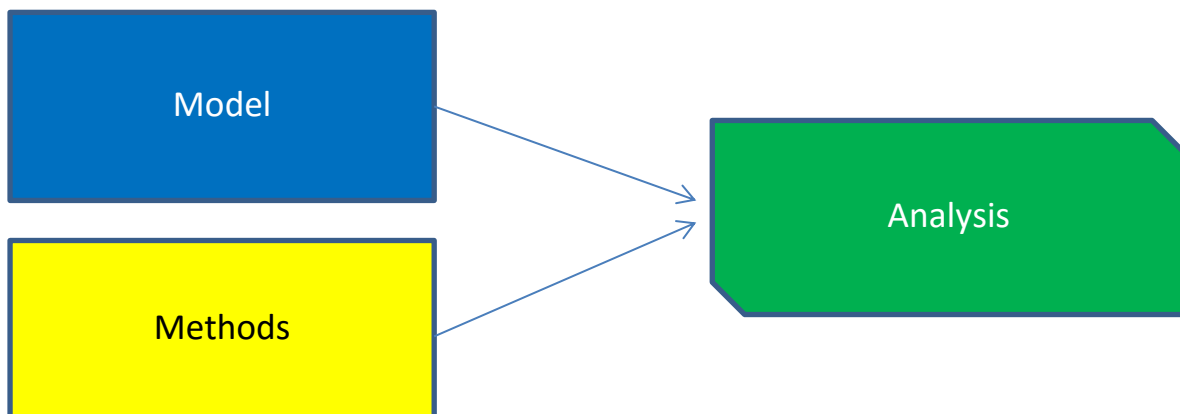


## What is Political Analysis?

01. The word *analysis* colloquially denotes systematic investigation; etymologically (from Greek *análysis: resolution*), indeed, it denotes the resolution or decomposition of an object into its elements. In particular relations and reciprocal effects among the elements are taken into consideration in order to understand an object in a well-structured way.<sup>1</sup> That's why any analysis presupposes a model to resolve the object in a consciously structured way. Since models, in turn, presuppose basic concepts and sets of assumptions (theories), analysis corresponds with choices of theory, in the end also with theory forming.

02. Under methodical aspects, analysis is to proceed in a logical way and open for empirical reality. Hence analysis combines model choice (theory) with empirical methods - a linkage that complies with demands of modern science. Correspondingly modern science is often called *empirical-analytical*.

Figure 1: *Analysis based on models and methods*



03. Analyses can imply great practical effects; since new options of usage and shaping can result from a better understanding of objects of analysis. Hence empirical-analytical science operates with an indirect relation to practice: Science develops falsifiable theories as basis of developing models for practical analysis.

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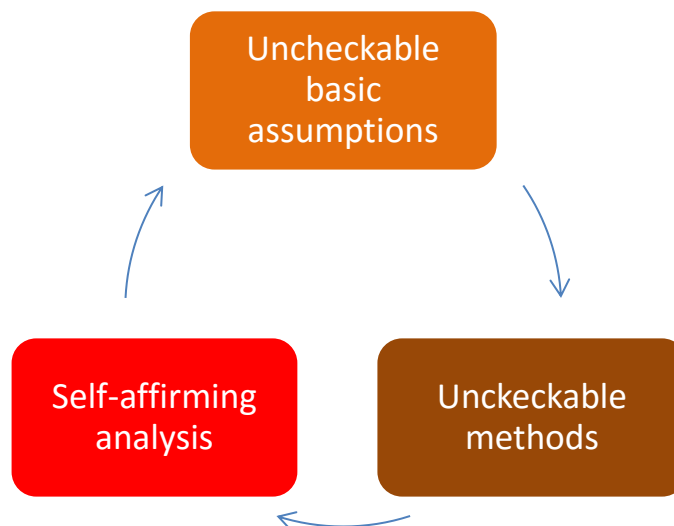
<sup>1</sup> The technique of analysis has been used already before Aristotle (384–322 B.C.):  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analysis>

04. In contrast, whether used models or theories are consistent cannot be checked through analysis; since it is not clear whether a chosen model fits or not for a certain analysis. If a certain model fails again and again, it suggests itself to question the model. Vice versa: If a model renders new insights again and again, it will take on greater significance. Insofar concrete analyses can contribute to advance scientific models and theories.

### Not impartial procedure

05. Checking reality in a structured way, indeed, is a wide-spread procedure far beyond science. To a certain degree, it characterizes any process of knowledge. Indeed, there is a precarious point, the question if impartiality. Thus we know often enough statements made by busybodies or power seekers that prove themselves. At them uncheckable assumptions (example: God wants it) are presupposed, or uncheckable methods are used (example: I feel it) - or both in a process of reciprocal affirmation. In case statements of that kind, for instance conspiracy theories or the stubborn denying of well-proved facts, get significance, the cohesion of a society can be endangered; since by that, communicative ways of checking reality are undermined or even completely disabled.

Image 2: *Self-affirming assumptions*



06. The challenge of an open relation between model and methods, indeed, goes far beyond specific cases of stubbornness, busy-bodiness, and power-seeking; since often there are vested interests in using and nurturing certain

models. Then analysts tend to evaluate affirming proofs for own basic assumptions over-proportionally positively, and vice versa - a general risk. That holds not least for the realm of politics.

