

# IS POLITICAL SCIENCE METHODOLOGICALLY ECLECTIC? A CASE FROM DEMOCRATIZATION STUDIES

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**Abstract:** Inspired by Max Weber's instrumental approach, 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. This paper challenges the understanding of modern political science as an eclectic and opportunistic methodological enterprise in which researchers choose freely among different methods. Its conclusions are based on the analysis of the writings of a few authors in the discipline, including Przeworski. 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. The study also investigates the reasons why these authors, including Przeworski himself, do not answer the call for methodological eclectics and opportunism.

This research was launched as a reflection on a controversial statement made by Adam Przeworski, a celebrity in comparative politics and in democratization studies. We owe him one of the most elegant definitions of democracy as a system of institutionalized uncertainty, or a regime where the rules are predictable, but not the electoral results (1991). While presenting his methodology, he calls it “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” (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” (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).

The reason this paper finds Przeworski’s statements puzzling rather than enlightening is that it runs contrary to the first impressions about this author. Similar statements, however, should not be considered without a long pedigree in social sciences. Max Weber (1904) inspires the instrumental vision of scientific research. According to this vision, the modern social sciences, political science among them, like to be seen as intellectual enterprise where researchers choose freely among different methods for the only sake of the advancement of knowledge. It is quite different understanding from the positivist vision regarding the role of social researchers, completely detached

from their subjective prejudices, objectively choosing methods and techniques that follow the object of their study. The key difference between these two approaches is the place of researchers. Within instrumental vision, they are free actors who arbitrarily choose among theories and methods; within positivist vision, they are simple agents who passively report social reality in a systemic and cumulative way. Think about these two visions as we think about the difference between inventors and discoverers. Inventors create something new, not known for their peers; discoverers find something that did exist but nobody found it earlier. On the invention-discovery scale Przeworski's statement seems putting him closer to the inventor's, if not to the artist's, point of view. It seems as if he is suggesting that he is not bound by established ways of theorizing. It seems that he also chooses methods and techniques according only to the principle of utility, a very economic, if not a very Weberian way of justifying research methodology. The research question or rather questions is what did Przeworski mean by making such a statement, whether it was true or not, and whether what was true for Przeworski might be generalized to other researchers in the domain of political science. In other words, this paper investigates the presence of eclectics and opportunism in modern political science.

Political science, unlike other disciplines, is in what Kuhn (1996) calls preparadigmatic state, meaning a lack of a paramount theory and methodological protocol. Following on the Kuhn's footsteps, Belanger (1998) pointed out at several alternative and equally possible ways of doing research within the discipline. Belanger saw the possibility of monopolization of research around certain theoretical and methodological postulates, such as methodological individualism and theories inspired by economic reasoning (2008). McFalls (2008), on the other hand, not only looks at the

discipline as an undisciplined object; he also sees no immediate risk of changing this status quo. Therefore, by answering these research questions, this paper will also put the findings within the frame of Belanger-McFalls debate on the future trends; whether the modern political science represents converging or divergent trajectories as far as the methodology is concerned.

## **Methodology**

This study favors inductive approach in demonstrating the scientific proof. This means that instead of taking as a basis a particular theory or a multivariable model, which is analytically filtered down to hypotheses, which are in turn tested with findings, it prefers to advance in the opposite order. It collects findings corresponding to specific methodological criteria, then put them to analysis, and only then, if possible, tries to frame them into theoretical schemes, either confirming or infirming the existing ways of theorizing.

This research focuses on Przeworski and on five other social scientists that partly overlap his interests in democratization (see Appendix). Each of them is also focusing on other issues away from purely democratic studies. For example, Johnson is interested in political economy, institutional change, and political identity matters; Schatz is interested in identity politics and in

political ethnography as a particular methodology. The sample includes a few peer-reviewed articles from each author, in at least two different personal research programs for each of them.

