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The Origin of Capitalism: A Longer View (Paperback)

By Ellen Meiksins Wood

Verso Books, United Kingdom, 2002. Paperback. Condition: New. Revised edition. Language: English . Brand New Book. Capitalism was born in England, yet the dominant Western conceptions of modernity come from elsewhere, notably from France, the historical model of bourgeois society. In this lively and wide-ranging book, Ellen Meiksins Wood argues that what is supposed to have epitomized bourgeois modernity, especially the emergence of a modern state and political culture in continental Europe, signalled the persistence of precapitalist social property relations. Conversely, the absence of a modern state and political discourse in England testified to the presence of a well-developed capitalism. The fundamental flaws in the British economy are not just the symptoms of arrested development but the contradictions of the capitalist system itself. Britain today, Wood maintains, is the most thoroughly capitalist culture in Europe. Weaving together economic and political history with the history of ideas, Wood ranges across a broad spectrum of current debates, from the Nairn-Anderson these to the contributions of J.C.D. Clark and Alan Macfarlane, and over a wide variety of topics: the development of British capitalism and French absolutism; the state, the nation and their symbolic representations; revolution and tradition; the cultural patterns of English speech;...


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