There is a rather widespread perception in today’s academia that post-Soviet studies and mainstream political science are worlds apart, sometimes going as far as claiming that the focus on Russia and other FSU states deserves to remain in a specific conceptual and methodological “ghetto”. This paper, however, argues that post-Soviet and particularly Russian studies, taken in a comparative context, may contribute considerably to our understanding of important trends and problems which are at the center of the ongoing debates in today’s political science.

There are several prospective focal points which may be important for such conceptual and methodological reevaluation and useful for understanding the possible lessons of Russia and post-Soviet research for political science per se:

(1) Non-linear nature of contemporary political development;
(2) Critical rethinking of the modernization paradigm, including the role of the middle class and social capital;
(3) Failure of the most existing theories of democratization;
(4) New and innovative focus on authoritarian durability, introduction of the concept of “authoritarianism with adjectives” (including the hybrid regimes);
(5) New conceptual and empirical approaches to the study of the state, stateness, state-building, state capacity, including their relationship to political regimes and regime transformations;
(6) Structure and agency as methodological approaches to the study of social and political developments;
(7) Looking for a balance between the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in comparative research, etc.

These and other related topics will be discussed in this paper.