

Preface

The aim of this book is to illuminate more clearly the link between economic capitalism and political authoritarianism within contemporary processes of globalization. Specifically, it hopes to shed light upon the function of a diverse array of authoritarian discourses and regimes for legitimizing and strengthening policies of marketization. More fundamentally, it will seek to trace out how the authoritarian qualities found in capitalism – namely its ideologically closed nature and its association of freedom with consent to hierarchical forms of sovereignty for the sake of personal and collective prosperity – provides the foundations for authoritarianism politically. Perhaps even more fundamentally, it aims to better understand the ways the perceived overwhelming structural power of global capitalism creates the desire for stronger, and increasingly repressive, forms of national and international sovereignty within the political sphere.

Significantly, it seeks to reveal the fundamental connection between the spread of economic liberalization and the increase of political authoritarianism. Proposing a theory that combines post-structuralist discourse theory with psychoanalysis, it highlights the justification of national and global capitalism through an appeal to an array of affective political fantasies. Here concrete policies of privatization and corporate-led development are linked to appealing narratives of progress directly championing explicitly authoritarian regimes as well as the authoritarian policies of otherwise considered democratic governments. At a deeper level, it challenges conventional thinking that naturally associates marketization with democracy, showing instead how the ideological dogmatism and structural power of economic capitalism can and often does produce a repressive authoritarian politics for its survival and reproduction.