

Commerce and Manners in Edmund Burke's Political Economy

Although many of Edmund Burke's speeches and writings contain prominent economic dimensions, his economic thought seldom receives the attention it warrants. *Commerce and Manners in Edmund Burke's Political Economy* stands as the most comprehensive study to date of this fascinating subject. In addition to providing rigorous textual analysis, Collins unearths previously unpublished manuscripts and employs empirical data to set out a rich historical and theoretical context for Burke's economic beliefs. Collins integrates Burke's reflections on trade, taxation, and revenue within his understanding of the limits of reason and his broader conception of empire. Such reflections demonstrate the ways that commerce, if properly managed, could be an instrument for both public prosperity and imperial prestige. More important, *Commerce and Manners in Edmund Burke's Political Economy* raises timely ethical questions about capitalism and its limits. In Burke's judgment, civilizations cannot endure on transactional exchange alone, and markets require ethical preconditions. There is a grace to life that cannot be bought.

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