

Review of: "Neoliberalism, Strong State and Democracy"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I enjoyed reviewing your paper very much and can offer three or four observations for your consideration. First, rather than assert that your posited thesis has been understudied to this point, I think it might be worthwhile to show, at least briefly, *why* that is the case and then to lay out (as you do now) how you will approach the concern you have raised. In that regard, you may wish to cite other trenchant thinkers on the implications of neoliberalism for today's democratic politics and for understanding state sovereignty more generally. Your historical argument regarding these central concerns is thoughtful but you cite little of the existing large critical literature. Second, if I have understood you rightly, I am struck that the last sections of your piece are its most analytically insightful and significant in that you seem to have developed two basic propositions there: first, that neoliberal ideology has allowed space and provided justification for the emergence of authoritarian liberalism in the name of market elite control of critical social decision-making but, second, and paradoxically, even it has done so it has opened up space for the emergence of a form of political autocracy that now threatens even those elites (the present case in Florida in the U.S. involving the Disney corporation is instructive in this regard, but there are others). If you mean to make this case, then I think you may wish to highlight and develop its implications and tie them closely to neoliberal attacks on the demos and to the dual problematique raised by the challenge of NOT having market elites who are acting in the greater public interest on the one hand (much in evidence in the last decades of neoliberal dominance) or of autocratic political rulers who are prepared to jettison democracy and liberalism alike in favor of power and delimited minority interests distinct from market-based ones. I think these are powerful criticisms of neoliberal ideology and of its innate dangers for freedom and democracy and reworking your paper to highlight them would make an already thoughtful effort still stronger.