As far as content analysis of these articles is concerned, the emphasis is put on the following important elements. First, it looks at the title and its possible relevance within particular “theorem”, to use Przeworski’s own words. This may, although it is not necessary, reflect particular leaning toward hypothetico-deductive approach, quite contrary to Przeworski’s statement implying initial theoretical equidistance. Second, the study looks closely to the research question, which may be explicitly stated or only assumed; in this case it is trying to deduce it from other general statements in the article. Third, it looks at the methods and techniques for gathering information. It pays special attention to possible change within this methodology over the years and as the authors move back and forth from one research program to another. This paper presents, if available, how the authors justify their methodological choices. This content analysis is carried out using semiotic techniques of information compilation. It puts a particular emphasis on the semantic and pragmatic level of analysis; the latter means that the positioning of the authors and their works close to eclectic theoretical and methodological pole or its opposite would be determined holistically from the entire work instead of short statements taken outside the large context. This study does not intend to replicate the research used in the sample or to do police investigation; it is not therefore its task to judge the quality of the research itself.

## Presentation of findings

The findings are summarized for all six authors from the sample in Table 1. The table includes a column on the name of the authors and the year of publication; the columns “title” and “research question” frame these parts of the articles within the large debates within the discipline; the last column “methodology” includes a list of methodological tools.

**Table 1.**

Author, year of publication	Title	Research question	Methodology
Johnson (1994)	Institutions framed within the debate between continuation and change	Why institutions fail? (Russian banking system)	Secondary sources (including media reports), analytical narrative
Johnson (2001)	Path contingency between structural and agency institutionalisms	Policy failures due to institutions or to policies?	Formal analysis, secondary sources, analytical narrative
Forest & Johnson (2002)	Reference to Bourdieu's concept of symbolic	Role of symbolic capital in national identity	Secondary sources (including media

	capital	transformation	reports), analytical narrative; non-representative survey.
Johnson (2006)	Diffusion framed between material incentives and socialization	Role of incentives and cultural norms in policy diffusion	Secondary sources (including media reports), analytical narrative, open interviews.
Kubicek (1997)	Realpolitik within debate between neo-realism and hegemonic stability	Why integration fails in Central Asia?	Formal analysis, secondary sources, analytical narrative.
Kubicek (1999)	Trade-unions - temporary weakness vs. structure-emulation	Impact of post-communist transition on trade-unions	Chronological narrative, analytical narrative, secondary sources.
Kubicek (2002)	Civil society role - Tocqueville vs. Huntington	Discussing link between weak civil society and political oligarchy	Chronological narrative, analytical narrative (incl. counter-factual scenario), secondary sources.
Kubicek (2005)	No reference to	Article closer to	Chronological narrative,

	particular theory or debate	journalism than to social science	analytical narrative, secondary sources.
McFaul (1989/1990)	Debate among paradigms in international relations	Arguments against established position within the discipline	Chronological and analytical narrative, secondary sources.
McFaul (1990)	No reference to particular theory or debate	Assessing impact of process through case study	Analytical narrative, secondary sources.
McFaul (2002)	“Wave” as metaphor of democratization	Against traditional views on the reasons for post-communist regime diversity	Analytical narrative, secondary sources.
McFaul & Stoner-Weiss (2008)	Different models of political development	Claim for spurious correlation between economy and politics	Analytical narrative, secondary sources, incl. statistical data.
Przeworski & Wallerstein (1988)	Debate between Marxism and neo-liberalism	Claim against theories of structural dependence	Formal analysis
Przeworski & Vreeland (2002)	Model of cooperation within game theory	Finding equilibrium point (zone) that makes bilateral cooperation	Formal analysis, case study



		possible	
Przeworski (2005)	Model of democracy within game theory	Finding equilibrium point (zone) that makes democracy possible and sustainable	Formal analysis
Benhabib & Przeworski (2006)	No reference to particular theory or debate	Finding equilibrium point (zone) that makes democracy possible and sustainable	Formal analysis
Robert D. Putnam (1988)	Game theory	Claim against traditional views in international relations	Formal analysis, brief analytic narrative
Robert D. Putnam (1994)	No reference to particular theory or debate	Describing a process	Chronological and analytical narrative
Robert D. Putnam (1995)	Inspired by his own theory	New theory of democratic decline	Formal analysis, analytic narrative
Helliwell & Putnam (1995)	Inspired by his own theory	Social capital as explanatory variable	Formal analysis, empirical analysis
Schatz & Schatz (2003)	No reference to particular theory or	Describing parallel developments of two	Analytical narrative

	debate	disciplines	
Volo & Schatz (2004)	No reference to particular theory or debate	Call for popularization of political ethnography	Analytical narrative
Schatz (2006)	Framing within dichotomy democracy - authoritarianism	Claims for link between legitimacy and political regime	Analytical narrative
Schatz (2008)	Framing within dichotomy democracy - authoritarianism	Claims for link between legitimacy and political regime	Analytical narrative with one key case study

