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Introduction: Adam Smith: An Outline of Life, Times, and Legacy FREE

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[-] Abstract and Keywords

This introductory chapter provides a selective context outlined and what little information is available of his part of the Scottish Enlightenment is recognized with a discussion as well as an overview of what was distinctive about the Scottish Enlightenment more generally. The legacy and history of Adam Smith in the present day is sketched.

Keywords: [Adam Smith](#), [Scotland](#), [enlightenment](#), [economics](#)

The chapters that follow examine in depth the various facets of Adam Smith's life and work, providing some selective background context. As far as possible it is made that Smith is a 'product' of his times, in any sense of the word, and his social environment (in the widest sense).

Smith's Life (1723–90)

What follows can only claim to be an outline (for details see the [Handbook](#) with a different emphasis, Phillipson (2010) who reprises the [Handbook](#); see also Gavin Kennedy's chapter which provides a more detailed account). As has been the focus of many biographies, Smith is not a particularly well-documented man. Like David Hume (1711–76), he was a poor correspondent and like Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78)—as it is possible to guess from the more objective outlines of his life, though, are well-known.

Adam Smith was born in 1723 in Kirkcaldy on the east coast of Scotland but he died six months before the son Adam was born. His mother, Margaret, died at birth, never re-married, and Adam was a devoted son to his mother, predeceasing her son by just two years. Dugald Stewart, who was able to gain additional information from content that he received from his father, who received the 'tender solicitude of his surviving parents' attention that filial gratitude could dictate during the loss of his mother.

He attended the local school in Kirkcaldy from about the age of seven with the enthusiasm of a new master. Smith entered Glasgow University at the time not unusual—age of fourteen. His school-gain

effectively able to by-pass the early years in the curriculum Glasgow was chosen. There were drawbacks to St Andrews (some past association) and perhaps Edinburgh was a city he wished for—in 1759 Smith was less than complimentary—positively there may have been a relative (an aunt) in Glasgow would have been an important consideration for his mother (Smith in inferential evidential support). Ian Ross observes and proffers that as a reason to carry some weight in choice.

At Glasgow, Smith studied under some of the leading Scottish philosophers, Robert Simson, who was (or became) a leading authority on geometry (of his *Sectionum Conicarum*). Much later Smith called him a 'scoundrel' (TMS III.2.20: 124). On what we might loosely call the 'Scottish philosophy' by Robert Dick, using instruments that began with the work on Glasgow's part to elucidate the 'doctrine of bodies' as improved by Sir Isaac Newton' (Emerson 1995: 29). However, in *Moral Philosophy*, Francis Hutcheson. In a letter towards the end of his abilities and virtues as the professor of moral philosophy, Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS) Smith openly disagreed with Hutcheson's sense.

In 1740 Smith was awarded a Snell Scholarship to study at Balliol College, Oxford and Tom Campbell the author of Chapter 27 held the same position. According to the original bequest, was to enable its holder to study and join the Episcopal Church in Scotland but even before that time (Phillipson 2010: 58). Smith stayed at Oxford until 1746. There was no education on offer; indeed in a frequently quoted passage he made a scathing remark that at Oxford 'the greater part of the professors are altogether the pretence of teaching' (WN V.i.f: 761). In the absence of any presumption is that Smith spent his time at Oxford keeping up his skills and in developing, as Dugald Stewart conjectured particularly of the political history of (p. 3) mankind' (L. 1746). 'A decisive event' in this 'study' was Smith's reading of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*. When Smith first read Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* during his Oxford sojourn would seem difficult to deny.

On his return to Scotland in 1746 he returned to live with his father in Edinburgh where, thanks to the patronage of Henry Home as a judge as Lord Kames—he was invited to give a series of lectures (his is less secure) on law and philosophy. There is only ind

Phillipson claims that it is plausible that this period is w (Phillipson 2010: 106). What is certain is that Smith's lec continuing support of Home and, decisively, Archibald Argyll), Smith returned to Glasgow University.

