

**Mateta O. A., Urin O. V.**

**COMPARATIVE METHOD IN  
TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Complex social and political processes that accompany the formation of Ukraine as a sovereign and independent democratic state reinforce the necessity of a thorough study of the science about politics – political science (politology). Such study will allow to outline the major stages of the development of world and national political ideas, to understand the essence and content of political interests of different social groups, to objectively estimate the activity of political institutions in Ukraine. There is every reason to agree with the member of the Academy of Sciences F. M. Rudych that “having mastered the fundamentals of political science, a young man will eventually see himself as a true citizen, a real creator of the real democracy...” [1, p. 82].

An important feature of “Political Science” is that it is an incredibly dynamic educational discipline. Therefore, its study cannot be limited to reading of textbooks or lecture material, but also requires getting political information from newspapers, magazines, radio- and television programs, from the Internet. Besides, “Political Science” is an integrative discipline, successful mastery of which requires engaging the knowledge students obtain within the courses of “Philosophy”, “History of Ukraine”, “Sociology” and the like. This is the reason why, to our opinion, an important component of the efficient study of “Political Science” involves the application of the comparative method when preparing for seminars, writing reports, taking tests, and studying for exams.

The main task of the modern Political Science in our country ought to be the citizens’ preparation for the participation in social and political life, formation in the

youth of new political consciousness and political culture. Crucial for understanding political doctrines, political processes of the past and present is Comparative Political Science, which is of particular importance for the young Ukrainian state. Political scientist S. Matviyenko states: “Political phenomena in Ukraine must be studied in comparison with similar political phenomena in successful, developed countries” [2].

Development of comparative political science since the second half of the 20th century has been promoted by many factors. A. Romanyuk states that the development of comparative method was related to the necessity of obtaining correct knowledge about the political system and mechanisms of functioning of the states worldwide [3]. Well known Russian scientist M. Ilyin came to the conclusion that in the 1970s “...comparative political science took leadership from other areas of political science and almost replaced the entire discipline” [4, p. 169]. If scientific research on the problems of comparative political science is quite extensive, the experience of the application of the comparative method in teaching of this educational discipline requires attention of specialists.

**The objective of the article** is the analysis of our own scientific findings that are based on a long-term pedagogical experience, research on the efficiency of the comparative method of political science for formation in the students of profound political knowledge and ability to use it in public life.

Taking into account that it is difficult for students to sort out diverse political information without special knowledge and skills, to distinguish it from ordinary publicity stunts, professors must come to help creating their own lecture materials, tailor-made tests and creative tasks, teaching students to analyze documents and real political events.

These lecture materials have been tested in the long-term teaching work and was named among the classified publications of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine as a teaching and practical manual for the students of higher educational establishments (letter № 14/18.2-21.09 dated 08.12.2003). Its sixth edition was

published in September of 2010 [5]. As the critical review prepared by the staff of “A Person and Politics” magazine and professor F. M. Rudych reads: “Lecture materials” by O. Urin can be considered as a new type of tailor-made educational manuals, which are used mostly in Western European and American educational establishments” [6, p. 154-155].

The basic method used when developing the abovementioned educational manual was the method of comparison. Already during the first introductory lecture on political science, the students’ attention is drawn to the thought-provoking definition of history and politics and the correlation between these fundamental for political science concepts provided by one of the founders of comparative political science, Englishman E. Freeman. The scientist stated: “history is politics in the past, and politics is history at the present”. So comparison in political science is not only one of the research methods, but also a research strategy, an orientation that enabled political science to win recognition. Besides, by means of tables and logical charts, comparison of political views of thinkers, politicians of different times, models of national development, ways of a legal, democratic state formation becomes more comprehensible.

Comparative charts that are used to study political science are developed in two ways:

- 1) thematically-horizontal (in columns that feature the views of thinkers and the selection of their quotations in support of the problems under examination);
- 2) thematically-vertical (the first column is completed, and the rest of the columns are filled with quotations of other thinkers according to the topic).

The first method is used, mainly, during lectures, whereas the second is applied after the explanation and examples, when the professor offers the manual as a guide for the independent preparation for the practical classes. Such procedure is justified by the fact that the amount of time allocated for in-class sessions (lectures) is quite limited, whereas the amount of learning material is significant. Our experience suggests that such methods, after the students have mastered them, develop an interest in political

science, facilitate understanding and retention of the necessary material. Furthermore, they serve as a vivid example of the formula of the general philosophical critical-dialectical method of political science research: “a mind that does not have grounds for comparisons is in despair”.

