

The Liberal Aspect of the American Dream in James Truslow Adams' *The Epic of America* (1931)

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Abstract: This article foregrounds James Truslow Adams' ideological discourse in his historical document *The Epic of America* (1931), in which the concept of “the American Dream” has first been introduced to the terminology of the American history. In this book, which traces the history of the American Dream from the early English settlements in America until the date of its publication, Adams defends American Liberalism, manifested in the free enterprise and the equality of success opportunity, as the basis of the American Dream. Reading the history of the American Dream in the light of Adams' book, we come to the conclusion that, as any American, he defines the concept according to his circumstances of birth, class and age; synthesized in a Liberal ideology that emphasizes the specificity of the American nation.

Key concepts: J.T. Adams, The American Dream, Ideology, Liberalism, Free enterprise, U.S.A.

المظهر الليبرالي للحلم الأمريكي في "ملحمة أمريكا" (1931) لجيمس تراسلو آدامز

ملخص: هذه المقالة تبرز الخطاب الأيديولوجي لجيمس تراسلو آدامز في كتابه التاريخي "ملحمة أمريكا" (1931)، حيث تم تقديم مفهوم الحلم الأمريكي لأول مرة لمصطلحات التاريخ الأمريكي. في هذا الكتاب الذي يتتبع تاريخ الحلم الأمريكي منذ المستوطنات البريطانية الأولى في أمريكا حتى تاريخ نشره، يدافع آدامز عن الليبرالية الأمريكية التي تتجلى في المشاريع الحرة والمساواة في فرص النجاح كأساس للحلم الأمريكي. قراءة تاريخ الحلم الأمريكي في ضوء كتاب آدامز تقودنا إلى الإستنتاج أنه، مثل أي أمريكي، يعرف مفهوم الحلم الأمريكي حسب ظروف ولادته، طبقته الإجتماعية وجيله، توليفها في أيديولوجية ليبرالية تؤكد على خصوصية الأمة الأمريكية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ج.ت. آدامز، الأيديولوجية، الحلم الأمريكي، الليبرالية، المشاريع الحرة، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية

Introduction : James Truslow Adams' book *The Epic of America* (1931) is the first historical document in the American history to coin the concept of "the American Dream". Considering the period in which the book was published, one wonders how a concept, upon which the main ideals of the American nation are built, appeared when the Americans were suffering from the most damaging depression in their history. It is, indeed, confusing that a concept, which embodies most of the hopes of the American people and the optimistic ideas to which the American success are related, was formulated in a period of despair and crisis. In fact, in his book, Adams overlooks the period of the 1930s and argues that such a concept as the American Dream is wider than that decade.

In Adams' view, the American Dream has a wide connotation and one has not to limit it to a certain period in history or to a specific group of

people, since it is embedded in the minds of all the American generations. It is a standard term that can be applied to all the periods of the American history since the beginning of settlement in the New World until the end of life on earth. Adams believes that the meaning of the American Dream changes according to the circumstances and the hopes of people in each period of time. Each group of people defines it according to their hopes, expectations, economic, political, and social conditions in which they live. However, the change to which the concept is submitted does not go beyond its basis, which is that of American Liberalism.

Most of the reviewers of *The Epic of America* agree on the fact that Adams has not limited the concept to the 1930s and that the book is about the history of the concept and the American nation from the first English settlement until the 20th century. For instance, the transaction Routledge publishers of the 2012 edition of *The Epic of America* argue that James Truslow Adams in this book gives a picture of the American past that makes its present and “reviews how the ordinary American has matured over time in outlook, character, and opinion.” (<https://www.routledge.com>). This maturity resulted in the present in an American citizen, who is different from a man or woman from any other nation. Along with it, Adams traces the history of the concept of the American Dream that moved through different periods to establish its specificity that is linked to business and Capitalism (Ibid.).

For her part, Tess Evans, in her review of Lawrence R. Samuel’s *The American Dream: A cultural history*, argues that Lawrence “takes up where Adams left off.” (Evans cite in <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/513418>). She acknowledges the existence of the American Dream before the period of the

1930s and she asserts that Adams, in *The Epic of America*, explores the development of the concept over history giving a vision of how the American Dream should be. She reinforces her ideas with an argument that Adams argues for an American Dream based on the Liberal values that make the specificity of the American nation (Ibid.). The history of the American Dream, then, makes the history of the American people that cannot be detached from the Liberal ideology.