He was appointed the Professor of Logic in 1751. There Smith was unanimous his rival (George Muirhead) was Languages and then Humanity at Glasgow (Ross 2010: dissertation (De Origine Idearum) (Scott 1937: 138 quot Confession of Faith, a document embodying Calvinist t maintained a formal link with the University which earl some bearing on Simson's father, as will be noted below signing this document, but it would be highly presumpt (if he has any such they would be of general Deistic sor and for Smith on religion generally see Gavin Kennedy' competition, Professor of Moral Philosophy. He succee to take on the Chair on Hutcheson's death, and whose s death. Smith held that post until he left academic life in

Smith professed on a wide variety of subjects. Beyond o discoursed on history, literature, and language and a se Lettres, have been discovered and published (see the d Swearingen, and Catherine Labio). Although in his will allow some essays to be published. Among these is an o and another on the 'History of Astronomy' (see Leonid the breadth of Smith's knowledge but also for his atten accounts to a basic human propensity to seek order. In 'universally acknowledged Reputation in letters and pa years in this University with great applause' (quoted in

(p. 4) Smith published two great books and the seeds o TMS appeared in 1759 and drew on his lectures. It went containing extensive revisions appeared in the year of h tells us is that Smith's commitment to the moral point c of WN, his second great book published in 1776. Althou student notes that have survived, that he had already c classrooms. This judgment is substantiated by the testi Millar (1735–1801) who recalls that Smith lectured on 't accumulation of property, in producing correspondent recorded by Stewart (Life I.19: 275)).

Smith left the University in 1764 for the more lucrative position of Tutor at Buccleuch; a position obtained through the influence of the University. The University expressed their 'sincere regret' at this event and extensive Learning did so much Honour to this Society. Smith's last contact because in 1787 he was elected Rector. Thanks he declares that he remembers his professorial life as 'the happiest and most honourable period of my life' (Corr 208: 252). On his return to France, settled in Toulouse but (typically) was the focus of concentrated research by Phillippe Masson at Geneva and met Voltaire who lived nearby at Ferney and through introductions, Smith visited Paris where he mingled with the French Enlightenment. Of particular note among those were Turgot (1727–81) and François Quesnay (1694–1774). Quesnay's school. We know Smith was familiar with the Physiocrats. *Physiocratie* (1767), was commended in WN as an 'ingenious system' (p. 5) we will note later, Smith was deeply critical of what he called 'the Physiocratic school' to claim that these meetings, and these writings, were conducted in good faith (Nerio Naldi's Chapter).

Smith's tutorship was cut short in 1766 by the unfortunate death of the Duke of Buccleuch since 1764. Despite the brevity of his responsibilities which relieved him thereafter of the necessity of having to travel to his mother's house in Kirkcaldy, where, Smith, speaking of his life for six years in great tranquillity and ... amused my mind with the *Wealth of Nations*' (Corr 208: 252). He moved to Edinburgh with the support of the Buccleuch connection, he was a student and Smith (p. 5) was able to establish himself in a substantial house (whither Hume had moved) but in the Canongate area he was conscientious in his fulfilment of its obligations to the Duke and disingenuousness, that he judged that it interrupted his

Among these pursuits were preparing further editions of the *Wealth of Nations* (of the latter was an extensive revision and the source of the chapters that follow). Smith may also at this time have been at the anvil; the one is a sort of Philosophical History of all Languages, Poetry and Eloquence; the other is a sort of theory and practice of the Law. In the end this defeated him as he intimated it would in the remarks that he has left intact the penultimate paragraph: 'to give 'an account of the general principles of law and government as they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society'

extent unknown, since Smith instructed his executors to the 'juvenile' (Corr 137: 168)) 'History of Astronomy' (H

As to Smith the man, his own reticence means relying p
'Life' is the most revealing. Stewart observes that his 'p
respect and attachment which followed him through al
peculiarities' which, reading between the lines, were pe
who were able to appreciate the 'inexpressible charm o
(Life V.12: 329). As Stewart continues to depict him, the
contained man, given to absent-mindedness and tacitu
Stewart can say is that 'there was nothing uncommon' ;
James Tassie 'conveys an exact idea of his profile'. Smit
friends) and, aside from Tassie's work, there only exists
Glasgow University is a nineteenth-century 'imaginatic

Scotland in the age of Smith

In what sort of society did Smith live? All ages are ages o
eighteenth-century Scotland. What follows is an indicat
claims that he was in some way a passive product of his
economic, religious, and educational institutions and co
between them.

