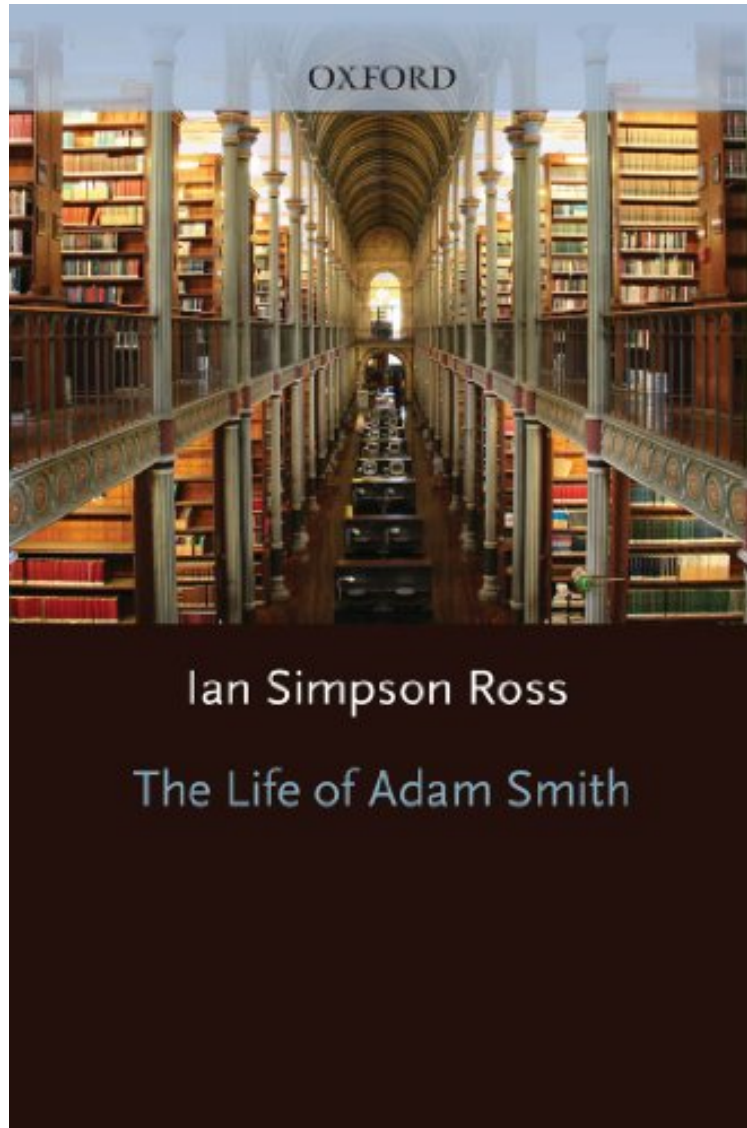


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## The Life of Adam Smith

*Ian Simpson Ross*

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**Ian Simpson Ross : The Life of Adam Smith** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Life of Adam Smith:

Adam Smith (1723-1790) is perceived, through his best-known book, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, as the founder of economics as a science. His thought has shaped modern ideas about the market economy and the role of the state in relation to it. Yet Smith needs to be recognized as more than this, as a man of

letters, moralist, historian, and critic, as well as an economist, if we are to get full value for his ideas and perspectives in contemporary applications. Ian Simpson Ross is the biographer of Lord Kames, Smith's patron, and of the Scottish poet William Dunbar, and has edited, with E C Mossner, Smith's correspondence for the Glasgow edition of his works. In this, the first full-scale biography of Adam Smith for a hundred years, Ross brings his subject in to historical light as a thinker and author by examining his family circumstance, education, career, and social and intellectual circle, including David Hume and Francois Quesnay, revealed through his correspondence, archival documents, the reports of contemporaries, and the record of his publications. Readers will meet Smith as a student at a lively Glasgow and sleepy Oxford; freelance lecturer in rhetoric; innovative university teacher; tutor travelling abroad with a Duke; acclaimed political economist; policy advisor to governments during and after the American crisis; and finally, if paradoxically in view of his tenets, a Commissioner of Customs coping with the free traders in the smuggling business. This is the life of a Scottish moral philosopher whose legacy of thought concerns and affects us all. Its lively and informed account will appeal to those interested in the social and intellectual milieu of the eighteenth century, and in Scottish history. Economists and philosophers will find much to read about the history of their disciplines, supported by full documentation.