

The Authoritarian International

Abstract

In his new book 'The Authoritarian International: Tracing How Authoritarian Regimes Learn in the Post-Soviet Space,' Stephen Hall argues that democracies can preserve their norms and values from increasing attacks and backsliding by better understanding how authoritarian regimes learn. He focuses on the post-Soviet region, investigating two established autocracies, Belarus and Russia, and two hybrid-regimes, Moldova and Ukraine, with the aim of explaining the concept of authoritarian learning and revealing the practices that are developed and the sources of that learning. There are clear signs of collaboration between countries in developing best survival practices between authoritarian-minded elites. Learning does not just occur between states, rather it can happen at the intra-state level, with elites learning lessons from previous regimes in their own countries. Hall highlights the horizontal nature of this learning, with authoritarian-minded elites developing methods from a range of sources to ascertain the best practices for survival. Post-Soviet regional organisations are crucial for developing and sharing survival practices as they provide 'learning rooms' and training exercises.

Bio

Stephen G F Hall is a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in Russian and Post-Soviet Politics. He completed his PhD in political science at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at University College London. Before joining Bath, Stephen was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Cambridge and taught at the Higher School of Economics – National Research University, St. Petersburg. He has published extensively in Europe-Asia Studies, Problems of Post-Communism, East European Politics, Post-Communist Economies, Russian Politics, and the Journal of Eurasian Studies.