

TITLE:

The Scottish Enlightenment: How Faith and Beauty born Science and Capitalism

AUTHOR:

Ondřej Čapek

DEPARTMENT:

Social Sciences and Philosophy Department, Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague

SUPERVISOR:

doc. Karel Thein, PhD.

ABSTRACT:

Thesis is focused on the Scottish Enlightenment (1707 - 1789), which is characterized as the period of economic prosperity based on the massive development of agriculture, education and trade inside the nascent British Empire. The emergence of individualism and the optimistic view of human nature are typical for the period. The thesis investigates the ancient roots of individualism (Plato, Stoicism) and European individualistic authors: Machiavelli, Montesquieu and Mandeville. The influence of the works of Isaac Newton on new methodology of social sciences is analyzed in details. Analysis of new social sciences is devoted to the theory of social stages, economics, jurisprudence and historiographical revolution in Scotland, with an emphasis on the description of a new approach of data mining inspired by Francis Bacon. The work also deals with Shaftesbury, Locke and especially Ferguson's aesthetic theory and the theory of moral sentiments. Both theories are built on the intersection of two philosophical approaches - empirical position and Platonism. Thesis shows their impact on the Adam Smith's writings. The second part of the thesis is devoted to a comprehensive evaluation of the work of Adam Smith, trying to explain his persistent influence and put his economic work (Wealth of Nations and recorded lectures) in the framework of Smith's moral philosophy. The intention is to present Smith as the complex author by focus on his philosophical works: on the manner of perception and sensations and Smith's theory of language.

KEYWORDS:

Scottish Enlightenment, Adam Smith, history of ideas, methodology of economics, modern individualism