

# Table of Content

<b>Preface</b> .....	7
<b>1. Introduction: choosing the question?</b> .....	9
1.1 Starting from the key aspect .....	9
1.2 Further examples .....	10
<b>2. Defining comparison</b> .....	13
2.1 The key questions .....	13
2.2 Classic thinkers .....	14
2.3 Modern theorists .....	15
<b>3. Why compare?</b> .....	20
3.1 The goals of comparison .....	20
3.2 Nomothetic objectives and generalizations .....	21
3.3 Explanation and understanding .....	25
3.4 What kind of theory should be adopted in political science? .....	26
<b>4. What to compare: the basic units</b> .....	35
4.1 Identifying the issue .....	35
4.2 Concepts and classes .....	36
4.3 Properties and variables .....	37
4.4 Operationalization .....	40
4.5 The “many variables, small N” dilemma .....	43
<b>5. What to compare: space and time</b> .....	46
5.1 Dimensions of comparison .....	46
5.2 Deciding the space .....	50
5.2.1 Case study .....	51
5.2.2 Other strategies .....	53
5.3 Defining the time .....	55
5.4 The problem of multicollinearity .....	59

<b>6. How to compare: the key mechanisms</b> .....	61
6.1 The available tools .....	61
6.2 Ogden and Richards' triangle.....	61
6.3 The rules of conceptualization .....	65
6.4 The Tree of Porphyry .....	67
6.5 Classificatory strategies.....	71
6.6 Mill's canons.....	82
<b>7. How to compare: recent developments</b> .....	86
7.1 In search of new rules for conceptualization .....	86
7.2 Process tracing .....	89
7.3 The Configurational Comparative Method and Qualitative Comparative Analysis.....	93
<b>8. Beyond comparison: other research methods</b> .....	100
8.1 Data collection and relations between variables.....	100
8.2 More about explanation, generalization and theory .....	102
8.3 Experimental and non-experimental methods .....	104
8.4 Statistical method .....	106
8.4.1 The number of cases.....	108
8.4.2. Logic .....	108
8.5 Historical method .....	109
<b>9. Conclusions. The limits of comparison</b> .....	113
<b>Bibliographical References</b> .....	117
<b>Index</b> .....	127