

# Review of: "Neoliberalism, Strong State and Democracy"

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The article/chapter offered me a great joy to read, learn and confirm or question some of my views on the current state of affairs and their origins which the author, in my view, rightly traces to the interwar Austrian school. I liked in particular, and agree with, the argument that is gradually developed that it was not a weak state but the weakening functions of democracy that neoliberalism required and produced. I think this argument could be tested in the analysis of a democratic deficit of the European Union (Plan B, as the article stated). The persuasive argument of an "authoritarian liberalism" leads me to the question of how functioning family of liberal democracies, like the EU, could come under the same, admittedly broad, umbrella with Pinochet's Chile? Perhaps, a more developed clarification might be helpful in the article. By just inspiring these questions and dilemmas, thoughts, the article has already fulfilled an important role for the intellectual debate. The article would certainly benefit with further analysis of Friedman's role and ideas. How they impact contemporary debate in a changed, if indeed changed, context.

A "depoliticization of politics" is another concept that would deserve more space in the debate, if the space is not restricted. The author challenged effectively in this article some of the conceptions, perhaps misconceptions in some authors' views, by providing nuanced understanding of the topics of (elite supported) neoliberalism, (strong) state and (deficient) democracy. The descriptions in brackets are mine and the author might disagree with them.

The centrality of Hayek's and Schmitt's views and their analysis enriches this article, especially in the historical context and influences that Schmitt provided despite not belonging to the neoliberal ideology. I would personally be interested to read the author's developed comparative analysis of Schmitt's dated work during 1930s and 1940s and their application, if possible, to some contemporary regimes. This might provide us with a test of whether predictions of the catastrophic outcome that current authoritarian model presents democracy with, stand on sufficient grounds. Radically different views of the concept of a strong state, the author contrasts, between Hayek's apolitical and Schmitt's political. The inclusion of Keynesian understanding of the state and democracy in the thorough analysis of neoliberalism, state and democracy, works really well and possibly issues a warning to the uncritical support of and the implementation of neoliberal ideas. Congratulations to the author on a very interesting and thorough analysis of some important concepts.