

that provides a refined and politically-nuanced picture of Russian society based on sophisticated theoretical analysis and elaborate sociological research.

ELENA CHEBANKOVA
University of Lincoln

Russian Studies and Comparative Politics: Views from Metatheory and Middle-Range Theory. By Frederic J. Fleron, Jr. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. xi, 345 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$110.00, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.71

In political science, scholars who specialize on a particular country can find themselves pulled in opposite directions. On one side are disciplinary pressures, which include grounding one's work in the general literature and providing readers with lessons that may prove applicable in other settings. On the other side are demands from country experts—both from the country in question and from other disciplines—who may question the utility of comparison, which is the nominal objective of comparative politics. In *Russian Studies and Comparative Politics*, Frederic Fleron pursues the admirable goal of outlining how scholars of Russian politics may satisfy these rival demands. Fleron presents the work as a culmination of previous calls to integrate Sovietology—and, more recently, Russian politics—into contemporary social science theory building, as well as a compilation of his own efforts to do so over the course of his academic career. His proposed solution is a greater reliance on middle range theory.

The book begins with a discussion of middle-range theory, its promise for understanding Russian politics, and its ability to use idiographic knowledge for disciplinary goals. Like others, Fleron presents middle range theory as the point where theorizing and empirics meet. Middle range theory avoids excessive generalities and abstraction while still providing a coherent conceptual framework that can guide the collection and analysis of data. In Chapter 2, Fleron reviews the main tenets of area studies and social scientific approaches while emphasizing that “the goal of any area of systematic knowledge [should be] to construct empirically verified theories” (39). Like most of the chapters in the volume, Chapter 2 is a reprint of a previous publication. In this case, the chapter comes from a 1968 Soviet Studies article. Nevertheless, the chapter's discussion of different research strategies, concept formation, and theory construction are foundational topics that fruitfully lay the groundwork for the chapters to come.

Chapters 3 and 4 round out the section of the book dedicated to metatheory. Both of these chapters were written in the mid-1990s and consider the degree to which the division between area studies and social scientific approaches that characterized Sovietology might continue. Fleron rejects the suggestion that “fact gathering” during this period of transition should take precedence over theorizing and warns against scholarship that is satisfied with producing “believable” and “recognizable” narratives. Instead, Fleron urges scholars to apply existing middle-range theories to political developments in Russia and to use the particularities of the Russian case to refine those theories. Fleron's call for systematic comparison as a way to acquire general knowledge is constant and unapologetic.

Chapters 5 through 10 present studies by Fleron that are intended to serve as models of how to apply and test middle-range theories. The subjects under investigation range from the use of cooptation theory to understand how Soviet leaders adapted to their changing environments to an application of congruence theory to assess the

prospects for post-Soviet Russian democracy. Unifying the chapters is Fleron's ability to draw new insights into Soviet or Russian politics from theories developed in other contexts while also relating those insights back to the discipline.

In the conclusion, Fleron acknowledges one shortcoming of the book: despite the occasional reference to "recent" works, it cites little scholarship on Russian politics beyond the late 1990s. While Fleron notes that limitations of time and space impede his ability to engage the latest generation of scholarship on Russian politics, the reader is still left wondering whether the divide that motivated the book is as great today as it once was. At the same time, more attention could have been paid to putting the study of Russian politics in comparative perspective. The narrative that Sovietologists were more marginalized in political science than other area studies experts is a familiar one, but some scholars of comparative politics working on other regions of the world today also likely feel both area studies and disciplinary pressures, making the prescription in favor of middle-range theory applicable to them as well. Nevertheless, the book serves as a valuable reminder of how the study of Russian politics can benefit from and contribute to cumulative knowledge, and it should be a worthwhile addition to seminars on the conduct of inquiry and comparative politics.

BRYON J. MORASKI
University of Florida

Governing Habits: Treating Alcoholism in the Post-Soviet Clinic. Expertise: Cultures and Technologies of Knowledge. By Eugene Raikhel. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016. xii, 231 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Paper. \$26.95, papers.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.72

Eugene Raikhel's book *Governing Habits* is a compelling and nuanced account of historical transformations in the treatment of alcoholism in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia. Narcology, with an emphasis on hypnotic suggestion, is often denigrated as backward and authoritarian, reflecting broader discourses on Russia and its relationship to the west. Raikhel considers narcology as an aggregation of infrastructures, styles of reasoning, and therapies. As an anthropologist, he is concerned with exploring the transformation of therapeutic practices in post-Soviet narcology, using the concept of "therapeutic legitimacy," grounded in classic and more recent literature on the production of authority and knowledge.

The ethnography is based on historical research, interviews with physicians and patients, and fieldwork at a St. Petersburg municipal narcological hospital and private rehabilitation center, among other sites. Raikhel addresses some of the methodological challenges, particularly with interviewing patients, in the introduction. Chapter 1 sets the scene with an analysis of the Russian demographic crisis after the fall of the Soviet Union, focusing on the knowledge production linking the demographic crisis to alcohol and to other post-Soviet crises. The next two chapters explore Soviet narcology, its relationship to particular forms of expertise, and its transformation in a post-Soviet context of commodification and bureaucratic patronage. Seeming nostalgia about Soviet narcology is interpreted as memories of idealized plans and intentions—the aggregation of narcology held together by a system—before narcology lost its monopoly on knowledge production around addiction and its treatment. In Chapter 4, the influence of Pavlovian reflex theory on Soviet psychiatry is related to a more physiological understanding of alcoholism and the rise of hypnotic suggestion