Parts of the tables provided below are to demonstrate the peculiarities of the use of comparative method for the study of political doctrines of different times. The material to be compared is bolded, which fosters understanding and retention of such complex theoretical material. The first part of the comparative table features the political ideas of the three prominent thinkers of antiquity: Plato, Aristotle and Cicero. It is possible to compare not only their ideas, emphasizing similar and different ones, but also to juxtapose their ideas with the present day ones, as well as to determine their significance for the political life in Ukraine. Important in this context is the definition of the place of politics in the public life, aspiration to make it moral, attitude to the role of law in ensuring order on the condition of equality of rights of all citizens in front of it. It is recommendable to emphasize the reasons for the negative attitude of the ancient thinkers to tyranny, despotism, which were seen as giving rise to the danger of support not ideas, but people who are not always ready to refrain from the substitution of the will of the people with their own interests. Finally, it is necessary to emphasize the pursuit of perfect order in Plato’s works, talk about the special role of the middle class as seen by Aristotle, and review Cicero’s views on the leading role of society in legitimization of the government.

### **Plato, Aristotle and Cicero’s Ideas**

Table 1

<b>Plato</b> (V – IV cent. BC)	<b>Aristotle</b> (IV cent. BC)	<b>Cicero</b> (I cent. BC)
<b>Politics</b> is the Tsar's art of ruling by wise men-philosophers to resolve the following main tasks: - Satisfy people’s needs;	<b>Politics</b> is an intellectual, highly moral, fair-minded activity is in interest of the state, its citizens. The state is all-sufficient	“ <b>State</b> is the people’s business, Republic is the business of the people, the people are persons united by a general agreement

<p>- Protect and govern;  <b>“Rule of law</b>, state officials and citizens are equal in front of it”.  <b>Forms of government:</b>  aristocracy - power is held by the best (the nobility);  timocracy – the rule by those who love honor;  oligarchy is defined as the power of the richest;  democracy is the rule of the people; “freedom of everyone leads to enmity”; ochlocracy is the rule of the mob;  <b>tyranny is the worst form of rule</b>, because “citizens obey to the man, but not to the idea, and private interests of the tyrant substitute the interest of society”.  <b>Perfect order is in the past!</b></p>	<p>for the existence of its citizens, personal interests are sacrificed for the public good;  <b>“Law is a principle that is not dependent on the desire”</b>;  <b>Forms of government</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="603 577 1002 1211"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="603 577 802 622">Positive</th> <th data-bbox="810 577 1002 622">Negative</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 622 802 831">Monarchy (the power of one according to the law)</td> <td data-bbox="810 622 1002 831">Tyranny (the power of one without the law)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 831 802 999">Aristocracy (the power of the nobility)</td> <td data-bbox="810 831 1002 999">Oligarchy (the power of the richest)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 999 802 1211">Politia (the power of the middle class)</td> <td data-bbox="810 999 1002 1211">Democracy (the power of the people, of crowd)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>The best form of rule is politia</b> - the power of the middle class.  <b>Perfect order is not only in the past!</b></p>	Positive	Negative	Monarchy (the power of one according to the law)	Tyranny (the power of one without the law)	Aristocracy (the power of the nobility)	Oligarchy (the power of the richest)	Politia (the power of the middle class)	Democracy (the power of the people, of crowd)	<p>about the laws and rights”.  - it is <b>“necessary to set the measure of power not only for the master but also for the citizens - measure of their obedience”</b>.  <b>Forms of government:</b>  -Tsar Power (goodwill, kindness);  The power of optimates (aristocracy);  The power of the people (democracy);  <b>The best form of rule is the mixed</b> one that ensures the strength of the state and equality of the citizens in front of the law.  <b>He supported the idea of the differentiation of the state and society the latter legitimizing the former.</b></p>
Positive	Negative									
Monarchy (the power of one according to the law)	Tyranny (the power of one without the law)									
Aristocracy (the power of the nobility)	Oligarchy (the power of the richest)									
Politia (the power of the middle class)	Democracy (the power of the people, of crowd)									

The next part of the table compares political ideas in Russia and Ukraine (15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries), which allows to draw students’ attention to, on the one hand, their fundamental differences: aspirations towards supreme power in the former and humanistic aspirations to link the elements of religious and civil conceptions in the latter. On the other hand, it also allows to draw a parallel between these political views and those of the Renaissance. Such contrast can be particularly fruitful if the students are reminded about the oprichnina at the time of Ivan the Terrible in the context of a well-

known Machiavellian formula “the results justify the deeds”. At the same time, it is important to compare the mentioned ideas for understanding of the differences between the modern interpretations of the national idea in Russia and Ukraine, which are studied in the final stages of the course.