(p. 6) The most momentous political events took place
that he lived with the consequences. The genesis lies in
(and VII) was, in effect, deposed by the English Parliam
time had its own Parliament but a succession of bad ha
Parliament's attempt to establish Scotland as a colonial
supplied a backcloth to the Union of the Parliaments in
some leading Scots, was the product of English chicane
difficulties is still a matter of academic (and political) di

The Treaty of Union gave the Scots as Scots little direct
per cent of the complement of the Commons). But the
system and their own form of church administration ar
meant that what mattered most immediately to most p
pivotal figures. On behalf of their patrons, such as nota
ran Scotland. Legal independence also reflected an inte
always had closer links with European/Roman systems

were founded, its lawyers were educated abroad, especially in Utrecht. Smith's own law lectures follow, albeit distinct

When Queen Anne (a daughter of James) died in 1714 the Hanoverian succession was far from a foregone conclusion. Hanover as the closest Protestant heir (he was married to a Catholic) was not the obvious choice. The Hanoverian succession that had particular political consequences in Scotland were Hanoverians. This meant more than supporting the Hanoverians, it also meant opposition to Jacobitism. The Jacobites were the leading political force in the eighteenth century there were regular flare-ups against the Hanoverians. It suggests that the Hanoverian succession was far from a foregone conclusion. The Union is not coterminous with support for the Hanoverians. The '15 and the '45. The '15 had widespread support, tapping into a perceived lack of benefits flowing from the Union. The Jacobites raised the army of the Young Pretender or Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745, 120 miles from London. Smith commented in his lectures (Lectures on Jurisprudence, 540). The initial military success of the Jacobites was not shared by the Scottish people and was soon reversed. After the battle of Culloden a deliberate Government policy to destroy the political structure of Scotland such as the Act of Parliament abolished 'heritable jurisdiction' and the rights to administer justice (including the power to punish) were abolished by the Treaty of Union but were nonetheless overturned on the Jacobite rebellion to raise an 'army' from their vassals (Shaw 1983: 169). Smith's comments in WN (III.iv.8: 416) in the context of an explanation of the

One of the motives behind the Union was the need for a strong central government. Eventually, by about mid-century, the Union began to take on a new character (Devine 1985). The growth of Glasgow was the most remarkable feature of the eighteenth century (roughly) 17,000 when Smith was a student to over 42,000 by the end of the century. Numbers from the rural Western Highlands as a process of enclosure and the Highland Clearances caused some commentators to speculate that Smith's 'theory of the division of labour' among Scottish literati to the mode subsistence, as William Robertson (1762: 823), was stimulated by the rapidity of socio-economic change. The chief industry, the production of textiles, especially linen, was the chief industry. The development was the growth in the tobacco trade as it was the chief industry of a number of the Glasgow 'tobacco lords'. He participated in the tobacco trade. Andrew Cochran, one of these 'lords' (Sher 1995: 335f) was a prominent figure. A tendency of merchants to have the ambition of becoming landed gentry was a feature of the activities of a number of these tobacco merchants such as James Buchanan. To still extant Glasgow street names (Devine 1975: 27)).

The development of 'heavier' industry like mining, chequer of the century and it is frequently noted that Smith (2005: 132). What urbanization and textile production did and financial. Transportation was by horse (Smith rode efficient coach service between Edinburgh and London transport in bulk was by boat and to get from Glasgow a hazardous voyage via the Pentland Firth (well over 600 miles in the east and the Clyde in the west was started in 1768 an engineering achievement but clearly took extensive capital) was the development of a banking system. The Bank of Scotland established in 1727 and the British Linen Company (BLC) were of them viable. One of the problems faced by the shareholders was confidence caused by the crash of the Ayr Bank in 1772. ('projectors') banking and financial regulation are found

