

Preface

This volume is the product of three years of collective work at the International Research Group on Authoritarianism and Counter-Strategies (IRGAC), an initiative founded in 2019 by the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung (RLS) in Berlin, Germany to support critical research on authoritarianism in and from countries of the so-called Global South. The IRGAC assembles more than 20 scholar-activists from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, India, Myanmar, and the Philippines, who were granted postdoctoral research fellowships of up to three years by the RLS.

The group's goal is to combine in-depth studies of national, regional, and local processes of socioeconomic transformation and politics with a global perspective that recognizes and analyzes the universal manifestations of authoritarian capitalism and universalizing processes that lie behind the rising tide of authoritarianism. At the same time, we propose an internationalist perspective on local and regional counter-strategies, a perspective that, while discussing alternative paths and concrete, popular resistances, explores their potential to pave the way for internationalist emancipatory transformative strategies.

Ever since our first gathering in late 2019, the group has worked together closely on- and offline, not only to regularly discuss our research and sharpen our theoretical, conceptual, and methodological tools to understand the manifold manifestations of global authoritarianism, but also in a series of concrete collective endeavors. In this respect, the research group collectively curates its website, www.irgac.org, where we regularly publish our findings as well as a series of other, non-academic articles on authoritarianism around the world. Likewise, the group has held seminars and public workshops, and organized a major international conference (“Contesting Authoritarianism: Perspectives from the South”) in Berlin in May 2022.

Work on *Global Authoritarianism: Perspectives and Contestations from the South* began back in 2020 with a collective editorial process organized by an editorial committee. Since then, each article has been written, read, discussed, and re-written several times in an incredibly rich, open, and informative dialogue between scholar-activists from across the world. Although, due to reasons of timing, not all of the people that participate in IRGAC contributed an article to this volume, their

perspectives are nevertheless an integral part of it, as its production has been an inherently collective process in which we constantly place the diversity of perspectives within the group into a highly productive tension. In this sense, the making of this volume is part of our ongoing effort to develop critical theories from the South in a collective and decentralized manner – with all the difficulties and potential that this implies.

Our work benefited greatly from the peer-review process this volume went through, for which we counted on the support of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung's Academic Advisory Board as well as its wider network of scholars. We would like to thank them wholeheartedly for their critical reading and helpful comments. We also want to thank our colleagues and comrades from Al.Berlin, Academy in Exile, the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut Freiburg, the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, bi'bak, the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Politics, the International Center for Development and Decent Work, Forum Transregionale Studien and OFF University for their trust and solidarity, for fruitful discussions and many joyous moments.

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