



## A. Smith: the Wealth of Nations

Winter Semester 2011/2012

Seminar (V3)

Objectives: In-depth reading and analysis of one of the major works of Adam Smith (1723 - 1790): [full title] *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776).

Classes (weekly): Thursday 12:00 - 14:00

Assessment:

- 2 credits: completion of three short chapter reviews (pass/fail)
- 8 credits: completion of three short chapter reviews (pass/fail) and a final paper (4000 words)

### Description of the course

In this course we will read and analyze most of Adam's Smith *Wealth of Nations*. The selection of texts we will go through in the course is divided in *themes* (see the schedule of classes). During each lecture, we will try to understand the concepts and phenomena Smith is writing about in the context of the time in which those themes were being presented. At the same time, each *theme* is accompanied by a text of contemporary literature. That will allow you to understand the development of those same concepts into the contemporary world. Students are required to purchase an edition of the *Wealth of Nations* (see bibliography). All other texts will be provided in class.

**You are required to enroll by sending an email including your first and last name, and, if you already have one, your "Matrikelnummer" to my email address: carlo.martini@uni-bayreuth.de. Feel free to email me for questions about the course too.**

### Schedule of classes

- |    |                            |   |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| 1. | <b>Primary readings:</b>   | <b>October 20, 2011 - Introduction</b><br>Jonathan B. Wight. <i>Saving Adam Smith</i> : pp. 19-30<br>Fleischacker (2004): pp. xv-xvii, 3-26 |
|    | <i>Suggested readings:</i> | Norlin (2002): pp.336-345.  |
| 2. | <b>Primary readings:</b>   | <b>October 27, 2011 - Division of Labor</b><br>A. Smith <i>W. of N.</i> : BOOK 1 — Chapters I, II, III                                      |
|    | <i>Secondary readings</i>  | Allyn A. Yung (1928) <i>Increasing Returns and Economic Progress</i>  |
| 3. | <b>Primary readings:</b>   | <b>November 03, 2011 - Origin of Money</b><br>A. Smith <i>W. of N.</i> : BOOK 1 — Chapter IV  |
|    | <i>Secondary readings</i>  | Carl Menger (1892) <i>On the Origins of Money</i>   |



- November 10, 2011 - Price**
4. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 1 — Chapters V, VI, VII, VIII.  
*Secondary readings* Friedrich Hayek (1945) *The Use of Knowledge in Society*
- November 17, 2011 - Stock**
5. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 2 — Chapters I, II, III.  
*Secondary readings* Hunter Lewis (2009) *Are the Rich Necessary? — Part II*
- November 24, 2011 - Progress**
6. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 3 — III, IV.  
*Secondary readings* Gregory Clark (2007) *A Farewell to Alms* — Chapters 10, 11
- December 01, 2011 - Mercantile System**
7. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 4 — Introduction, Chapter I.  
*Secondary readings* J.M. Keynes (1936) *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* — Chapter 23
- December 08, 2011 - Protectionism**
8. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 4 — Chapters II, III.  
*Secondary readings* Max Corder (1993) *The Revival of Protectionism in Developed Countries*
- December 22, 2011 - Colonies**
9. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 4 — Chapter VII.  
*Secondary readings* J.S. Mill (1861) *Considerations on Representative Government* — Chapter XVIII
- January 12, 2012 - Defense and Justice**
10. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 5 — Chapter I: Parts I,II,III  
*Secondary readings* M.C. Mcguire (2007) *Economics of Defense in A Globalized World*
- January 19, 2012 - Public Debts**
11. **Primary readings:** A. Smith *W. of N.*: BOOK 5 — Chapter III  
*Secondary readings* V. Tanzi, L. Schuknecht (2000) *Public Spending in the 20th Century* — Chapter III
- January 26, 2012 - Commentaries 1**
12. **Primary readings:** Fleischacker (2004) — Chapter 2: Epistemology and Philosophy of Science.
- February 02, 2012 - Commentaries 2**
13. **Primary readings:** Fleischacker (2004) — Chapter 8: A Theory of Justice?
- February 09, 2012 - Commentaries 3**
14. **Primary readings:** A. Sen, *Adam Smith and the Contemporary World.*

## Main Bibliography

1. Fleischacker, Samuel. 2004. *On Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations : a Philosophical Companion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
2. Norlin, Kurt. 2002. 'Adam Smith.' In *Dictionary of Literary Biography. Vol 252: British Philosophers, 1500-1799*. Eds. Philip B. Dematteis and Peter S. Fosl. Farmington Hills, MI: The Gale Group (2002).
3. Smith, Adam<sup>1</sup>. 2010 [1776]. *The Wealth of Nations: The Economics Classic: A Selected Edition for the Contemporary Reader*. (Abridged edition). Ed. Tom Butler-Bowdon. Oxford: Capstone Publishing.
4. Wight, Jonathan B. 2001. *Saving Adam Smith: A Tale of Wealth, Transformation, and Virtue*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

<sup>1</sup>Any edition of *Wealth of Nations* will do for the course, as long as it contains all the texts listed in the schedule of classes.