country studies, Qualitative and quantitative techniques Universal generalizations, as well as regional and country specific inferences **Basic unit of analysis:** individuals and individual countries (global and regional samples) |
| **Table n° 1:** Evolution of comparative politics: substantive foci and dominant methods | | |
| **Source:** Todd Landman, Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction, 3 ed, Taylor & Francis Group, USA, p 304. | | |

Contrary to the observations of some comparative scholars (e.g. Mair 1996; Peters 1998), all methods of comparison are valid and continue to be employed by scholars in the field (see Gerring 2006). The period of 'new eclecticism' recognizes and even celebrates the plurality of topics, theories, and methods in comparative politics. But this eclecticism and claim of methodological pluralism does not mean 'anything goes'. Rather, the method adopted and the research design that is formulated are a function of both the type of research question that is being addressed and the theoretical perspective that has been adopted. There is not a unity of method in comparative politics, but as in more general developments in the philosophy of the social sciences, there is now the practice of 'cognitive instrumentalism', which applies the necessary theoretical and methodological tools to a series of important and challenging political puzzles (Gordon 1991:624–634; Grofman 2001). But as new issues emerge and new research questions are posed, the key for comparative politics in providing sound answers to such new puzzles is systematic analysis that follows in comparative politics (Landman, 2008, p. 303).

Many comparative political scholars have immersed themselves in the modularity of the new eclectical analysis, whether it is knowledgeable with this pattern of cognitive analysis or even in implicit and unconscious contexts, a matter that made one of the pillars of comparative politics in the contemporary period and one of the most important theorists of this field admits that. Howard Wiarda, says: (Wiarda, Grand theories and ideologies in the social sciences, 2010, pp. 240-242).

*(... To be eclectic, borrowing useful theory from a variety of approaches. Because of my research interests, I tend to borrow what I think of as useful ideas from developmentalism, political culture, political sociology, institutionalism, rational choice, and non- Western theories of change. Some of my writings have been identified with the political- cultural approach, but actually in my empirical research, I pick and choose among a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. To me, these are purely pragmatic choices; I am interested in any theory or body of knowledge that helps shed light on the particular issue that I am investigating. Doubtless the Freudian in our research team would find deep psychological impulses in the choices I make, and certainly the scientist would also find a subconscious cause. But at least in my own mind the goal is ever- deeper explanation, and I am willing eclectically to use any theory or approach that helps advance that goal, and in my field research I have always employed an eclectic approach, borrowing from culture studies, developmentalism, institutionalism, and rational choice, as well as from non- Western theories ...).*

In recent years some scholars of comparative politics have moved away from the earlier emphasis on approaches. They simply assume, as most of us do, that the corporatist, state-society relations, political economy, and other approaches noted above are so thoroughly integrated into the field, so widely accepted, that we don't need to argue about them anymore. We use them, or some combination of them, where they are useful; the choice among approaches, most of us believe, should, therefore, be eclectic and pragmatic, and not based on great ideological or methodological hang-ups. Taking for granted the usefulness of these approaches and moving on from there, quite a number of scholars have now gone on to focus on problems and issues (Wiarda, Comparative Politics: Approaches and Issues, 2007, pp. 12-13).

A well-constructed typology can bring order out of chaos. It can transform the overwhelming complexity of an apparently eclectic congeries of numerous apparently diverse cases into a well-ordered set of a few homogeneous types clearly situated in a property space of a few important dimensions. A sound typology forms a firm foundation and provides direction for both theorizing and empirical research. No other tool has as much power to simplify life for a political scientist. The task for the future is the further elaboration of this crucial nexus between the qualitative and statistical approaches. This requires effort from scientists with both theoretical and statistical talents. Many scholars recognizes the ‘‘complementary relationship of quantitative and typological procedures’’ and advocates ‘‘the emergence of a number of political scientists who are procedurally competent in both typology and statistical techniques as an eclectical trends (Montgomery, 2000, p. 1388).

Thus, it is not surprising that there has been growing interest in alternatives to researchs that is explicitly or implicitly designed to defend the core meta-theoretical postulates of a paradigm or research tradition. Such alternatives focus on the practical utility of theories in relation to concrete problems in the real world rather than on their ability to meet the criteria established by proponents of particular paradigms. Within the context of comparative politics, a growing number of scholars have chosen to bypass the paradigm wars. Instead, they address vexing issues of both scholarly and practical import through complex arguments that incorporate elements of theories or narratives originally drawn up in separate research traditions. Many of these works are also a response to the growing gap between self-contained, academic debates and broader public debates over policy and practice. What we call analytic eclecticism is intended to capture the contributions of, and provide a coherent intellectual rationale for, this relatively new movement that resists a priori constraints on the kinds of questions that social scientists ask of political life and on the kinds of theories (Sil Rudra, p. 09).

