

Review of: "Duality, Liberty, and Realism in Entangled Political Economy"

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The review of the article *Duality, Liberty, and Realism in Entangled Political Economy* by Giampaolo Garzarelli, Lyndal Keeton and Aldo A. Sitoe (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32388/8P2B7P>).

The article is a well-written demonstration of the advantages that the framework of entangled political economy has over earlier approaches based on duality and/or the tradition of Public Choice theory. The authors show convincingly that conceptualizations and descriptions of the relationship between liberty and coercion rooted in the duality approach do not provide a good account of actual socioeconomic processes. However, working in the fields of sociology and cultural studies, I have the impression that there are simpler ways to show that the basic assumptions on which the duality and Public Choice approaches are based are just assumptions and not empirical observations with general validity.

For example, the statement "taxes are a forced revenue extraction from the natural power asymmetry between the individual and the state" is an ideological description and not an attitude towards taxation dictated by human nature. I am not aware of any anthropological or psychological research that would attest to such a content of human nature. Similarly, the statement "the individual prefers more to less liberty" is not an unconditional empirical fact. Even if one does not accept what psychoanalytic theory has to say about such a description of human subject, it is not difficult to point to situations where individuals prefer less liberty in exchange for safety (like in an airplane) or various kinds of enjoyment that come from being restricted or hampered in various ways (from BDSM to drug use to being a member of a political party). So, for me, as a social scientist, what the article proves is as true as it is obvious. Nevertheless, I understand that it may look different for someone working in the field of economic science.

I welcome the conclusion of the article that presents a more nuanced and empirically pertinent curve expressing the relation between liberty and coercion (Figure 6). Lenin claimed that freedom is recognition of necessity, and the conclusions of the article seem to support this point of view at least to some degree.

I believe it could be beneficial to further expand the anthropological questioning of the basic assumptions of economic science, for example, by exploring the possibility 3(d) - "rejecting the universality of purposive human action" - that the

authors explicitly negate. My impression is that this negation serves to maintain the validity of the concept of human beings as utility maximizers. It may be the case that human action is universally purposive, however, at the same time there being no universally shared understanding of what "purposive" means. So, the categories of "purposefulness" and "utility" would be as universal as utterly empty. That is just a loose thought that came to my mind after reading the article.

All formal aspects of the reviewed text are correct. It contains discussions with earlier theoretical positions, references to existing literature, etc. Theses are articulated in a lucid and exact manner and are equally well-supported by arguments.

In my opinion, the article may be published in its current form.