**Political Ideas in Russia and Ukraine (XV – XVI centuries)**

Table 2

Russian political ideas	Political ideas in Ukraine
<p><b>Symeon Suzdalskyi:</b> Heavenly origin of the church power and independence of the Russian Church.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bases of the political theory of “<b>Three Empires</b>” that was completed by <b>Pskov monk Philotheus (or Filofei)</b></li> <li>-the First Rome fell because it didn’t accept Orthodoxy;</li> <li>-the Second Rome (Constantinople) fell because it betrayed Orthodoxy;</li> <li>-the Third Rome (Moscow) is the worldwide political church centre;</li> </ul> <p><b>Muskovy is a great monarchy, is the only defender of Orthodoxy</b> “the city with the people chosen by the God, if it falls there will be the end of the world”.</p> <p><b>Ivan IV the Terrible:</b> domination of the state over the church;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- boyars’ total submission to the tsar who can decide his dependents’ fate;</li> <li>- introduction of “machiavellism” formula “the results justify the deeds”).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Christophor Philaleth:</b> ideas of the public agreement and natural rights, but limitation of the rights and freedoms of dependents on the principle of the God’s Right;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>against social and religious oppression of the Ukrainian people</b> by Poland and by local landowners;</li> </ul> <p><b>Ivan Vyshenskyi:</b> conception of collegiality of the Christian church rule on principle of the equality of all. He <b>denied the theory of absolute centralism of the religious and secular power</b>, supported the rule of law and social justice.</p> <p><b><u>Petro Mohyla:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>domination of the Orthodox Church as a support in the fight against the Polish arbitrariness;</b></li> </ul> <p>“Orthodox Tsar must report to the God; Church is his spiritual adviser. Public rulers must govern according to the God’s Law”.</p>

Comparative tables can be used with success not only to study history of political doctrines but also to teach other topics. For example, when analyzing the differences of the republican forms of government, we recommend the following:

## Republican forms of government

Table 3

<b>Republics</b> (government is representative and is periodically re-elected)	
<b>President Republic</b>	<b>Parliamentary Republic</b>
<p>The President, who is elected by the people, is the head of the state and government (<b>there is no Prime Minister</b>); the president cannot dissolve the parliament (legislative body), but he has the right to veto its decisions.</p> <p>There operates a system of counterbalances between the three branches of power. <b>The state guarantees the independence of judicial power.</b></p> <p>It is not need for a contrasignation (the signature of a minister on decrees)</p> <p>USA, Ecuador, Colombia, Zaire</p>	<p><b>Parliament domination</b> (the president can be elected by a legislative body or its representatives along with the electorate). <b>The key figure is the head of the government</b>, which is formed by the parliamentary majority, There operates a system of counterbalances between the three branches of power. The contrasignation (a signature of a minister on decrees) is obligatory.</p> <p>Germany, Czech Republic, Latvia, Estonia</p>
<b>Mixed forms of the Republic Form of Government</b>	
<b>President-Parliamentary</b>	<b>Parliamentary-President</b>
<b>Both the Parliament and the President are elected by popular vote</b>	
<p>Most plenary powers are exercised by the President, who manages executive power and forms the government, but the parliament can pass a vote of no confidence in the existing government, a consequence of which is governmental dismissal.</p> <p>France, Russia, Ukraine (since 01.10.2010)</p>	<p>Parity of plenary powers of President and Parliament: <b>the government is formed by the parliament</b> (except for individual ministers), but the President has the right to dissolve the parliament.</p> <p>Poland, Croatia, Lithuania</p>

This approach provides a thought-provoking comparison of legal and political documents, different interpretations of certain concepts, such as differences in political parties and public organizations, outstanding politicians' statements at different times,

pre-election programs and steps to their realization, and so on. It is difficult to analyze political trends, variations of ethnos, social models of politics in different countries, geopolitical paradigm of international relations without comparative tables.