Simplifications based on a single theoretical lens involve trade-offs, and can produce enduring blind spots unless accompanied by complementary, countervailing efforts to ‘recomplexify’ problems (see Scott, 1995). Without such efforts, academic discourse risks becoming little more than a cluster of research activities addressing artificially segmented problems, with little thought to the implications of findings for real-world dilemmas facing political and social actors. This is where analytic eclecticism, despite its own limitations. However, makes its distinctive contribution as political scientists seek to contend with the complexity of political phenomena that bear on the practical dilemmas and constraints faced by decision makers and other actors in the real world. Paradigm-bound scholars typically focuses on questions that conform to particular meta-theoretical assumptions and lend themselves to the use of particular concepts and approaches. Analytic eclecticism takes on problems as they are understood and experienced by political actors, without excessively simplifying such problems simply to fit the scholarly conventions or theoretical boundaries established by any one tradition. Paradigm-bound scholars typically assumes the ontological and causal primacy of certain types of phenomena, mechanisms, and processes while disregarding or marginalizing others. Analytic eclecticism explores how diverse mechanisms posited in competing paradigm-bound theories might interact with each other, and how, under certain conditions, they can combine to affect outcomes that interest both scholars and practitioners (Sil Rudra, pp. 09-10).

There is a broader sample of eclectic studies drawn from comparative politics. For now, we elaborate on the significance of the three markers we employ to identify analytic eclecticism in practice. Each is defined in flexible terms so as to preclude specific injunctions, but each is also clear enough for the purposes of distinguishing eclectic from tradition-bound studies. The first is a broadly pragmatist ethos, whether implied or proclaimed; the second is an effort to formulate problems in a manner that seeks to trace rather than reduce complexity, and the third is the construction of causal stories focused on the complex processes through which different types of mechanisms interact. Although still comparatively rare in the comparative politics, eclectic studies is beginning to make an impression in certain fields. Such eclecticism may be identified in relation to distinct strands within a broadly defined research tradition. In the interest of brevity, we focus here on eclectic scholarship that cuts across research traditions in the fields of international relations and comparative politics. We neither pretend to offer an adequate summary of the arguments considered, nor assess their substantive accuracy or explanatory power. We do, however, view these works as meeting our three criteria for analytic eclecticism: they take on problems of broad scope, they develop complex causal stories at the level of middle-range theory, and they implicitly seek pragmatic engagement within and beyond the academe (Katzenstein, 2010, pp. 416-421).

Practical eclecticism, in which scholars combine interventions from different therapeutic approaches in the hopes of modifying relevant variables which can be better justified than theoretical eclecticism. Theoretical eclecticism is more difficult to justify insofar as two different and incompatible theories cannot be simultaneously true. Which theory or set of variables best explains or predicts the efficacy of various treatment packages should be resolved by empirical data (Albert Ellis, 2010, p. 211). In the social sciences, theory plays an absolutely essential role, although it's not always clear exactly what this role is. Indeed, one of the criticisms leveled at the field (both from within and without) is that there is no single or even dominant theoretical approach to distinguish comparative politics. Instead, there has been a proliferation of approaches (especially since the 1970s) "to the point", as one prominent comparativist puts it, "where both graduate students and some professional practitioners in the field have at times seen the diversity as anarchy" (Verba 1991, p. 38). Others, like Peter Evans, see the theoretical eclecticism of the field in a more positive light, arguing that it gives comparativists the freedom "… to draw on a mélange of theoretical traditions in hopes of gaining greater purchase on the cases they care about" (Kohli, Evans et al. 1995, p. 4). Theory, in this view, is pragmatic: it provides the tools to help frame and explain empirical puzzles, while comparative researchers are "eclectics" who use whatever works (Lim, 2006, p. 50).

## V- Critical reading

Analytic eclecticism is neither a substitute for nor superior to approaches embedded in research traditions. Its role is to complement such approaches, and its contribution depends largely on continued engagement with these approaches. For two reasons, it deserves greater space in political science disciplines than it presently enjoys. First, analytic eclecticism alone aims to problematize complex phenomena encountered by practitioners and ordinary actors, phenomena that are typically sliced into more narrowly circumscribed puzzles by adherents of research traditions. Second, analytic eclecticism alone is designed to simultaneously traffic in

theories from multiple traditions in search of linkages between different types of mechanisms that are normally treated in isolation in separate traditions. In so doing, analytic eclecticism increases the chance that scholars and other actors will hit upon hidden connections and new insights that elude us when we simplify the world for the sole purpose of analyzing it through a single theoretical lens. This possibility justifies committing at least some of our resources to analytic eclecticism even as we continue to encourage the development of and competition between existing and emerging research traditions. A discipline that accommodates adherents of diverse research traditions as well as their analytically eclectic colleagues will not only expand "the fund of insights and understandings" that all scholars can draw upon but also facilitate more fruitful conversations across and beyond the boundaries of the academe (Katzenstein, 2010, pp. 425-426).

