



Russia's Putin: The Co-Construction of Russian Authoritarianism

IARCEES 2019 Public Keynote Lecture

by

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Conventional stories about Russian politics – and, indeed, conventional wisdom on authoritarianism – places the people squarely in the hands of their ruler. But while it's true that strong-man leaders like Putin enjoy a number of important structural advantages, the established top-down approach misses important truths about how power works in Russia and in contemporary autocracies more broadly. As Sam Greene and Graeme Robertson show in their new book, *Putin v the People: The Perilous Politics of a Divided Russia*, Russia's leader is powerful not despite the Russian people, but in large part because of them. Drawing on several years of survey research, interviews, social media data and leaked documents, Greene and Robertson show the ways in which social, psychological and ideational factors have come together in recent years to construct what we know as Putinism, making the people simultaneously the source of Putin's power and the greatest threat he faces.

Dr. Samuel Greene is Reader in Russian politics and director of the Russia Institute at King's College London. Prior to joining King's in 2012, he was Director of the Center for the Study of New Media & Society at the New Economic School (Moscow) and Deputy Director of the Carnegie Moscow Center.



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