

Review of: "Liberalism Caused the Great Enrichment"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The essay *Liberalism caused the Great Enrichment* addresses the development of modern capitalist society with the aim of identifying its main causes, foundations and ideas.

A complex essay that takes the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th century as its starting point and identifies its elements and thinking. A historical moment that developed into the 'great enrichment' but certainly also had consequences for society and social policies.

The "liberal" view certainly dominated the philosophy of the notables in the early 19th century.

For the most part, the essay focuses on Anglo-Saxon liberal thought. During the 19th century, there was a move towards a progressive distinction between English liberty - aristocratic liberty that can be defined without recourse to equality - and democratic liberty - French liberty - based on the certainty that reasonable individuals must want liberty equally.

Two conceptions of freedom: an extreme dissimilarity of individuals and an extreme similarity of human conditions. The essay, moreover, has an Anglo-centric perspective and does not mention the season of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, which certainly marked a fundamental moment in history on the subject of the realization of individuals and individual freedoms.

The historical perspective, and contextualization in general, is the most lacking part of the essay, ending up lacking solid foundations in the reconstruction of the phenomenon of capitalist development.

Attempts to reconstruct the 'terminology', the vocabulary, of liberal culture are interesting, but even here, contextualization is lacking. A long-term explanation is interesting, but complex for a subject such as liberalism and capitalist development, which certainly did not have a linear development, even if only for the first half of the century. The 1940s certainly represented a 'decisive moment', the revolution of 1848 marked the economic but also political choices of the main European states, to give just a few examples.

Finally, I would avoid 'excessive' and forced comparisons with current events. Fascinating for the reader, less convincing on a theoretical and historical level.