



The Liberal Virus: Permanent War and the Americanization of the World

Samir Amin

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Samir Amin's ambitious new book argues that the ongoing American project to dominate the world through military force has its roots in European liberalism, but has developed certain features of liberal ideology in a new and uniquely dangerous way. Where European political culture since the French Revolution has given a central place to values of equality, the American state has developed to serve the interests of capital alone, and is now exporting this model throughout the world. American imperialism, Amin argues, will be far more barbaric than earlier forms of imperialism, pillaging natural resources and destroying the lives of the poor.

The Liberal Virus examines the ways in which the American model is being imposed on the world, and outlines its economic and political consequences. It shows how both citizenship and class consciousness are diluted in "low-intensity democracy" and argues instead for democratization as an ongoing process—of fundamental importance for human progress—rather than a fixed constitutional formula designed to support the logic of capital accumulation.

In a panoramic overview, Amin examines the objectives and outcomes of American policy in the different regions of the world. He concludes by outlining the challenges faced by those resisting the American project today: redefining European liberalism on the basis of a new compromise between capital and labor, re-establishing solidarity among the people of the South, and reconstructing an internationalism that serves the interests of regions that are currently divided against each other.

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