

Reception of the Scottish Enlightenment in Germany

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Reception of the Scottish Enlightenment in Germany: Six Significant Translations, 1755–1782

*Heiner F. Klemme,
Editor*

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著者:Klemme, Heiner F.

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Scottish philosophy had a decisive impact in the 18th century, not only on the English-speaking world but also on the Enlightenment in central Europe. That impact

was perhaps most greatly felt in Germany, where the advancement of Scottish moral sense philosophy, Hume's Scepticism and Common Sense philosophy was marked by a series of important translations. Six of the most significant texts, most of them very rare today, are reprinted here. Although some of the works by Scottish philosophers were known and discussed before the death of Christian Wolff, their importance increased considerably after the decline of German school metaphysics around the middle of the century. English at that time was less widely known, so the German editions became highly influential. The translations were often by important German Enlightenment thinkers and philosophers such as Lessing and Christian Garve, and several were provided with interesting introductions and commentaries by their translators and editions. In the case of Hume's first "Enquiry", the editor Johann Georg Sulzer, an adherent of Wolffian metaphysics, commented extensively on Hume's philosophy. It was this translation that famously woke Kant from his "dogmatic slumber".

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