Johnson's work is presented with four peer-reviewed articles published between 1994 and 2006. They partially overlap as far as their research object is concerned. For example, Johnson (1994; 2001) discusses case studies within large debate between historic and rational choice institutionalisms within political science; Johnson (2001) and Forest & Johnson (2002) are also part of post-communist democratization studies; Forest & Johnson (2002) and Johnson (2006) look at the cultural dimensions of political change. Regarding the titles of these four articles, at least three of them (1994; 2001; 2006) clearly show consideration for current debates within the discipline. As far as the research question is concerned, again, at least three out of four article (1994; 2001; 2006) start

from the premise that a particular debate within the discipline requires additional research. In all these three articles such research leads to a synthesis compromise, where elements of each antagonist are used in order to produce superior explanation. As far as the methodology and techniques of gathering information are concerned, Johnson shows conservatism coupled with slow evolution. This author uses predominantly secondary literature, which is framed with analytical narratives. These narratives seek to combine historical narratives with the rigor of rational choice theory, particularly through the use of game theory (Bates et al, 1998). Exceptionally, Forest & Johnson (2002) use non-representative surveys for quantitative purposes. Johnson (2006) adds open interviews to her methodological arsenal. The only article that stands apart from the group, Forest & Johnson (2002), is a collective work, which may present valuable information as of the reason for this exceptionality. An indirect proof that this may be the case is the research program of the other member of the team, Benjamin Forest. Unlike Johnson, he uses Pierre Bourdieu's structural sociology as basis for his research (Forest, 1995); he also is more disposed to use quantitative methods of analysis (Forest, 2002). Thus, in sum, Johnson's research is conservative as far as methodological change is concerned. This author prefers to start from working hypotheses inspired from conflicting theoretical paradigms; methodologically, she frames her findings as analytical narratives with strong emphasis on secondary literature with marginal use of triangulating open interviews. When a sudden turbulence is observed within her sample articles, it is possible that it is due entirely to the influence of her co-author.

Kubicek's sample includes four peer-reviewed articles published between 1997 and 2005. Like Johnson's articles, they partially overlap as far as their research object is concerned. For

example, Kubicek (1999; 2002) discusses different angles of post-communist trade-union development and civil society development in general; Kubicek (1999; 2005) focuses on the West-East relations that take trade-union development and larger civic society issues as illustrations; Kubicek (1997; 1999; 2002) hovers over post-communist development issues; all articles to a different degree treat aspects of social and political development as illustrations of the game theory. Regarding the titles of these four articles, at least three of them (1997; 1999; 2002) clearly show consideration for current debates within the discipline. As far as the research question is concerned, again, at least three out of four article (1997; 1999; 2002) start from the premise that a particular debate within the discipline requires additional research. Unlike Johnson search for synthesis compromise, Kubicek intellectual thrust in these three articles (1997; 1999; 2002) leads to clear winners among the initially presented alternatives. The only article where such winner is not produced (2005) is also unique in other ways; its title is descriptive rather than analytical; its research question is open-ended; and there are no clearly identified theoretical oppositions. It seems that the author is confused to identify clear-cut conclusion without maneuvering within well-delimited theoretical framework. As far as the methodology and techniques of gathering information is concerned, Kubicek is also very conservative and risk-free entrepreneur. His favorite starting point, after presenting in brief some key theoretical debate, is to move on presenting historic background, which gradually is engaged in analytical narratives, based exclusively on secondary literature. The only deviation from this straightforward path is his discussion of the role of trade-union movement in post-communist democratization (2002) where he briefly develops a counter-factual scenario as part of his analytical narrative.