This article aims to analyze Adams' Liberal discourse all along *The Epic of America*, dealing with his understanding of the American Dream and its functions throughout various periods in the American history. The analysis explains Adams' faith in Liberalism as the foundation of the American Dream along the country's history and his standing against any current that comes against the Americans' ancestral liberal principles, either in the present moment or in the future. It discusses also Adams' understanding and definition of the concept; a definition based on the three principles of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, exemplified in the American free enterprise and capitalistic values. The discussion, then, follows the outline of Adams' book, which deals first with the Liberal dreams of the previous generations and defends at the end an American Dream that belongs to the author's own generation, that of the twentieth century Capitalists. At the end, it shows how Adams is determined by his background and biography in his definition of the American Dream.

Adams' Liberal ideology is analyzed in the light of Louis Althusser's theory on ideology included in his essay entitled "Ideology and ideological State Apparatuses" (1971). In this essay, Althusser gives a materialist understanding of ideology. For him, ideology is not present in the brain of

the individual in a form of ideas, but rather in institutions or what he calls state apparatuses, as the church, the school, trade unions and the family. It manifests itself in society in a form of beliefs, rituals, habits and customs. These apparatuses, according to him, belong to the state and called Ideological State Apparatuses or ISAs. Just like the Repressive State Apparatuses or RSAs, as the police and the army, the ISAs are initially controlled by the ruling class or the elite, which tries always to impose its control on the working class by spreading its ideas in these institutions or apparatuses. In this way, the individual, or the subject, as is labeled by Althusser, is always shaped by the ISAs. He writes, "All ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects" (Althusser, in Lenin, 1971: 115) meaning that ideology creates a sense of identity.

Althusser's definition of ideology is mainly based on Capitalist societies, in which the ideology of Capitalism is imposed on individuals via these state apparatuses and becomes part of their identity. As such, ideology always carries with it proletarian values and Bourgeois domination. Since J. T. Adams belongs to the Bourgeois class within a Capitalist society, he takes the role of an ideological state apparatus to impose his liberal capitalist ideology. As his *Epic of America* traces the whole history and civilization of the U.S.A. and bases its arguments on the official documents and institutions of the U.S.A, it represents the majority of the ideological state apparatuses since it covers the religious, educational and, political spheres. Through his book, Adams tries by all means to dominate the minds of American citizens and impose on them an identity based on Liberalism by giving this book a title of an epic, and connecting the concept of the American Dream, which represents the American identity, which is closely related to this ideology.

- American Dream, American History and the ideology of Liberalism: Adams' Overview of the Three Concepts

Before defining the American Dream, Adams has first reviewed the history of the United States from the beginning of the English settlement until the twentieth century to show that the American Dream is the American history itself. He compares the concept and the American history to a tale without a beginning. In his prologue to the book, he claims that “no date marks the beginning of our [Americans’] tale” (P. 3) to make it clear to the reader that the American history and civilization started before the English settlement in the New World. Since the Indian civilization, which was established before the Europeans’ arrival to this land remains unknown for him and for all historians, he, in his book, opens the tale with the arrival of the English to the New World.

Adams considers that the first English people, who settled in America, were led by the spirit of Liberalism. Since then, all the other groups of settlers, who were brought up within this Liberal atmosphere, were permitted to fulfill their hopes and dreams. He does not deny that the dream of all the people who settled in America had materialistic motives behind it, but he justifies their materialism by the bad living conditions they suffered from in their homeland. He argues that “for various reasons, economic conditions in England were very bad,” (P. 30) and “the opportunities of the New World were painted in glowing colors, and those who were sinking in the social and economic scales in England began to look toward it as a land of refuge and hope” (Ibid). He adds to this that the bad economic conditions that those people underwent in their homeland were the result of the political system of the government, which was tyrannical and conservative. As such, what those people needed in reality was a land where they would be

able to live “a better and freer life, a life in which a man might think as he would and develop as he willed” (Ibid. P. 31).

