

Anniversary Exhibition

Celebrating 250 Years of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*

— A Message from the Library —

This year marks a monumental milestone: 250 years since *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, the magnum opus of Adam Smith, the father of economics, was published in London in 1776. In this commemorative year, we are profoundly honored to present a rare and precious first edition (two volumes) recently added to our collection.

These volumes hold a deeply significant connection to our university. The late Professor Emeritus Toshio Ofuchi (1926–2006) discovered this masterpiece in Kanda-Jimbocho's antiquarian book district in 1982 and cherished it throughout his lifetime. Following his passing, these volumes were generously donated to Nihon University College of International Relations by his son, Specially Appointed Professor Mitsuhiro Ofuchi, and were officially transferred to the College of Law in April 2025 for further academic utilization. Handed down across generations, they now stand as a spiritual cornerstone of economic research at our institution.

At the time of transfer, the volumes were in a critical state of deterioration due to age. To preserve them for future generations, the library undertook a full conservation treatment involving “disassembly”—carefully separating the covers and spines. While restored books are normally reassembled, this exhibition takes the bold step of displaying them in this temporary “disassembled state,” prior to their final rebinding.

This unique approach offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to observe the late 18th-century bookbinding techniques and internal structures inherently hidden within a bound book. Due to the delicate nature of these rare volumes, this exhibition will run for only two weeks. We invite you to experience this exclusive, unseen aspect of the first edition — a truly irreplaceable encounter available only now.

Through this exhibition, we hope you will feel the profound weight of Adam Smith's ideas, alongside the enduring bonds between people and scholarship forged by a single rare book. In closing, we express our deepest gratitude to the Ofuchi family, the College of International Relations, and everyone who made this acquisition possible.

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