McFaul's work is presented with four peer-reviewed articles published between 1989 and 2008. They fall within two clearly distinctive groups, dealing with case studies in international relations (1989/1990; 1990) and with post-communist political development in larger comparative perspective (2002; 2008). Regarding the titles of these four articles, at least three of them (1989/1990; 2002; 2008) clearly show consideration for current theoretical debates within the discipline; these three articles start from the premise that particular theoretical debate within the subdiscipline, international relations or comparative politics, requires additional research. Unlike Johnson's sample articles but much like Kubicek's works, McFaul does not make compromise with established truths; he defends ideas that oppose current understandings on the subject. An important difference with Kubicek is that McFaul's research is not about judging which among the opposing arguments is superior; it is as if he produces himself this superior argument. As far as the methodology and techniques of information gathering is concerned, McFaul shows conservatism coupled with slow evolution. Like previously presented authors, he uses as a primary source predominantly secondary literature, which is framed with analytical narratives. Exceptionally, McFaul & Stoner-Weiss (2008) include within discussed information some statistical data. This is a teamwork, which may present valuable information as for the reason for this slight evolution in methodological tools. An indirect proof that this may be the case is the research program of the other member of the team, Kathryn Stoner-Weiss. Unlike McFaul, she uses statistical data as illustrations (Stoner-Weiss 2002).

Przeworski's sample includes four peer-reviewed articles published between 1988 and 2006. Only one of them (2005) is a solo work; others are co-authored. They treat different topics, from the

relative independence of the state from economic interests (Przeworski & Wallerstein 1988) and possibility of bilateral cooperation (Przeworski & Vreeland 2002) to points of equilibrium that make democracy economically feasible (Przeworski 2005; Benhabib & Przeworski 2006). Despite this difference, they all are based on identical assumptions about human behavior, inspired by the game theory. Regarding the titles of these four articles, at least three of them (1988; 2002; 2005) show clearly considerations for current theoretical debates or are inspired by clear theoretical paradigms, such as the game theory. Przeworski's style is different from any of those previously presented. In three articles (2002; 2005; 2006) he builds models that do not make any reference to established alternatives, as if he works on a clear table, unobstructed by other theorizing on the subject. Only once (1988) he mentions theoretical nemeses – Marxism and neo-liberalism, only to discard them as false; in this unique case of confrontation he resembles McFaul's style, although the methodology that he uses is quite different. This exception within the sample is most probably due to the influence of the co-author Michael Wallerstein, those works attack the simplistic correlation between economic and political development (1980) or fill the lack of academic attention for some particular social issues (1987). As far as the methodology and techniques of information gathering is concerned, Przeworski, quite ironically, given his statement that triggered this research, also shows deep conservatism. Instead of expected eclectics the sample suggests a quite confident use of only one methodological approach, the formal analysis. Only once, in Przeworski & Vreeland (2002), this formal analysis is coupled with a case study that analytically demonstrates superiority of the new model. Here again, this methodological nuance is most likely due to the presence of co-author, James Raymond Vreeland, those work (2002) is focused on the same case study.

Putnam's sample is presented with four articles published between 1988 and 1995. Three of them (1988; 1994; 1995) are solo works; one is co-authored. They treat two quite different topics, from international relations and comparative politics; two focus on G-7 summits either as illustrations to new version of the game theory (1988) or as descriptive narratives representing American perspective (1994); the other two treat the social capital as possible explanatory variable toward different social processes (1995; Helliwell & Putnam, 1995). Regarding the titles of these four articles, at least three of them (1988; 1995; Helliwell & Putnam, 1995) are either inspired by theoretical paradigms, such as the game theory, or impose new theoretical paradigms, such as the social capital. Putnam, like Przeworski, builds theoretical explanations that do not make references to existing alternatives, as if he also works on a clear table, unobstructed by outside theorizing on the subject. As far as the methodology and techniques of information gathering is concerned, Putnam, much like the other authors from the sample, shows deep-rooted conservatism. He mixes formal analysis and analytical narratives. A small nuance occurs only once (Helliwell & Putnam, 1995), when he and his co-author create their own measurements in order to reveal the real impact of their most important variable, the social capital, in the framework of an empirical analysis. Here again, this methodological nuance is most likely due to the presence of co-author, John F. Helliwell, whose work (1994) reveals the same attention for empirical demonstration.

