



Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the 21st Century

By Giovanni Arrighi

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In the late eighteenth century, the political economist Adam Smith predicted an eventual equalization of power between the West and the territories it had conquered. In this magisterial new work, Giovanni Arrighi shows how China's extraordinary rise invites us to reassess radically the conventional reading of *The Wealth of Nations*. He examines how recent US attempts to create the first truly global empire were conceived to counter China's spectacular economic success. Now America's disastrous failure in Iraq has made the People's Republic of China the true winner in the US War on Terror.

China may soon become again the kind of noncapitalist market economy that Smith described, an event that will reconfigure world trade and the global balance of power.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Arrighi is a student of the French historian Fernand Braudel, and the book has the range and ambition of Braudel’s work.”—*Financial Times*

“*Adam Smith in Beijing* follows, and completes, his previous volume *The Long Twentieth Century*. Together they constitute a stunning work of world history with theoretical and political intent whose intellectual roots lie in a mix of radical historiographical traditions.”—*Radical Philosophy*

“This book is an impressive result; it will have a major impact ... Arrighi argues his case in great detail—using an elaborate exegesis of *The Wealth of Nations*, which will send many readers back to that text in amazement.”—*Economic and Political Weekly*

Review

Arrighi leads us on a breathtaking tour of the history of world capitalism over the past three hundred years, and suggests where we may be headed in the future.

About the Author

Giovanni Arrighi (1937–2009) was Professor of Sociology at Johns Hopkins University. His books include *The Long Twentieth Century*, *Adam Smith in Beijing*, and, with Beverly Silver, *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System*. His work has appeared in many publications, including *New Left Review*—who published [an interview on his life-long intellectual trajectory](#) in March–April 2009, and [an obituary](#) in Nov–Dec 2009—and there are more accounts on his [memorial website](#).

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