The people’s dream is, then, liberal by nature. Their migration to the New World is shaped by the spirit of liberty and equality. It is not like the ancient migrations, which were made by lords followed by their agents dependent on them. It is rather, as Adams argues the one in which “the common man as well as the leader was hoping for greater freedom and happiness for himself and his children” (P. 31). The dream of those people was not expressed, but it was forming in their minds. Adams argues that “that dream or hope has been present from the start” (P.4) and America was called by some people “freedonia”, since it has been considered the land of freedom and equality. Starting from this point, Adams finds that he cannot cover any event in American history without making reference to the philosophy of Liberalism.

When the thirteen colonies claimed their independence and secession from the British Empire, they also defended their cause under Liberal principles. Their Declaration of Independence was, in fact, the announcement of the Lockean Liberal rights of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, which were theorized by Thomas Jefferson and his followers to themselves and to all mankind as he writes:

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of

government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it (Jefferson [1776] in Adams, 1931: 89).

Following these principles, the American nation got its independence from Britain in 1883. Since then, all the official documents of the American government, as the American Constitution and the Bill of Rights, were inspired from this declaration and all oppressed groups defended their rights under these principles. Adams argues that “[...] in the Declaration of Independence, made good by war, the gospel of equality, of natural rights, and of government by consent of the governed, had attained influence and authenticity that no mere philosopher could secure for it” (Adams.1931: 110).

In the centuries that followed the American independence, the Declaration of Independence became the source of inspiration for the majority of the movements for the preservation of human rights. The philosophical aspect of this declaration makes it open to different contexts and circumstances. Each individual or group of people interprets it according to his/their social, economic, political and historical circumstances. The entire Americans’ hopes and expectations are claimed and come true under the liberal principles of this declaration, which became the basis of the American Dream. In this context, Adams claims that “Jefferson” stood “for the American Dream” (P. 112), an expression which became the emblem which separates America from the rest of the world, especially Europe. Indeed, when the United States of America established itself as a nation with a civilization and “stability of material and spiritual values” (P. 402); she seceded not only from the empire, but from the whole Old World. Since then, the American people opened their new frontier by expanding it to the Western shores of their lands. This westward expansion is the new image of

the American Dream, a dream of a better life looked for on the basis of the old settlements in the New World not on the basis of any European background (P. 122).

- American Dream and American Liberalism: The Link Between the Two Concepts

With the establishment of new states in the West, especially in the nineteenth century and with introduction of industry to the Northern states, the Liberal principle of the American Dream, which was inherited from the European philosophy began to be revised and redefined to be specific to America, by linking it mainly to money making and material success, achieved through investment in different fields. In the turn of the twentieth century, Liberalism for Americans meant free enterprise and non-governmental interference in economy. This new form of Liberalism contributed to achieve the highest points of material success and technological development. It also opened the way for them to be proud of themselves as the best nation in the world and to claim their success to be the result of their new vision of life. This new image of the American Dream is best illustrated in the literary works of such authors as Theodore Dreiser and Francis Scott Fitzgerald.

James Truslow Adams belongs to this generation that believes in the specificity of the American nation and the American Dream. He argues that whatever was the definition given to the latter, it never goes beyond its basic principles, which are: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The three basic principles of the American Declaration of Independence were inspired by Thomas Jefferson from John Lock's philosophy of Liberalism. The latter was revised and then modeled within American political, social and mainly

economic frameworks. The American philosophical tradition of Liberalism is, according to him, embodied especially in their economy via their system of Capitalism based on free market. The same system is seen as a sign of democracy and equality among people, since opportunities of investment and material success are open to all individuals, regardless of their social rank or origins.

It is important to point out that American history shows that since the realisation of the American independence, material success was considered as a project to be realized by many local inhabitants and emigrants that come to America each year to see this new light of hope. The reason is that this land of economic liberty and equality among people gave to them a light of hope to realize what they could not realize elsewhere. In this context, Reyas argues that “America is a utopia... it is the name of human hope” (Reyas in Parrington. 1947). The happy life which all the American citizens look for is, then, the result of economic liberty, a liberal principle redefined each time according to the individual’s social rank, as well as the political order that characterises his/her historical era. In this context, Adams argues that the dream of all these people is:

That American dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank, which is the greatest contribution we have made to the thought and welfare of the world. That dream or hope has been present from the start. Ever since we became an independent nation, each generation has seen an uprising of ordinary Americans to save that dream from the forces which appeared to be overwhelming it (Adams.P. 04).

