
Symposium: Beyond Paradigms and Research Programs?

Introduction

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.935557>

Peter M. Haas

University of Massachusetts-Amherst
haas@polsci.umass.edu

This symposium on Rudy Sil's and Peter Katzenstein's (Sil/K) analytic eclecticism (Sil and Katzenstein 2010a, 2010b) in the *Qualitative & Multi-Method Research Newsletter* comes from the roundtable on analytic eclecticism at the 2011 Annual APSA Conference.

I was at the Brohan Museum in Berlin, admiring Pablo Picasso's 1939 *Der Gulbe Pullover* (Lady in a Yellow Sweater) when I received Rudy's email request to chair this session, and to participate. My appreciation of the overall project is thus framed by this context.

Analytic eclecticism is a work of art in the sense that it helps us see the world in new ways and to appreciate multiple perspectives, as is the goal of all good art. Most contemporary ways of understanding world politics provide only monochromatic or narrow visions of a rich and complex reality, and thus oversimplify a complex subject of study. A dramatic change in perspective, such as analytic eclecticism, provides a fruitful entrée for understanding contemporary world politics under conditions of globalization and complexity. Art history provides a convenient metaphor for thinking about the reception and diffusion of such path-breaking works of art. Consider Picasso's *Der Gulbe Pullover*.



Picasso's modernist eye changes our own appreciation of perspective and representation, as does the broader notion of analytic eclecticism. Thus it leads us as viewers to see the world in a different light. But radical new artistic movements require institutional change if they are to prosper. In order for the Impressionists, and later the German modernists, to gain a niche in art circles they not only had to produce their work, they had to create a market niche through publicizing and promoting it, finding dealers and galleries willing to represent them, creating juried exhibits that would present them—since existing juried exhibits were conservative and would reject new styles—and soliciting patrons.

Make no mistake. Sil/K's manifesto on analytic eclecticism is a work of art. Our essays in this symposium treat two aspects of the artistic rendering of Sil/K. The first two, by Andrew Bennett and Peter M. Haas, discuss the broader themes and context of Sil/K's analytic eclecticism. Bennett focuses on causal inference and social mechanisms and various schools of thought in world politics whose efforts can be advanced through the application of analytic eclecticism. Haas discusses analytic eclecticism in a metatheoretical framework, looking at its philosophy and sociology of science foundations, and its utility for advancing understanding about international environmental politics. The essays by Ba and Paul discuss analytic eclecticism from the perspective of writers who were singled out by Sil/K for their exemplary work, and tell revealing individual stories of two authors who may not have regarded themselves as necessarily working within the tradition of analytic eclecticism, and of the challenges and rewards of analytic eclecticism for their own research projects.

References

- Sil, Rudra and Peter J. Katzenstein. 2010a. "Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 8:2 (June), 411–431.
- Sil, Rudra and Peter J. Katzenstein. 2010b. *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.