Schatz's sample includes four peer-reviewed articles published between 2003 and 2008. Two of them are co-authored; he writes the other two alone. The co-authored articles treat general methodological questions in political science; the solo works focus on political development in Central Asia, more particularly in post-communist Kazakhstan. Regarding the titles, the two

methodological articles are fairly descriptive; those focusing on Central Asia political development are open-ended within the large framework of democratization studies and democracy-autocracy dichotomy. Regarding the research question, the two articles on Central Asia posit a correlation between forms of power legitimacy and current forms of political regime in order to explain soft authoritarianism that prevails in post-communist Kazakhstan. As far as the author's style is concerned, he tries to build his own explanation in opposition to what most of his peers do. The same applies to his methodological choice of ethnography, where he clearly stands with minority within the discipline. As far as his way to demonstrate proof is concerned, he always uses analytical narratives, and only once adds a particularly illustrative case study (2008) within the larger narrative.

### **Further analysis**

Having presented the findings, the main research question may have quite a simple answer; political science, despite all its theoretical and methodological diversity, does not present even a single case of theoretical or methodological eclectics on individual level of analysis. To the contrary, each author from the sample is deeply embedded within his or her own ways of demonstrating the proof. They find them obvious, to the point of not revealing in details why they have chosen to use one or another set of theoretical and methodological assumptions. When any sudden shift is observed, it is always due to the presence of co-authors who, although it is not necessary, bring in



different tools and points of view. The time span seems leading toward further consolidation of the ways researchers do their job; there are no signs of erosion to the chosen ways of reasoning.

Such unequivocal rejection of the Przeworski's statement, not supported by the works of any other author within the sample, not supported even by his own work, opens the door for further investigation. Usually researchers do not make any statement about their epistemological beliefs; therefore Przeworski could hardly be accused of missing important elements of his research if he could also skip this part altogether. Not all researchers, as we have seen from the sample, do bother to set up clearly their research questions too. It is only via the answers that they are providing that the readers can successfully try to reconstruct the original questions. Therefore this study feels in debt to Przeworski, the only person within the sample, who dared to make general statement about his methodology. We feel compelled to go further investigating his claim, instead of simply rejecting his words about his theoretical and methodological eclectics as false. If, on a purely semantic level, his statement is simply not true, this paper will try to find another point, from which it might be true.

This point may be the self-interpretative position each author takes within the discipline as far as his or her work may or may not relate to those who asked the same or similar research questions. I claim, based on the sample, that even if each researcher remains basically unchanging as far as his theoretical approach and methodological tools are concerned, he or she sees himself or herself differently from his or her peers. This difference relates to the interpretative self-image that each researcher makes of him or of her. Within such interpretative self-imaging, some researchers, Przeworski among them, may think about themselves as theoretically and methodologically free

despite their consistency over time. Other researchers may think about their position as more or less embedded within existing theoretical paradigms; some of them may think about their place within discipline as serving different roles for the advancement of knowledge.

From this particular interpretative point of view, the sample researchers want to play quite different roles within academic community. They simply take different positions on the scale of emancipation from arguments that are used as theoretical basis for their research. This study hereafter describes the roles played by the sample researchers as if these authors were explicitly verbalizing about their goals. They represent ideal-types, more logical than real creatures. Working within inductive framework, this study cannot claim to embrace all possible interpretative self-images. Such more exhaustive study may be subject to a separate research.