Comparative tables can be effectively used in the study of forms of government, political regimes and electoral systems. Such tables should provide positive and negative features inherent in a certain system. We offer a part of such a table, where attention paid to the key problems of two main electoral systems (similar table is made separately on a mixed electoral system taking into account current realities.)

### **Peculiarities of majority and proportional electoral systems**

Table 4

<b>Majority Rule</b>		<b>Proportional Representation</b>	
<p><b>A person or people are elected</b> (in single or multimember districts). <b>The winners are</b>, according to the <b>“absolute majority” system</b>, those who got 50% + 1 of popular vote, or according to <b>the plurality system of relative majority</b>, the winners are those who got more votes than their competitors.</p>		<p><b>A Party</b> (or a block) and <b>its party list</b> (or regional lists) <b>are elected</b> in a nationwide multimember district; <b>Winners are parties</b> (blocks), which <b>overcome the barrier</b> (in Ukraine - 5% since 2012.); there are <b>“hard” or closed lists</b> (a voter does not affect the party list), <b>“soft”, or open lists</b> (a voter chooses a party and a candidate from the list).</p>	
+	-	+	-
<p>- <b>voters elect a candidate</b> who is to be responsible for them;</p> <p>- <b>contact with voters</b>, better understanding of the problems of the district; and</p> <p>- ability to <b>elect a representative</b> of the local community.</p>	<p>- <b>lack of political responsibility</b> of the party, block;</p> <p>- <b>lawmaking</b> gives way to lobbying of clan interests; and</p> <p>- it is easier to <b>“buy” the voters</b> of one district, and getting the power, to pay off</p>	<p>- <b>increased responsibility of parties</b> (blocks) for their appointees;</p> <p>- lawmaking is the main function of the deputies; and</p> <p><b>it is impossible to buy voters</b> across the country, and</p>	<p>- voters do not know all the candidates from the list, whereas electoral threshold <b>distorts the choice</b>;</p> <p>- there is no one to deal with the problems of the district;</p> <p>- <b>most deputies</b></p>



	the expenses.	<b>“open lists” are a chance to elect a candidate who is trusted.</b>	<b>are professional politicians</b> or representatives of financial clans; and <b>- trading places in the party lists.</b>
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Content of each column of the table is substantiated by the examples from the political life in different countries. Furthermore, students are encouraged to give their own examples and think up questions on the key issues.

Thus, the comparative method is widely used in the modern political science. This method involves the comparison of typical political phenomena, such as political systems, history of political doctrines, different ways to perform the same political functions with the aim to identify their common and specific features, to find the most effective forms of political organization.

Using the comparative method as the main method when working on the course of political science in Kremenchuk National University is of practical value. Since 2003, every year, students of this university have been among the prizewinners in the national competitions in political science. Knowledge of political science that students obtained, including using the author’s lecture materials with tables and diagrams contribute to the study of other disciplines and help in the professional and civic development of the students.

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### **Mateta O. A., Urin O. V. Comparative Method in Teaching Political Science**

Use of political science comparative method in forming of deep political knowledge and in practical application of skills in social life were reviewed in an article. Examples of comparative tables demonstrative fragments main features for use of political science comparative method in teaching of different decades political doctrines were given.

*Key words:* comparative method, political knowledge, civil position, political culture.

### **Матета О. А., Урін О. В. Використання порівняльного методу у викладанні політології**

У статті розглянуто використання порівняльного методу політології для формування в студентів глибоких політичних знань та вміння застосовувати їх у суспільному житті. Наведено приклади фрагментів порівняльних таблиць, що

демонструють особливості використання порівняльного методу під час вивчення політичних учень різних часів.

*Ключові слова:* порівняльний метод, політичні знання, громадянська позиція, політична культура.

**Матета А. А., Урин А. В. Использование сравнительного метода при преподавании политологии**

В статье рассматривается использование сравнительного метода политологии для формирования у студентов глубоких политических знаний, умения использовать их в общественной жизни. Приведены примеры фрагментов сравнительных таблиц, которые демонстрируют особенности использования сравнительного метода при изучении политических учений разных времен.

*Ключевые слова:* сравнительный метод, политические знания, гражданская позиция, политическая культура.

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