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Karrie J. Koesel, Valerie Bunce, and Jessica Chen Weiss, eds. *Citizens and the State in Authoritarian Regimes: Comparing China and Russia*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020), 340 p. \$99.00 hardback; \$31.95 paperback.

The edited volume *Citizens and the State in Authoritarian Regimes* is a very rich and much needed collection of studies discussing state-society relations in Russia and China. The chapters address various topics, which speak well to each other: the shift in governance practices from mostly managerial and growth-oriented to driven by tighter political control in China; an increase in institutionalized protest channels accompanied by diminished opportunities for contentious participation under Xi Jinping; the strategies of the Russian and Chinese governments to prevent international influences, including the diffusion of protests from abroad, as well as their ways to control the public discourse through the media and education; people's motivations to support Vladimir Putin and to work for the state; and the ways the Russian and Chinese political regimes deal with the challenges posed by globalization. All the chapters are very rich empirically and present an excellent collection of the most recent scholarship on statesociety relations in the two countries.

The value of the volume, however, is not only in its empirical richness. It is also very important theoretically to compare Russia and China. Before this volume, only a few studies did it. Russia and China are vast and complex countries, which require different regional expertise to make an informed comparison. At the same time, such comparison is crucial for advancing our knowledge about the strengths and vulnerabilities of authoritarian regimes.

Any comparison balances similarity and difference. We do not want to compare apples to oranges, but there is little point in comparing two identical apples either. We can focus our analysis on why the two countries, which are otherwise similar, differ in important respects. Or we can focus it on why the two countries, which are different in important ways, still exhibit similar political and social patterns. The volume does a very good job theorizing the difference between China and Russia: the argument developed in the introduction as well as throughout the book about the different historical paths of the two countries since the 1980s makes perfect sense. At the same time, the book pays less attention to the analytic potential of the similarity of Russia and China, which, in my opinion, may be more important for advancing our knowledge about authoritarianism.

The last comment is informed by my own work on state-society relations in Russia, which focuses on the state as an authority that unites people and different social groups into one collective. I see many of the empirical findings of the volume fit this framework better than the one that aims to "unpack 'society' and address such issues as what various groups want from the state, how they bargain, and what they get." (p. 8) None of the chapters, except for Chapter 8 on the labor movement in China, talks about the different groups and their demands. Quite the opposite: many of them analyze the ways the regime deals with society as a whole or demonstrate that there are few divisions in ideological and political attitudes of different groups (see, for example, chapters 8 and 11). In the conclusion, Mark Beissinger

points at the common ways of how Russia and China have handled globalization and hypothesizes that the differences between the competitive and non-competitive authoritarianism may pale in the future. Thinking more about not only the possible future convergence but also about the common historical roots of state-society relations in Russia and China would enrich the volume and allow for a deeper conceptual contribution to the studies of authoritarianism.

This conceptual work, however, is a big task for future research that many would say goes beyond the scope of this volume. It is important that the current book pulls together the studies addressing the state-society nexus and often points at the directions of future research. Some chapters of this volume conclude with concrete suggestions for new studies; others do not formulate the hypotheses directly but provide the findings that raise new original questions. Scholars of state-society relations and authoritarianism in any part of the world will benefit greatly from reading this book. It will not only inform them about the topics covered by the authors but also inspire their own research with new questions and insights.