It appears from the above excerpt that Adams, as any American citizen, defends an American Dream that belongs to his social rank and his

generation. Being descended from a Virginian family of landowners, he is qualified as a man of noble bloodline. Jim Cullen argues that he is “A man with elite bloodlines dating back to the seventeenth century, when one of his ancestors came to Virginia as an indentured servant and ended up in the landowning class.” (Cullen, 2003: 3). Thus, he inherited the ancient liberal values of the American Dream from his ancestors, and he modeled them on the modern economic atmosphere of his twentieth century generation. He experienced his own American Dream by working on Wall Street and made his material success as a successful businessman. As such, the American Dream he defends in his *The Epic of America* is based on the ancient liberal values of his ancestors, but at the same time the liberal values he defends are those redefined in the twentieth century in terms of free market, Individualism and material success achieved through business investment. When he writes in the epilogue of *The Epic of America* that the American Dream is not merely a dream of motor cars and high wages but rather a dream that every man and woman can make success regardless of his/her social class or origins (P. 405), he, in fact, recalls the experience of his family that came to America as indentured servants and turned to be a family of landowners. The reason behind their success, according to Adams is the opportunity which was open to every man and woman to reach success at that time under the liberal values of equality among people and the worthiness of each individual according to his/her abilities. And when he says that each generation raises in a rebellion to defend her own dream, he means that all the previous generations worked hard to preserve their dreams by keeping stick to their ancestral liberal values, and it is time for his own generation to defend theirs.

Adam's notion of the American Dream belongs to the twentieth century businessmen, redefined in terms of political freedom, the accumulation of wealth and the freedom from want. The reason is that, as it is aforementioned earlier, Adams himself is a successful businessman. During his time, it was the combination of the political and economic ideals instead of the spiritual ones that governed the American life, since economic prosperity in this period was reinforced by political rather than spiritual laws. Yet, to reach this prosperity, government has to share the same dream as the citizens, because they are in need of laws that protect their interests. Charles Geisst argues that "The realistic side of American history has seen governments play a strong, central role in defining and fashioning this persistent dream, especially when political and economic factors become too overwhelming for the marketplace." (Geisst.1990: VI). Indeed, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence that Adams reports and considers as the source of the American Dream says that governments must contribute to the general will of the people and that if any government doesn't succeed to achieve this aim, it must by no means be removed by the people. The problem is that when Adams wrote his *The Epic of America*, the government was unable to share with the dreams of its people. In fact, the depression in which the American nation was plunged after the economic crash of 1929 obliged the government to give up some of its liberal principles to adopt some socialist values. This act made the advocates of Liberalism, Adams included, afraid that people would follow the path of their government and give up their ancestral Liberal values. As such, he finds that it's time for him to defend America's Liberal tradition against the governmental socialist practices.

Adams' reference to an uprising in the last sentence of his above definition of the American Dream is, then, a way to save that dream from the forces that came against it. We understand from this that his aim through the book is to save this dream from disappearance, since he was afraid that Americans, in these moments of despair, would come to forget about their ancestors' values, which insisted that the three basic principles of the American Dream can only come true with hard work and individualism, implied in free enterprise. At that time, he came against Franklin Delano Roosevelt's socialist programme of the New Deal, and he felt that Roosevelt, through this programme was betraying the American tradition based on autonomy and government's collusion to create a materialistic consumer society. His aim through this book is, then, rather ideological than social, economic or historical. This epic is written to remind Americans that in America, the myth of the American Dream never dies, and since the early foundation of the American nation, people were struggling to make it come true. It is, then, time for them to revolt against Roosevelt's New Deal, and follow the path of their ancestors to save their nation from depression through hard work and the spirit of Individualism rather than that of Socialism. It is to remind the Americans about their ancestors traditions that made of this nation the one of their day, and it is then their task to follow the path of the great men of the seventeenth, eighteenth and mainly nineteenth centuries to overcome the problems of the Great Depression.