(p. 8) As mentioned above, the Union left intact the 1690 officially sanctioned form of Church government in Scotland. Westminster Confession was made the test of orthodoxy. In 1696 a 19-year-old student Thomas Aikenhead was executed. It lasted into the eighteenth century with attempts to reform. John Simson (father of Robert) in 1717 and again in 1727 doctrine, and politics—a cocktail that affected more than the foot (at least at elite level). The loss of a Parliament at 1707 equivalent to a national debating forum in the form of the Scottish Parliament. It was the focus of political attention and this eventually helped Scottish Enlightenment to come to some sort of rapprochement. Robertson, Principal of Edinburgh University (1762–93) in 1762 (succeeded by another professor—Alexander Gerard *Essay on Taste*). The shift this represented can be gauged as denounced in the Assembly for their 'impious and infidel

Robertson was a leading figure in the 'Moderate' movement. The minded 'modernizers' managed to make itself the dominant. Moderates to oversee the appointment of ministers sympathetic outlook suited to the political 'management' of Scotland. religious beliefs were insincere even if their seeming erudition relative effacing of hellfire sermonizing prompted an even. the Moderates were the 'Enlightenment' party. With the Moderates the Enlightenment in Scotland very different from that in England was friendly with the leading Moderates and this circle

The view of Moderates like Robertson and Adam Ferguson. Many Smith scholars enlist him, with varying degrees of religious views are enigmatic (see Ross 2010: 432) and (

With the exception of Hume and law-lords like Kames, Smith, university professors. For a country of Scotland' St Andrews, Glasgow, and Kings College Aberdeen, which Marischal College Aberdeen, which were Reformation universities was to turn out ministers of religion and there, here, too, there was change. We have already mentioned were officially recognized in Edinburgh (1740) and Glasgow though formally part of the curriculum, had become more recognized need to address the demands of societal change the same class for all its subjects throughout its four years retained it through the century). A second change was that Glasgow was an important pioneer and his personal influence the 'father of the Scottish Enlightenment'. He was a key as 'the never to be forgotten Dr. Hutcheson' (Corr 274: 'moral sense', as a constitutive part of human nature (in opposition to all rationalist and egoistic accounts of morality).

The practical aspect of learning was clearly important. In law and medicine there was expansion in subjects like chemistry, agricultural improvement and 'industry'. For example, on the chemistry of fertilizers and gave special lectures on his own where he put his own principles into practice (Dorland's application of chemistry to linen-bleaching (Guthrie 1996). Intellectual developments (in which Cullen also made his notable was the speed with which Newton's system was adopted himself gave the Glasgow graduate Colin McLaurin—an alumnus for his appointment at Edinburgh in 1725 (Chitnis 1976: 10).

As part of the 'system', university appointments were, in fact. The apparently simple fact that the theorists of the Scottish professors is *prima facie* evidence that in this system nepotism and cronyism was present, little was to be gained reason than that they would not attract students to pay less compared favourably to Oxford).

Implicit in much of the above is the interweaving nature of the academy. These can be characterized as interwoven

across the board. This involvement was embodied in the clubs that were established as they formed a point of convergence for the 'improving' gentry (Phillipson 1973). For example, the Edinburgh Society for the Encouraging of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, a number of key social theorists like Smith, Hume, Kames, and Hutcheson, by nature and reputation, Smith was an active member of the club. He mentioned the Glasgow Literary club with its mix of 'to

(p. 10) It is instructive that a number of these clubs were mentioned in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* were reprinted quickly in *The Edinburgh Review* (1789: 235). What was attractive in these publications was the 'urbanity' of Ramsay, one of their contemporaries, they 'descanted' on the 'those lesser duties of life which former divines and moralists have thought those who are engaged in such a concern with social propriety was the corollary of 'urbanity' (and the related 'civility') became positively valued (see Boyd's chapter). Any reader of TMS cannot but be aware of Smith and his delineation of elaborate social interactions so as to achieve a 'concord' of sentiments (TMS I.i.4.7–9: 22–3). These aspects are discussed in the chapters, especially in Part Three. In summary, it is not surprising that state institutions, informal societies, and civic consciousness have come to characterize a 'civil society'.

