



# State Form and Authoritarian Liberalism: From the Perspective of the State Derivation Debate

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Revisiting Marxist Theories of Fascism and Authoritarianism

Soichiro Sumida

[s.sumida@osaka-ue.ac.jp](mailto:s.sumida@osaka-ue.ac.jp)

# Introduction

-“Leviathan 2.0” (Maier) in the 21th century

⇒ War and state, not market and capital, seem to be the constitutive principles of capitalist society.

- Left populists/sovereignists VS Autonomist Marxists

⇒ Marx against the “autonomy of politics“ (*Schmittian Marxism*)

- The state embedded in "society as totality" (Adorno 1968)

⇒ Critique of the political economy from the perspective of the “politics of autonomy” (Negri 1989)

# Ordo-liberalism as Authoritarian Liberalism

-Carl Schmitt's Address to Business Leaders in 1932, 'Strong State and Sound Economy' »A process of depoliticization, the segregation of the state from non-state spheres is, to repeat, a **political** procedure. » (Cf. Crisiti 1998)

⇒For Schmitt, unlike Traditional Marxism, the distinction between the political and the economical is extremely fluid.

-Discovering a notion of economic self-rule »First, *the economic sphere of the state*, the sphere of genuine state privilege.[...] Second, in opposition to that domain, the sphere of the free, individual entrepreneur, i.e. the *sphere of pure privacy*. Third, the **intermediate non-state, but still public sphere**. » (Cf. Crisiti 1998)

# Ordo-liberalism as Authoritarian Liberalism

-»Both Schmitt and the ordoliberalists differ from Anglo-American liberalism in that they never believed in a market economy independent from state authority. **To them Leviathan was and had to be there first.** They also have in common that they regard the economy, the market and capitalism as a self-driving and self-equilibrating machinery put in place by **an act of politics** [...]. » (Streeck 2016, 153)

⇒Schmitt's argument is to refine Hobbes' theory of sovereignty, which seeks to overcome the anarchy of 'possessive individualism' (C. B. Macpherson).

-For Ordo-liberals, the problem is not state intervention *per se*, but its purpose and methods.

# Ordo-liberalism as Authoritarian Liberalism

-Hayek's Reception of Schmitt's political philosophy »This **weakness of the government of an omnipotent democracy** was very clearly seen by the extraordinary German student of politics, Carl Schmitt, who in the 1920s probably understood the character of the developing form of government better than most people [...]]»(Hayek 1982)

-Like Schmitt, Hayek defends a "liberal authoritarianism" that affirms dictatorship over liberal democracy. (Cf. Chamayou 2021)

⇒ His emphasis on spontaneous order means actually the importance of **institutional design** for the task of economics. (Cf. Slobodaian 2018)

# From what does the Strength of the “State of Capital” derive?

-Hermann Heller's State Theory »The specificity of capitalist class society is not, as is claimed without exception, that the **weak state** refrains from any intervention in economic life. ...By no means is non-intervention of state power, but private mobilization of state power, and very **strong intervention** in the economic sphere, the slogan of the bourgeois social order. » (Heller 1963)

-As 'objective forms of thought' (Marx), » Ordoliberalism recognises the state as the **political form** of the capitalist social relations and conceives of it as the concentrated power of bourgeois society. » (Bonefeld 2017, 4 )

⇒The authority and interventionist power of the state has its *raison d'etre* not in the state itself, but in the dynamics of capital.



# From what does the Strength of the “State of Capital” derive?

-The Total State for Ordo-liberalism »A pluralistic party-state becomes "total" not out of strength and power, but out of **weakness**; it intervenes in all areas of life because it must fulfill the demands of all interested parties. In particular, it must enter the area of the hitherto state-free economy, even if it renounces all leadership and political influence there.» (Schmitt 1932, 89)

-The solution of a strong, authoritative, "qualitative" total state as opposed to a "quantitative" total state, i.e., social state (Cf. Chamayou 2021)

⇒For authoritarian liberalism, the social state is merely a weak state that imposes restrictions on the free development of industry. (Maus 1980)

# From what does the Strength of the “State of Capital” derive?

-However, strong state is a limited entity in the sense that it has the capacity and power to limit itself to the "organization of the market".

⇒The state of capital constrained by economic form-determinations can be understood as the product of institutional ordering that makes a **vital** and competitive market.

-The state of capital from the "genealogy" of authoritarian liberalism. »the ordoliberalists say we should completely turn the formula [the free market under the state] around and adopt the free market as **organizing and regulating principle** of the state, from the start of its existence up to the last form of its interventions. » (Foucault [1979] 2004)



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That's all I have to say.  
Thank you for your attention.

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