Even as Ira Katznelson sees the biggest of pictures, he adopts an eclectic research strategy. Katznelson demonstrates a "pragmatic attitude about method." Displaying a "healthy disrespect for overly stylized battles about paradigms," he wants to employ "a range of analytical traditions to answer tough and meaningful questions" about "important problems." Katznelson urges "problem-focused writing that exhibits little respect for traditional divisions within comparative politics" such as political economy, contentious politics, and electoral studies. Utilizing multiple methods – archives, surveys, ethnography, experiments, and cross-national statistics – helps the field transcend "inductive variable centered strategies." He also urges comparativists to "refuse to choose between positive and normative orientations." Believing that many "intersecting modes of investigation" can produce findings that illuminate questions that are empirically grounded, ones rich in knowledge of time and place, Katznelson advocates a style of comparative inquiry that is "realist and concrete rather than nominal and abstract.

Even so, Ira Katznelson cautions against excessive pragmatism. Katznelson has little use for "highly targeted studies" of limited ambition that produce "substantive and conceptual retrenchment" from the great works of the past. Without the sort of larger project focused on Western liberalism that he advocates, "thematic literatures threaten to remain confined within specialized conversations, and possibilities for integrating findings across a range of discoveries are likely to stay artificially abridged." Katznelson thus worries about the decentering of comparative politics – the heterogeneity and diversity in subjects, questions, and studies that inevitably accompany a diverse toolkit. Katznelson seeks a big picture pragmatism that can contain the field's tensions and contradictions. Applying a rational choice approach, Margaret Levi also advocates research pragmatism that aims at big questions. Her chapter details significant substantive, methodological, and theoretical advances in rational choice analysis that allows rationalists to employ manageable research strategies to probe the big picture. Levi discusses how, over the past decade, rational choice comparativists have indeed helped to redirect comparative politics toward goals that she shares with Katznelson (Mark Lichbach, 2009, pp. 03-04).

It is easy to produce numerous deductions by adding numerous assumptions. It is an approach that deserves no honors. Research programs in the social sciences often appear deductively fertile only because of an inelegant eclecticism: their assumptions are hedged so as to be able to account for much of the empirical world. But unless the assumptions behind a

research program are parsimonious and precise, nothing of value has been accomplished, for anything can be derived from everything. The consequence of eclectic theories is therefore that testing becomes impossible. Eckstein (1980) discovered this truth in conflict studies when he tried but failed (not his fault) to separate two important research programs, Gurr's (1970) version of culturalist theories and Tilly's (1978) version of rationalist theories, by determining which theory better explains the known facts about how social cleavages, the economy, repression, urbanization, and so on influence collective dissent. Eckstein points out that Gurr and Tilly surrounded their core assumptions with a "protective belt" by arguing that grievances and mobilizable resources are required for collective dissent. Both theories thus turned out to be eclectic. Nonetheless, there is a problem with the different and better criteria. Researchers who consider themselves "problem driven," puzzle directed," or "question oriented" often argue that synergisms of research traditions are valuable. Since this type of scientist is interested in developing middle-range theories in some substantive domain (e.g., protest cycles) or historically concrete explanations of empirical happenings (e.g., fascism in Germany and Italy), he or she wants to draw freely upon rationalist, culturalist, and structuralist approaches to develop a single comprehensive theory or explanation (Lebow Richard Ned, 2007, pp. 272-274).

Some of the researches that has appeared in the past decades points to some approaches to surmount those methodological and research difficulties. In the field of comparative politics in general the work on comparative studies over the past decades has retreated from attaching to one model - rational, structural or cultural - to employing new eclectical ways in studies and researchs, through the following:

- From attachment to one paradigm – rationalist, structuralist, or culturalist – to a new eclecticism.
- From reliance on comparative statics to historically rich research, taking account of temporal sequencing and critical junctures.
- From the use of a single template of the state to approaches recognizing both the isomorphism of states and their great diversity.
- From the either/or of single-case studies or large-N research to studies of distinctive subsets of states, whose findings are in dialogue with, rather than merely validating, large-N hypotheses.
- From linear causal analysis to process-oriented, complex, multitiered research (Mark Lichbach, 2009, p. 163).

Should we therefore be pragmatic and eclectic in picking and choosing among several explanations, combining them to form a more complex multi-causality, or does one of these explanations (class analysis, culture, psychology, rational choice, sociobiology, and the "new institutionalism" are among the claimants) have greater explanatory power and is it all-encompassing? Is the pursuit of Grand Theory and Ideology still useful, or, in this new, more scientific, and empirical era driven by demands for hard data, should we now focus on smaller, more manageable issues amenable to clear empirical research? But then, how do we do our empirical research if our larger ideas are still unclear, inchoate, and fuzzy? If Grand

Theory and Ideology are still relevant and useful, how do we decide which Grand Theory or Ideology to use?