The Enlightenment: Scotland and the West

Smith is unquestionably a member of what Peter Gay called the Scottish Enlightenment was a self-conscious movement. To a significant extent, it was against a stringent reading that would deny the appropriate role of the state (Pocock 1999, Robertson 2005, Sher 2006, and Withers 2006). The participants—referred to variously as *philosophes*, the 'philosophical' members of the educated stratum of society. In Scotland, as we have seen, were lawyers, doctors, and university professors and this is not to say that, for example, were also professors). For all its popular associations, it was not this regard something of an outlier, since with one or two exceptions, the men of letters or of independent means.

Nor was the Enlightenment a localized affair. There were similar movements in America. The *litterati* genuinely were participants in an international dialogue. The same debates. One form of this dialogue was direct communication with Rousseau by reviewing his *Discourse on Inequality* for t

EPS) (see Dennis Rasmussen below). A second form of and translations. For example, the Italians typically kne days Smith had for a time (1758–60) responsibility for th seven volumes of Diderot's *Encyclopedie* (Scott 1937: 1

(p. 11) If we turn to the core concerns of these self-cons a helpful clue. Light implied that earlier times were con contrast between light and dark is the contrast between prejudice, and superstition. Hence any institutions such that still existed were to be opposed as relics, as creatu subscription to this agenda (see Samuel Fleischacker b Even though Smith as a writer was not given to express 451), was unambiguous in his deprecation of judicial cr 120) and in his condemnation of infanticide (TMS V.2.1. possible limits to Smith's sympathy (a topic also explor did blazon his Enlightenment credentials as in his open enthusiasm and superstition' (WN V.i.g.14: 796).

Central to the lifting of darkness was the light shone by Newton. Newton was *the* hero of the Enlightenment. To within one comprehensive schema an explanation, der gravity), of the range of natural phenomena, from the c and decisively these laws were proved to be right. New Descartes, elongated at the poles and flat at the equato expeditions to Lapland and the Equator. His prediction borne out by its (Halley's Comet) arrival in 1758. Well b especially in Scotland.

One hallmark of Newton's status was that to liken some compliment. For example, John Millar in his *Historical economy*' because he had discovered the principles of Enlightenment enthusiasm and in his case this was bac Leonidas Montes' chapter below). In the posthumous (Newton's system was 'the greatest and most admirable IV: 67) and his principles 'have a degree of firmness and system' (HA IV: 76). Though this declaration has been s

In his rhetoric lectures (on which see Jan Swearingen's termed the didactical mode, a style of writing as the 'Ne principles known or proved in the beginning, from whe connecting altogether by the same chain' (LRBL ii.134:

especially in contrast to its chief alternative—the Aristotelian view of every phenomenon. Because it is the most philosophic philosophy’ it is sufficient reason to pursue it. Some (p. 100) see Newtonianism. Norriss Hetherington (1983: 487), for example, sees Smith's effort to discover general laws of economics as a kind of motion and David Raphael (1979: 88) judges that ‘Smith's theory of social cohesion and social balance’. Others have been less sympathetic though this is largely because of their more historically minded perspective (see for example Schliesser 2005; Montesquieu 2002). As already noted, Smith himself is not very helpful—and does not have any references to Newton in his two major works.

The Scots for their part are believers in progress. This belief was the driving force behind the writing of the Scottish Enlightenment was of this cast (E. J. Hume). Smith's work as his adoption of the so-called ‘four stages of progress’ (see Michael Amrozowicz, Fabrizio Simon, and Maureen Hamlin). The Enlightenment's attitude to the past has been largely negative, ‘unhistorical’ ((Collingwood 1946) is a classic statement of this attitude (1978). Others have been more sympathetic seeing in the Enlightenment including all of humanity and all facets of humanity in its progress (1963).

In Smith and his compatriots this twin-track universalism does not do. They do maintain that it has advanced across a wide front and that the main ingredient in this advance, they are less confident than Joseph Priestley, that it is automatic and necessarily always present as a factor accounting for this less than wholehearted approval. Smith's subscription to the ‘law of the market’ (Forbes 1954). Smith's subscription to the ‘law of the market’ (hand’ is but one manifestation) reveals his awareness of the tension between the particular action of individual agents and the general trend of the collapse of the power base of the ‘landed proprietors’ and the rise of foreign commerce’ as it changed the ‘state of property’.

