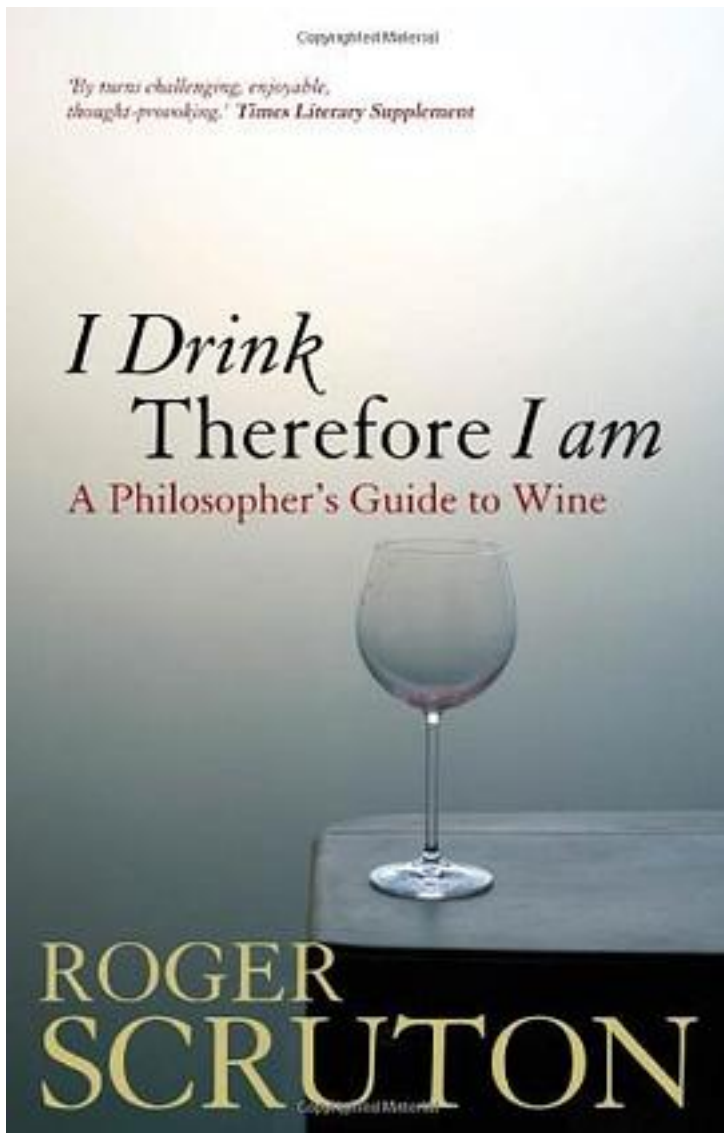


I Drink Therefore I Am



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Here Scruton explains the connection between good wine and serious thought with a heady mix of humour and philosophy. The ancients had a solution to the alcohol problem, which was to wrap the drink in religious rituals, to treat it as the incarnation of a god, and to marginalize disruptive behaviour as the god's doing, not the worshipper's. Gradually, under the discipline of ritual, prayer and theology, wine was tamed from its orgiastic origins to become a solemn libation to the Olympians and then the Christian Eucharist - that brief encounter with salvation which has reconciliation as its goal. We are familiar with the medical opinion that a daily glass of wine is good for the health and also the rival opinion that any more than a glass or two will set us on the road to ruin. Whether or not good for the body, Scruton argues, wine, drunk in the right frame of mind, is definitely good for the soul. And there is no better accompaniment to wine than philosophy. By thinking with wine, you can learn not only to drink in thoughts but to think in draughts. In vino veritas.

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