

## Commerce and Peace in the Enlightenment

For many Enlightenment thinkers, discerning the relationship between commerce and peace was the central issue of modern politics. The logic of commerce seemed to require European states and empires to learn how to behave in more peaceful, self-limiting ways. However, as the fate of nations came to depend on the flux of markets, it became difficult to see how their race for prosperity could ever be fully disentangled from their struggle for power. On the contrary, it became easy to see how this entanglement could produce catastrophic results. This volume showcases the variety and the depth of approaches to economic rivalry and the rise of public finance that characterized Enlightenment discussions of international politics. It presents a fundamental reassessment of these debates about “perpetual peace” and their legacy in the history of political thought.

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For István Hont (1947–2013)

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