



## The Authentic Adam Smith: His Life and Ideas

By James Buchan

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Adam Smith FRSA (16 June [O.S. 5 June] 1723 – 17 July 1790) was a Scottish economist, philosopher and author as well as a moral philosopher, a pioneer of political economy and a key figure during the Scottish Enlightenment, also known as "The Father of Economics" or "The Father of Capitalism". Smith wrote two classic works, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). The latter, often abbreviated as *The Wealth of Nations*, is *The Authentic Adam Smith: His Life and Ideas*. W. W. Norton & Company. ISBN 0-393-06121-3. Adam Smith, *Radical and Egalitarian: An Interpretation for the 21st Century*. Edinburgh University Press. ISBN 0-7486-2352-3. <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Adam-Smith-Radical-Egalitarian-Interpretation/dp/0748623523/>. In the insightful *The Authentic Adam Smith: His Life and Ideas*, Buchan frees Smith from current-day misrepresentations and resurrects him as a moral philosopher more concerned with ethical society than with pure economics. It's an engaging look at a man we thought we knew well. Buchan is the author of several previous books, including an intellectual history of 18th century Edinburgh, Scotland -- the milieu that fostered Smith, biographer James Boswell, and philosopher David Hume. In the current book he takes note of the severe limitations of the place and period. "Smith was brought

Adam Smith was a Scottish moral philosopher and political economist who achieved never-ending fame for his authorship of *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). While...<sup>Â</sup> The authentic Adam Smith: His life and ideas. New York: W.W. Norton. Google Scholar. Coase, R. H. (1976). Adam Smith's view of man. *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 19, 529-546. Google Scholar. Schneider, H. W. (Ed.). (1970). Adam Smith's moral and political philosophy. New York: Harper Torchbook. Google Scholar. Smith, A. (1759). Adam Smith FRSA (16 June [O.S. 5 June] 1723 - 17 July 1790) was a Scottish economist, philosopher and author as well as a moral philosopher, a pioneer of political economy and a key figure during the Scottish Enlightenment, also known as "The Father of Economics" or "The Father of Capitalism". Smith wrote two classic works, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). The latter, often abbreviated as *The Wealth of Nations*, is

The authentic Adam Smith: His life and ideas. J Buchan. The Theory of Moral Sentiments. Article. Jan 1987. Smith. View. Adam Smith's Views of Man. Article. Feb 1976. Adam Smith's two major works are based on apparently contradictory themes in human nature: noncooperative self-interest and other-regarding sympathy. These views are not contradictory if we distinguish impersonal market exchange and personal exchange. Noncooperative behavior in the former maximizes the gains from exchange, the basis of specialization and wealth creation.

Adam Smith entered a world that his reason and eloquence would later transform. He was baptized on June 5, 1723, in Kirkcaldy, Scotland. It's presumed that he was either born on that day or a day or two before. He would become the Father of Economics as well as one of history's most eloquent defenders of free markets. Although it provided for modest improvements in life and liberty over the feudalism that preceded it, it was a system rooted in error that stifled enterprise and treated individuals as pawns of the state. Mercantilist thinkers believed that the world's wealth was a fixed pie, giving rise to endless conflict between nations. Adam Smith (1723-1790) has been adopted by neoconservatives as the ideological father of unregulated business and small government. His "invisible hand" has become a commanding shorthand for politicians promoting laissez-faire economics, but Smith never used it in reference to free-market capitalism. Smith was a deeply moral man who considered himself a philosopher, not an economist. Drawing on twenty-five years of research, James Buchan renders an Adam Smith untainted by political and economic interests. This compelling narrative uncovers Smith's passionate commitment to develo