Putinism and Populism

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The global populist wave has deservedly captured the attention of scholars the world over, but populism can take many forms. Russia’s political regime is sometimes described as populist, yet it differs from many other forms of populism. Unlike most populisms of the right, it lacks an ethnonational component; and in contrast with left populisms, it often embraces macroeconomic orthodoxy rather than profligate spending on targeted support groups. How, if at all, does the Russian experience enrich our understanding of the global populist wave? What, if anything, does it teach us about the possible limitations of populism’s appeal and the potential for liberal pushback around the world?