



University
of Exeter

Ideology and the Authoritarian Turn in Global Politics

Tuesday June 13th 2023, 9:30-18:00
University of Exeter
The Forum, Seminar Rooms 10 and 11

Organised by

Center for Advanced International Studies
Center for Political Thought
Authoritarianism Research Network

For registration or questions please email g.bettiza@exeter.ac.uk

Modern authoritarian systems have often been described as 'post-ideological'. This idea of authoritarian systems as lacking a strong ideological basis has long historical roots. In this workshop we challenge this approach and aim to revive interest in the ideological and ideational drivers of contemporary authoritarianism, reflecting a wider turn to ideology in recent work on law, politics and international relations. Themes we expect to discuss include the overlap between contemporary authoritarianism and modern populism, the influence of radical conservative and illiberal ideas, and the mechanisms of ideological diffusion across borders. In the workshop we will explore these dynamics in different contexts:

- The role of ideology in specific political regimes, such as Russia and China, and its impact on the relationship between state and society;
- The nexus between law and politics in contemporary authoritarianism;
- Transnational aspects, including ideational flows between authoritarian regimes and their diasporas, and their ideological ties to illiberal/extremist political movements in constitutional democracies.

We will discuss new theoretical and methodological approaches to these questions from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Programme

- *09:15-09:30 Welcome and opening remarks*

- 09:30-10:45: Panel I: New Approaches to Authoritarianism (I) (Chair: David Lewis)
 - Thomas Heberer (University of Duisburg-Essen): China, civilizing processes, discipline
 - Catherine Owen (University of Exeter) and Xuan Qin (Fudan University): CCP ideology shaping public sector at grassroots level in urban China

- *10:45-11:00: Coffee break*

- 11:00-12:15: Panel II: New Approaches to Authoritarianism (II) (Chair: John Heathershaw)
 - Fiona Adamson (SOAS): Diasporic Geopolitics and the Rise of the Global South
 - Alex Dukalkis (University College Dublin): Authoritarian Snapback: How Dictatorships Tame the Spread of Democratic Ideas

- *12:15-13:30: Lunch*

- 13:30-15:00: Roundtable I: Law, Policy and Politics (Chair: Dario Castiglione)
 - Stephen Skinner (Exeter, Law): Law, Fascism, democracy
 - Marc Valeri (Exeter, Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies): Legitimacy in authoritarian regimes
 - Nelly Bekus (Exeter, History): Soviet and Post-Soviet history, nationalism, memory and identity
 - Stephane Baele (Exeter, Politics): Online extremism, far-right propaganda

- *15:00-15:30: Coffee Break*

- 15:30-17:00: Roundtable II: International and Transnational Politics (Chair: Gregorio Bettiza)
 - David Lewis (Exeter, Politics): Russia, conservative ideology, foreign policy
 - Xianan Jin (Exeter, Politics): Neoliberal authoritarianism and street vendors in Rwanda
 - Kevork Oskanian (Exeter, Politics): Russia, Africa, democracy, contestation
 - Irene Fernandez Molina (Exeter, Politics): Morocco, authoritarian contestation, liberal democratic norms and the influence of the EU

- 17:00-17:15: *Break*

- 17:15-18:00: Roundtable III: Concluding Reflections on Ideology and the Authoritarian Turn (Chair: Catherine Owen, Bice Manguashca)

- 19:30: *Dinner*