The judge. This self-image tries to stand above the two opposing arguments, giving the right to one of them and automatically rejecting the other as false. On the scale of emancipation this image is heavily dependent on existing theoretical approaches; it cannot exist without identifying more than one opposing ways to explain particular phenomenon. The scientific value consists in providing a piece of new evidence, whether from independent field research or from a new analysis of the secondary sources, a new evidence that finally tilts the balance in favor of one of the opposing arguments. Researchers who work within this paradigm will hardly see themselves as totally independent of existing theoretical views; these researchers need them in order to position their new piece of evidence within the discipline. From the authors' sample Kubicek is such a researcher; he is someone who limits his role in choosing winning argument among these that he has already identified. Three of his sample articles (1997; 1999; 2002) produce proof demonstration in a form of

a verdict, where existing theories models or particular explanations, e.g. neo-realism vs. hegemonic stability or the Tocqueville's vs. Huntington's interpretation of the link between civil society and political modernization, are set to compete for explaining real questions and issues; these questions are why integration fails in Central Asia or what is the impact of post-communist transition on trade-union development. The author takes the arguments as already established, accomplished, and not subject to any further improvement; he then makes a clear-cut decision in favor of one of the opposing arguments by presenting new pieces of evidence. He does not claim or want to go beyond this point; he does not want to reconcile elements of two or more opposing models, and he does not want to offer a brand new approach to his research questions.

The peacemaker. The peacemaker is another self-image. The author does not limit his or her task to judging which among the arguments is better and which is worse. The goal is to find common ground between arguments, elements that make them theoretically compatible, and to establish a new harmonious synthesis. Like the judge, the peacemaker is heavily dependent on existing theoretical approaches; it cannot exist without first identifying more than one opposing ways of explaining a particular phenomenon. Unlike the judge, and perhaps this is the single most important difference between the two, the peacemaker does not take the existing approaches as already established and unchangeable, without any room for further improvement. The scientific value of seeing the self as a peacemaker in science consists in providing evidence, whether from independent field research or from a new analysis of the secondary sources, that makes the existing scientific debates obsolete. Researchers who work within this paradigm, like the judges, will hardly see themselves as totally independent of existing theoretical views; these researchers need them in

order to place themselves within the discipline. The peacemakers, however, establish new theoretical positions, different from all previous models; these new positions logically combine elements from views considered to be mutually incompatible. Johnson is the peacemaker within the sample; her research is the way of bringing peace within the discipline by reconciling elements of different approaches to her research questions. Three of her sample articles (1994; 2001; 2006) produce demonstration of the proof if not in a form of a peace treaty, then at least in a form of a truce. She looks at the institutions, path contingency, and diffusion as points of equilibrium between structure and agency, continuation and change, and material incentives and socialization. Unlike the authors who work strictly within the limits of these particular paradigms, Johnson sees her work as a new synthesis that transcends the mutually incompatible positions. This new synthesis claims to be closer to and provide a better explanation to social reality, whether it is the reason why institutions fail, whether policy failures are due to institutions or to policies, and what is the role of incentives and norms in policy diffusion.

The prophet. The prophet is a self-projected charismatic personality in the realm of scientific research; charismatic in the sense that Weber gives (1994) when he evokes Jesus Christ's words "It was written... but I say unto you". The author does not limit his or her task to judge other arguments or to extract useful elements from them; these arguments are wrong and must be rejected in the name of more rigorous approach to the particular subject matter. The prophets, however, like the judge and the peacemaker, are heavily dependent upon those who preceded them. Like Jesus in the New Testament, they cannot make their revolutionary statements without evoking the arguments of those who they reject. They find a common point that embraces the entire literature

that preceded them and apply all their force of destruction, thus creating a sense of anticipation for something big and extraordinary to come, nothing short than a new paradigmatic shift concerning the subject matter. I consider McFaul as a good example of the prophet phenomenon in social research. Three article out of four (1989/1990; 2002; McFaul & Stoner-Weiss, 2008) are dominated by his willingness to prove the faults of existing explanations in general, be they in the realm of international relations, comparative politics or international development. His method is either to identify the dominant approach and to overthrow it, or to put all existing models within one group, where they may look similar on a point McFaul describes as paramount, and then to reject them by offering a new understanding, which suites best the cause of the advancement of knowledge. In his explanation of Angolan national reconciliation he rejects the dominant “Reagan doctrine” (1989/1990); he rejects the entire literature on political transition to democracy attacking its common point of linking the mode of transition with the resulting political regime type (2002), an attack that does not take into account the uncertain and tentative conclusions of key transitologists, such as O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986). McFaul also attacks the conventional understanding for correlation between authoritarian political regime and economic growth (McFaul & Stoner-Weiss, 2008). He never tries to present his arguments and conclusions as a verdict between the relevance of two or more conflicting arguments; it seems that he does not see any intellectual pedigree for his new approach. He also does not want to make peace with his predecessors; it is precisely his willingness to prove them wrong on the point he considers paramount that motivates his publications.