As Adams believes that the American Dream is the dream of the whole nation since its foundation in the seventeenth century, he finds it odd to give his book the title of "American Dream", even though he is the first to use this concept and even though he invokes it over thirty times in this book. According to him, it's not clear whether he actually coined the term or

appropriated it from someone else, since although it did not exist as a concept it existed as an idea in the minds of all the Americans since they came to establish colonies in America. In fact, all of them had the dream of success in life; a materialistic success, according to him. So, instead of the title of “American Dream”, which was suggested by his publisher, he opted for *The Epic of America* to remind Americans that the concept is an epic which will never die. Since Truslow Adams used this concept, it became a national motto, which is used in sport by athletes to claim their identity, in politics by political leaders to lead their compains and mainly in economy by businessmen as the ultimate goal of their enterprise. The term becomes a component of the American identity, more meaningful than terms like democracy, constitution, or the United States itself. Its vitality stems from the fact that the term is universal; it is part of the American tradition. Jim Cullen argues that even though the Pilgrims, when they settled in the New World, did not make reference to the concept of “the American Dream”, they understood its idea and lived it, in the sense that they imagined their destiny in a positive way and traced their future optimistically. So did the founding fathers, when they drafted the American constitution and so did the businessmen of the nineteenth century, when they invested and speculated their wealth in different projects. Even the different waves of immigrants, who joined the American continent to overcome their homelands’ problems, experienced the same dream (cf. Cullen, 2003: 5).

Due to the widespread use of the concept of the American Dream, it became in the twentieth century a major element of the national identity. In fact, any nation in the world identifies itself by elements that unify its people, such as blood, religion, geography, shared history or language. The American people endeavored to create a shared and collective imagination

inspired from the hopes of the first English settlers on this New World and articulated explicitly by the founding fathers in the Declaration of Independence to be consolidated in the American constitution (Ibid., P. 6). This shared imagination came true with the businessmen of the nineteenth century, who succeeded to make of the U.S.A. the leading industrial nation in the world. It is this imagination that James Truslow Adams came to name “American Dream” in the first half of the twentieth century and that the coming generations succeeded to keep alive through hard work and a shared belief in it.

- American Dream Based on Adams' definition

At the end of his book, after tracing the whole history of the United States, and after relating the American Dream to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, James Truslow Adams comes to give his official definition of the concept in the epilogue of *The Epic of America* as “that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man” (P. 404). But, what do the terms “better”, “richer” and “fuller” mean differ from one individual to another, from one social group to another and from generation to another, just like how the terms “life”, “liberty” and “the pursuit of happiness” mean different things for different people. Accordingly, the terms “better”, “richer” and “fuller” are defined in terms of money in modern America. Yet, in the seventeenth century, they could be defined in religious terms. Other definitions can be given to these terms, such as political reform, educational attainment, sexual liberty, ethnic equality and an infinite number of other definitions. So, what makes this concept successful, in fact, is its mythic aspect and its reference to ideological and standard principles, which makes its use general and specific at the same time, and which gives Americans a shared identity, and separates them from Europeans.

Coming back in the history of the American people, we find that from the very beginning of their settlement on this new found land, their main aim was to create a new nation based on new principles different from those of what they called the Old World. When they fled their homeland's regime and problems, they set on themselves the task of creating a new world with new ideals always opposing or revising the European ones, and so they did. In fact, the ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness came against the oppression and tyranny of the European governments and Church, which restricted the political and religious liberty of the citizens. Starting from the nineteenth century, when industry started to take roots in the U.S.A., several connotations, which can be considered as being revolutionary comparing to the previous centuries and especially to the European thought, are attributed to the American Dream. It became an identification of the American citizen from the foreign one. This idea manifested itself clearly starting from this century through the ideology of Capitalism, which became the basic foundation of the American Civilization. In this context, Adams extends his definition of the American Dream as:

That dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement. It is a difficult dream for the European upper classes to interpret adequately, and too many of us ourselves have grown weary and mistrustful of it. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of a social order in which each man or woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by the others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position (Adams, 1931: 404).

