

Review of: "Carl Friedrich's Path to "Totalitarianism""

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The scientific article under review explores the influential "theory of totalitarianism" developed by Carl Friedrich, its origins, and the controversies surrounding it. Friedrich's theory, though highly regarded for nearly a decade, is scrutinized for its departure from the American understanding of law and constitutional order, as well as its divergence from liberal thinkers such as Max Weber and Hans Kelsen. This review aims to critically analyze the article's arguments and assess the validity of its claims.

Summary and Evaluation:

The article provides a comprehensive overview of Carl Friedrich's intellectual journey, beginning with his defense of Article 48 in 1930, his subsequent activism in the defense of democracy, and his participation in the American occupation. Friedrich's theory of the modern state, however, diverged from the mainstream American perspective by advocating for a discretionary bureaucratic state operated by a "responsible elite" rather than being subject to democratic controls or parliamentary supervision.

The author highlights Friedrich's criticism from scholars such as Herbert Finer and Joseph Dorfman, who contested the anti-democratic nature of Friedrich's views and his manipulation of political language. The article successfully captures the essence of the critique, shedding light on Friedrich's inability to criticize the rise of National Socialism and Stalinism using conventional terms of freedom, the rule of law, and democratic accountability that defined the American vernacular conception of politics.

One of the strengths of the article is its examination of Friedrich's departure from Harold Lasswell's concept of the Garrison State. Friedrich disagreed with Lasswell, asserting that party control of the state apparatus was an essential feature of totalitarian societies, thereby distinguishing his theory from Lasswell's perspective. This analysis deepens our understanding of Friedrich's unique position within the discourse surrounding totalitarianism.

However, the article could have delved further into Friedrich's specific characteristics of totalitarianism and their implications. While Friedrich's theory is acknowledged as historically influential, the article could have provided more examples and concrete evidence to support its claims and facilitate a clearer evaluation of his ideas. Additionally, the article leaves room for further exploration of the impact of Friedrich's theory beyond the theoretical realm, such as its practical applications or subsequent influence on political thought.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the scientific article presents an insightful analysis of Carl Friedrich's theory of totalitarianism, delving into its

origins, controversies, and departures from prevailing American perspectives. By shedding light on Friedrich's intellectual journey and the critiques he faced, the article contributes to a nuanced understanding of the development of political theories in the twentieth century offers a valuable examination of a significant contribution to the study of totalitarianism.