### *Political Analysis*

07. Politics has been analyzed as long as there has been politics. Since political actors try to influence the preconditions of being successful; with that aim, they analyze their strategical and tactical options against the background of the given situation as well as possible - interest-lead, performance-oriented behavior that in principal fosters the development of political analysis.

08. **Actor-bound** political analysis, indeed, is precarious in some respects:

- Usually it is not accessible for the public. Results of analysis, for instance advisory opinions, are not made public, at least if they don't like them.
- Even strong actors often try to get also private and illegal information. Then a war about data starts - up to the supposed to being legitimate war between secret services.
- Without correcting public, privately ordered political analysis tends to exert partisan profiles excessively - a possible starting point for producing and exaggerating views that obstruct public interests such as demands of peacefully living together. Thus very aggressive concepts of perceiving reality and government are developed and maintained often in party-near think tanks.<sup>2</sup>

9. Political analysis on behalf of public administration equals actor-bound analysis insofar as members of public administration operate as political actors, too: Also in this realm contracts are awarded related to certain actors, and results of analysis are often dealt with in an opaque way, too. At the other hand, public administration has generally to cope with demands of meeting public interests. Insofar larger analytical lee-ways are given for individual authors, experts and so forth.

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<sup>2</sup> See the governmental phase under George W Bush:  
[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project\\_for\\_the\\_New\\_American\\_Century](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_for_the_New_American_Century). How far the spontaneous suggestions of Donald J. Trump have been inspired through similar kitchens of ideas, has to be examined:  
<https://www.facebook.com/TrumpsThinkTank/>

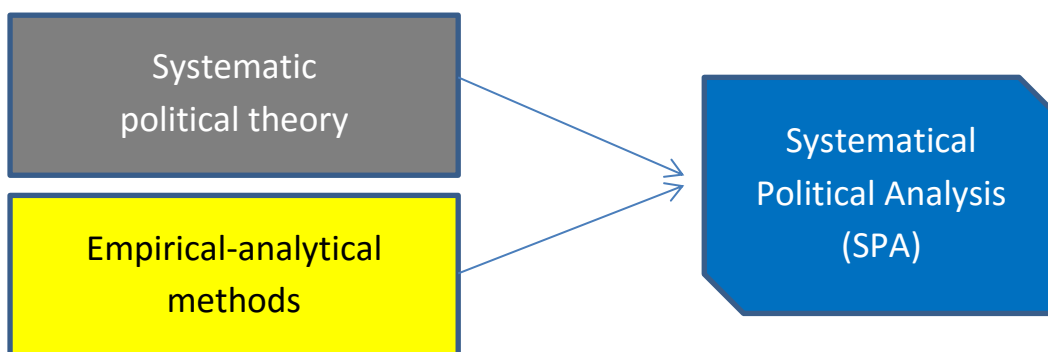
10. Also journalistic analysis is often sorted to be partial. Whereas forms of party press used to be very wide-spread in former times, meanwhile political journalism - at least in open societies - has developed beyond being nothing but partial. Thus aside of biased reporting and commenting aspects of meeting public interests in certain policy-areas or related to certain challenges often dominate - up to the role of journalists as representing political correctness norms for protecting the open society. Indeed, journalistic analysis is subject of particular economic constraints such as being topical and saleable - requirements that can foster or lower the quality of analysis.

11. Political analysis becomes a sort of art in the Political Cabaret (**Kabarett**). Here current politics is analyzed against the background of the public in often surprising turns with wit and esprit - an entertaining and often stimulating form of sophisticated art with extreme technical precision...

12. The fragmented Political Science constitutes a correspondingly fragmented area for principals of political analysis. Thus scientific authors of policy research are usually not addressed as Political Scientists, but as competent experts and members of influential policy networks - valid also regarding issue-areas such as foreign policy.

14. Political analysis of political science - comparable to a bio-chemical expert analysis - does not exist so far - simply because there is no accepted theory-forming in Political Science that could be basis of systematic political analysis.

**Image 3: Systematic political analysis**



15. As soon systematical theory-forming comes up in Political Science, indeed, politics can be analyzed systematically (**Systematic Political Analysis: SPA**).

**Image 4: Potentials of systematic Political Analysis (SPA)**



16. Systematic political analysis has a wide spectrum of **potentials**:

- Independent analyses, for instance independent opinions of Political Scientists, will gain significance.
- Cases, diagnoses, and recommendations can be sorted in a systematically reflected way.
- Diverse approaches of analysis as well as diverse prospects of recommendation can be consciously combined.
- Usual ways of analysis can be stimulated and deepened.
- Instead of analyzing political matters by qualitative statements, quantitative tools of analysis will gain significance.
- Political affairs are going to be analyzed digitally - supported by computer-aided models.
- Systematic political analysis will raise the reputation of Political Science among sciences and in public.

17. Hence the term *Political Analysis* does not only stand for usual ways of analysis such as policy analysis or system analysis; it also and especially is going to denote the **project of analyzing politics in a systematic way** - with a broad spectrum of potentials and possible benefits.