Some reexamines the role of Grand Theory and Ideology in helping us to understand human behavior and the development of nations. It explores not only the older paradigms of liberal developmentalism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, culture studies, and institutionalism (old and new), but also more recent approaches, such as sociobiology (Edward Wilson), environmentalism (Jared Diamond), genetic and chemical explorations (from our biology and chemistry departments), and evidence from physics that we are merely a collection of nerve endings and electrical impulses. The issues are: Which of these conceptual frameworks or Grand Theories, in a time of rising uncertainty and conflict about the future, still carry validity and explanatory power? Which of these are still useful in understanding our present condition? Is any one of these Grand Theories or Ideologies sufficient unto itself, or does it have the possibility of developing in that direction in the future, or must we be eclectic, choosing the most useful and relevant aspects of several theories? Can we thus combine several theories into a more all- encompassing explanation; alternatively, could we devise a technique of multivariate analysis and complex multi-causality that helps better than competing paradigms to get at that complex, ever- changing phenomenon called truth? (Wiarda, Grand theories and ideologies in the social sciences, 2010, pp. 03-04).

Some advocates of these individual "schools" or approaches continued to advance exclusivist claims for their point of view, arguing that theirs was the best or most encompassing approach. But most scholars of comparative politics took a more pragmatic and eclectic viewpoint. Their argument was:

1- Let us end the internecine "warfare" among these various approaches and their proponents.

2- Let us borrow selectively from and use each of these approaches where it is useful and sheds light on the subject matter, and, meanwhile.

3- Let us go on to study the various issues, problems, and subject matters that we and comparative politics are interested in.

And that is what happened in comparative politics in the 1990s and continuing to today. The fervent debate among the rival approaches discussed here has died down. Instead, what most scholars do is utilize whichever of these approaches best helps her or him to understand the issues. So if dependency theory is useful, let us use that; if corporatism or state-society relations are helpful, let us use those. The approach one uses depends on the issue one chooses to study. Thus, if you're interested in the politics of labor relations and how both labor and employer groups relate to government policy making, then the corporatism literature will be useful to you. But if you're interested in the international flow of capital or how the U.S. government or big multinational corporations operate abroad, then some of the dependency theory literature will be useful to you. The point is, the choice of a research approach ought to be a pragmatic one and not the result of some ideological position.

This focus on pragmatism and eclecticism in the use of approaches helps explain the direction of comparative politics contemporaneously. By now most scholars in the field have come to accept the fact that all these approaches, or various combinations of them, have

something to offer. We don't need to argue about that so much anymore. So let us go on, avoiding the ideological and methodological disputes of the past, and explore the issues and problems that we are interested in, using where appropriate the approaches set forth here (Wiarda, Comparative Politics: Approaches and Issues, 2007, pp. 273-274).

Long ago, the British philosopher Michael Oakeshott (1962 [1947], p. 15) noted that 'nobody supposes that the knowledge that belongs to a good cook is confined to what is or may be written down in the cookery book.' The best way to learn a recipe may well be to watch the cook at work in the kitchen. In a similar vein, the best way to discuss how to pursue eclectic research is to consider the common attributes of works that have fruitfully adopted an eclectic approach to generate interesting and useful insights. It is not possible to construct a definitive 'model' or 'guide' for conducting eclectic studies. But we can learn from considering what makes these diverse works similarly eclectic, and what sets them apart from conventional paradigm-bound research projects. This takes us back to the three criteria for defining and distinguishing eclectic styles of research, the open-ended formulation of problems; the construction of complex middle-range causal stories; and the facilitation of pragmatic engagement between the academic world and the world of policy and practice (Sil Rudra, Beyond paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics, 2011, pp. 204-205).

## VI- Conclusion

While the political phenomenon is expanding strongly and depth, the field of comparative politics has become an urgent need to employ the positive aspects in eclectic analytic by incorporating new research methods to suit the nature of new research topics as well, under the influence of major political, social and economic changes, and this expansion has prompted, for example, field scholars To reconsider some of the previous and causal assumptions and investigate new experimental areas, this interaction between the field and the transformation of the "real world" still represents a real challenge to research methods. Keeping up with internal and international transformations and studying phenomena may have consequences on the boundaries of the field in general and on the topics that will be covered. In particular, here appears the imperative to use eclectic analytic to preserve the boundaries of specialization on the one hand, and to succeed in building realistic scientific explanations on the other hand, this is far from the competing paradigms that transform over time into contiguous paradigms rather than conflict over the extension of cognitive dominance within the field of comparative politics.

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