The passage illustrates the way Adams recalls his European origins, and mourns his ancestors' inability to make a decent living there, because of their social rank, the thing that obliged them to sail to America as indentured servants. In parallel, he praises their ability to rise to nobility once in the New World, and shows thus the specificity of American Liberalism comparing to the European one. He shows how Liberal opportunities in America are open to every individual, regardless of his circumstances of birth or origins, and how only hard work can lead someone to success. He shows that the Liberalism he defends is not the one understood by the Europeans, and the concepts of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness have other meanings in America. Since the American liberal principles were set for the first time, they were used as an attack and defense against the European principles to preserve the American identity as a nation, which will never follow the European path. So, following Adams' overview of the use of the concept of the American Dream in different periods of the American history as an American ideal, we find that it comes always against the European ideals. Adams argues that its meanings, especially in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, manifested clearly this idea.

Dealing with the concept as an ideology, Adams argues that one finds it difficult to understand its meaning in any given period of the American history without making reference to the Puritan period and the first English settlement in America. Starting from the point that the American Dream is originally set on some European ideals that have been calcified in America, one can understand why we cannot speak about the American Dream without making reference to its origins that come back to the first Puritan people, who left Europe looking for good living conditions in the New

World. This religious group intended to purify what they brought with them from Europe. What they brought with them, however, was just a set of political and religious ideas; ideas of government and Christianity. Ruland and Bradbury argue that when this religious group crossed the Atlantic Ocean, they had in their minds a plan on how to revise these concepts once in the New World. They planned to set a government based on the respect of the individual freedoms; mainly religious freedom (cf. Ruland and Bradbury, 1991: 8). From this Puritan dream came the idea of making the American nation different from Europe, and from it came the idea of revising all what comes from Europe. Starting from the first English settlement in America, all the European ideas and movements reached America in a new shape revised and corrected (according to them) by the basic principles of their American Dream, which differs from the European one.

In *The Epic of America*, James Truslow Adams focuses on the difference of the American nation from the European one by insisting that the American Dream is the product of “the American mind”, which considers “business and money-making and material improvements as good in themselves.” (Pp. 405-6). He states that “the mere fact that there were no old things to be swept away here made us feel the full impact of the Industrial Revolution and the effect of machinery, when we turned to industrial life, to a far greater extent than in Europe, where the revolution originated.” (P. 406). By this statement, Adams makes it clear that despite the first settlers’ efforts to create a new nation detached from the European one; it was the Industrial Revolution with its impact on the socio-political life of the people that helped the Americans to detach themselves completely from Europe.

- Conclusion

From the analysis of the concept of “the American Dream” in James Truslow Adams’ *The Epic of America* (1931), we understand that Adams’ aim through the book is not limited to giving a definition to the concept, and the worthiness of the book is not limited to the fact that it is the first to use the term “American Dream”. His aim is extended to the preservation of the ideals of the American people by his own generation and the coming ones. Even though the term is repeated several times in his book, he kept its definition until the last pages. He has first reminded the American people about the different phases of their history and the hopes and dream of people in each period. He also reminded them that the Liberal ideology is the foundation of their dreams, and explained how the dream of each individual or generation, economic, political, social or religious has some liberalism in its heart. Following the history of the Liberal ideology in the U.S.A., he came to the point that it was until the nineteenth century, when the Industrial Revolution reached the country that the American people came to distinguish themselves clearly from the European tradition. The reason is that the American governments knew how to adapt the liberal ideology to its economy. The American political system, then, allowed most of the people to reach material success thanks to the opportunities of investment opened for every individual of every social position; regardless of his circumstances of birth or origins. This is the American Dream that Adams defends and that the European nations cannot understand, according to him.

J.T. Adams’ *The Epic of America* works as Althusser’s Ideological State Apparatuses, as it aims to create an American identity based on the Liberal ideology, which finds its well functioning in the Capitalist society. To reach his aim, he invokes the concept of the American Dream, which represents the American identity, and stresses the point that the concept

cannot be linked to a certain period of history. After that he gives his definition of the concept, which is based on the ideology of Liberalism. This goes with Althusser's view that ideology has no history, and identities are formed by ideologies, which are controlled by the state through its apparatuses. In addition to this, Adams, in *The Epic of America*, builds his arguments on the basic documents of the American government, as the American constitution and the Declaration of Independence, on the basis of which the state apparatuses function.

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