‘Property’ is crucial to the ‘four stages’ theory, and ‘man's progress’ is due to the role of social habits or customs. Here the Scots do not differ from Montesquieu's fulsome in their praise of his *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), though they do differ in his climate theory. Smith (typically) is sparing in his public acknowledgments that he had a close knowledge of the work. What he does say is ‘un esprit général’ (Montesquieu 1989:19, 4: 310). This ‘general spirit’ is the ‘men’ and which impact differently on different nations.

of ‘discourses.’ It speaks both the language of natural law and the language of political economy. Smith's thought contains both registers and much interplay, emphasizing differing aspects.

The natural law discourse stems ultimately from the system of natural law that was central to Scottish legal education, which Smith both received and re-formulated, post-Reformation, accounts of Natural Law (notably James Dalrymple, Lord Stair's *Institutions* (1681) picked out in this regard by Smith (LJB 1.3: 397–8)—we can compare this to the work of Hugo Grotius and Pufendorf (*On the Law on Nature and Nations* (1672) which was a central place in University curricula; with Scotland no exception). John Carmichael, the first Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, wrote *Man and Citizen* (1673), that his successor Francis Hutcheson (*Philosophy* (1747), to be ‘by far the best’ (Hutcheson 2002) outlines. As subsequent chapters will see, Smith was to recast this tradition along what may be called modern natural law.

But for all its obvious importance, the jurisprudentialist tradition's venerable vocabulary, with its roots in Aristotle, spoke to a different expression of human nature (see now classic exposition of this input with the articulation of ‘republican’ thought and a key term of art). Inherent in this tradition was a critical preoccupation with private gain and thus possessing the ‘public good’. This dimension gained a new lease of life as the tradition unfolded to produce a commercial society, where, as Smith wrote of the ‘merchant’ (WN I.iv.1: 37), a statement seized upon by Neohumanists (see Spencer Pack's chapter). Smith's relationship to this tradition is explored in the chapters by Spiros Tegos

Legacy and reputation

Aside from the relative weight to be attributed to the two traditions (Pocock 1983: 248) there is a more infamous interpretation of Smith's moral philosophy as expressed in TMS (p. 14) and his label of ‘Das Adam Smith Problem’ (ASP). While its initiation was between the supposed sympathetic altruism of TMS and the self-interest of WN has been discredited, the relationship itself continues to be a ‘new’ ASP, see e.g. Otteson 2002; Montes 2004). What first made Smith ‘the economist’, the author of WN, had overshadowed his moral philosophy.

recent treatments which take fully on board, even when WN in any assessment of Smith.

Smith is, and always will be, indelibly associated with 'e straightforwardly assimilable into the present practice' Aspromourgos, and Nerio Naldi demonstrate in their c 'problematics' are recognizable. His own wider context Paganelli in her contribution to that Part.

Smith the economist was neither a lone voice nor with *Discourses* (1752) contained important and influential e an uncharacteristic acknowledgement of the work of ot essays that commerce gradually introduced good gove that compliment to another Scottish (though exiled as a This was not from ignorance since Smith says in a letter has confuted 'every false principle in it' (Corr 132: 164). also expressing a debt to Hume, and sharing some grou difference with its supposition that at the head of gover vicissitudes of manners and innovations, by their natur any interest within the commonwealth' (Steuart 1966: I French Physiocrats. As we noted earlier, Smith met its l when he was in Paris. They undoubtedly made an impr dismissal of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants a

As this suggests, WN is a notable work of polemics. Of a heaviest treatment. He does not mince his words. Its er malignant' (WN IV.vii.c.56: 610); it is ill-conceived and in of its inhabitants. Smith is not a negative figure; he mak of the American colonies but he is not sanguine that his complicated relation to 'reform', see David Levy and Sa economics' frequently attached to Smith reflects the su commitment to 'natural liberty' where everyman is 'lef way', with its corollary that the 'sovereign is completely industry of private people' (which is just as well since e wisdom or knowledge'), constitutes perhaps its basic te the seemingly limited tasks of external defence, interna judgement that the pursuit of their own interests by ind than one emanating from some predesigned aspiratio Smith's chapter). Of course this is a gross simplification concluding chapter of this volume. Liberty is itself a 'blk