The god-creator. This is the final and most emancipated author's self-image, emancipated from peer environment and from any intellectual pedigree. The god-creators do not need to think about anybody as reference, positive or negative, in order to set up their ideas. They make their demonstrations as if they are the first to engage in scientific reflection regarding a particular subject matter. They are not necessarily founders of discursivity in the sense that Foucault gives to the term (1994); Marx, on the one hand, whom Foucault considers as an example of a founder of discursivity, constantly puts himself against different theoretical alternatives in order to present his own intellectual identity. The god-creator, on the other hand, acts as if there is no yesterday, as if the understanding of the research question begins with himself. He also does not need environment to present his identity; it seems that the author is self-sufficient. Therefore, unlike the prophet, he does not need to find a common trait in the literature in order to focus his critical thrust upon it. He is working as if there is no other literature to be considered, even as a negative leverage. The god-creator, of course, is not solipsistic creature, he does live in intellectual environment that makes him create research questions and provide possible clues for answers. Yet, he is convinced that he does not have such an environment for acknowledgement. To solve this paradox, the god-creator needs to find a theoretical paradigm that will look within the circle of its devotees as having no intellectual history. Przeworski is a sample author who epitomizes this type. He is clearly the most emancipated as far as his relations with his peers are concerned. To put bluntly, it seems he does not think of himself as engaging in peer discussions. He sets problematic and finds solutions as if there is nobody but him in the field, as if he is the first to enter the realm of this particular research, as if he has no theoretical foundations. Three out of four sample articles (Przeworski & Vreeland, 2002;

Przeworski, 2005; Benhabib & Przeworski, 2006) follow this line of thought; only one article (Przeworski & Wallerstein, 1988) is based on an opposition toward existing theoretical alternatives and this is due, as already mentioned, to the personal style of the co-author. The other three articles are looking to points or zones of equilibrium for different social phenomena, such as international cooperation and democracy, within the game theory. Within Przeworski's mode of analysis, this theory has nothing to do with some particular way of theorizing as opposed to possible alternatives; it is considered as representing objective social reality that needs no further justification. It is akin of an open toolbox that anybody has the right to use at will without paying attention to intellectual pedigrees and relevant alternative theorizing.

Understanding the place of Przeworski among his peers, the place he himself delimits, helps understanding the apparent contradiction of his opening statement, his self-image as an eclectic and opportunistic researcher, as somebody having no principles. This study clearly suggests that Przeworski has remained loyal to his style, so in that sense he had firm principles to stand upon. He embraces economic vision of society, a vision that takes people as simple economic agents, who have no reason to cooperate, wage wars and keep democracy other than their material interests. He does not move away from this vision and in that sense he is not eclectic, far from it. He, however, considers himself detached from the need to position his work within theoretical schemas established by others in a process of gradual accumulation of the knowledge. He interprets this detachment as a proof of being independent from theorems, or statements that have been confirmed on the basis of some previously established statements. Przeworski's reasoning does not

need any such theoretical basis. As a researcher deeply influenced by economic analysis, he does not question the intellectual foundation of his own economic reasoning.

### **Instead of a conclusion**

At least two questions remain open, questions that were constructed as far as this research moved ahead. First, are these four types of researcher's self-image: the judge, the peacemaker, the prophet and the god-creator, the only possible ideal types? I personally doubt this. A very small sample of six researchers revealed four possible interpretative schemes and the intuition tells me that the point of saturation, the point where adding new cases does not add new knowledge is not yet reached. Second, the sample showed remarkable continuity within each type, researchers did not make changes over many years; the only reason why they made any change in their research design was to accommodate co-authors, which is strategic rather than cultural way of coping with a new environment. None of these researchers was analyzed from A to Z, from their very first manuscript after graduation until their most recent. Although my intuition does not tell me to expect huge surprises, I nevertheless will not be surprised to see some possible mutations within at least some of these authors.



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