good. What government does properly, via the exact ad
liberty' to function. It is morally wrong to use the power
employment or dress (WN II.iii. 36: 346; cf. IV.vii.c.87: 6
restricted (as with bank lending). Nor is he above criticism
'market'. His well-known judgement of merchants belittles
of others while being silent on the 'pernicious effects' of
as they contrive to raise prices (WN I.x.c.27: 145), indeed
the publick' (WN I.xi.p.10: 267). Since unintended outcomes
responsibilities include ameliorating both the material and
this is Smith's argument for the provision of education

WN was rapidly translated—it appeared in Danish, French,
1790 (Campbell and Skinner 1985: 168). The initial reception
shortly before his death exclaimed his delight (Corr 150
of pin-making) were reproduced. Although there is dispute
depth of WN's penetration in the reading public (for a century
percolate into the political, policy sphere. Prime Minister
in WN that an explanation has been given as to how capitalism
'mistaken or mischievous policy'; it is, indeed, Smith well
connected with the history of commerce or systems of
this, it would be a mistake to assume Smith's 'impact' was
cited Smith in Parliament in 1795 in support of a bill for
his work was rapidly taken up by Thomas Paine and others
of this was that in the early nineteenth century Smith was
century that he was criticized from the Left because he
competition and self-interest.

The history of TMS is far less eventful. As Glenn Moroy
of WN, the same anniversary had not been celebrated for
contrast was marked by conferences in Glasgow and Berlin
ignored when it first appeared. Across the Enlightenment
century translations into French and German. Although
nineteenth century, its impact was muted. In Britain, neither
approaches—Utilitarianism and Idealism—paid it much
refer to him though he does receive a careful and respectful
(1886) even if the concluding assessment is lukewarm (1906: 5ff).
selects Hume as his representative target for his critique
on evolutionists) (1906: 5ff). On the continent, Kant's systematic
heteronomous reliance on 'experience', and thus 'sentimental'
indeed the only reference to Smith in Kant's *Metaphysics*

similarly, in his *History of Philosophy* lectures (published by the 'Scottish School' but that is in virtue of his work as an economist rather than Hume or Smith. Although, in contrast, Auguste Comte singled out HA rather than TMS for particular mention

Walter Bagehot, in a not unkind if rather patronizing essay, judged to be of 'inconsiderable philosophical value' (the same judgement is repeated 'several times') (Bagehot 1965: 91, 101). A brief volume on Smith's ethics that 'his contribution to ethics ... was unimportant' (Haldane 1994: 101). In his book, Hector Macpherson still judged that TMS' 'philosophy was unimportant' (Macpherson 1962: II, 65). In his compendious *The Scottish Philosophers* (1962) seeing William Hamilton's development of Reid as the 'most important' he concludes it is likely now to be read for its style rather than its content. A more informed account is by L.A. Selby-Bigge, who included a chapter on Smith (1897). While John Rae's *Life* (1895) and W. Scott's *Smith's Economics* (1904) scholarship neither indulged in any evaluative discussion

Such discussion in any detailed length had to await Tom Sargent's chapter (1971) (his chapter in this Handbook revisits some of its points) to prompting, and then increasing, serious interest in TMS's works of 1976. In the wake of the Glasgow edition of 1976, The Glasgow publication in definitive edition of discovered the breadth of Smith's interests to scholarly notice to compare

This Handbook aims to reflect, and embody, the depth of scholarship responsible for, in Alfred Marshall's judgement, 'the greatest work of the century' (1890: 55) (only a notch or two down from Thomas Buckle's 'most important book ever written' (Buckle 1904: III, 315)) he was an informed and creative historian, an attentive and insightful philosopher of culture. His view of the world, and of human behaviour, in his own son of his time he was also a teacher for future generations. The materials in this volume provide the materials to appreciate the v

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Notes:

(1) It is an exaggeration to see Stair as a key factor in Smith's thought (MacCormick 1982). Indeed, there is little evidence of Stair's influence on Smith's thought (for Smith's intellectual hinterland, see Chapter 2).

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