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Discussion paper

# Samuel Pufendorf and Ludvig Holberg on Political Economy

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# Samuel Pufendorf and Ludvig Holberg on Political Economy

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**Samuel Pufendorf**



**Ludvig Holberg**

## Introduction

My interest in the history of economic thought goes several decades back. My studies in the Dano-Norwegian history of economic thought brought me to Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754). As many of you are aware of Holberg is known in the Nordic countries as a writer of comedies, an important representative of the Nordic Enlightenment and a creator of modern Dano-Norwegian letters. Only rarely is he known as an historian, jurist or political economist. My investigation into Holberg's writings on political economy brought me to his *Naturens og Folkerettens Kundskab* (The Knowledge of Natural and International law). This book has substantial tracts of political economy. On the cover of the first edition from 1715 it says, "drawn from the works of the most distinguished jurists, in particular Grotius, Pufendorf and Thomasius". It turned out that Samuel Pufendorf (1632-94) was his primary source. However, I had not heard the name and neither had my colleagues.

The aim of this presentation is first to briefly outline Pufendorf's contribution to natural law and political economy, the diffusion of his ideas and the influence he had on his successors.

Thereafter to give a presentation of Holberg's life, his discovery of Pufendorf and how he used his ideas in his own writings on both history and political economy.

Finally, to discuss Holberg as a political economist and his influence on the development of political economy in Denmark-Norway.

## Samuel Pufendorf - A Champion of the Enlightenment

Pufendorf was born in a rural village in Saxony in 1632. He grew up during the violence of *The Thirty Years War*. The insecurity of the times set its imprint on him for the rest of his life. To live in peace was the best condition of men.

In the years 1650-57 he studied at the universities of Leipzig and Jena. His mentor at Jena, professor Eberhard Weigel (1625-1699), introduced him to the methods of René Descartes (1596-1650) and the natural law works of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). On completion of his studies he was not able to find work close to home but he secured a post as tutor for the children of the Swedish envoy at the court in Copenhagen.

His arrival in the summer of 1658 could not have been more inconvenient. The Swedish army besieged the city and Pufendorf was immediately arrested, accused of being a spy. Despite miserable conditions in a cell at the Kastele fortress, he managed to compose, based on his university studies a manuscript on natural law which included political economy.

After 8 months, he was released and went to Leiden with the envoy's family. Here he matriculated at the university and continued his studies. In 1660, he published his manuscript as *Elementorum Jurisprudentiae Universalis* (Elements of Universal Jurisprudence). It became an immediate success and earned him a position as professor of Natural Law at University of Heidelberg.

In this academic position he taught, did research and wrote. But he also had the opportunity to work as a consultant to the Prince Elector. In 1665, a satisfying event took place and he married the widow Katharina Elisabetha. She brought with her, into what became a happy marriage, one daughter, and together they had two. He published his historical and political work *De Statu Imperii Germanici* (On the Constitution of the German Empire) in 1667.

In 1668, Pufendorf accepted an offer to become Professor Primarius of Natural Law at the newly established University of Lund. Here he published in 1672 his major natural law works *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* (The Law of Nature and Nations) in eight books. A year after, an abridged 'student edition' *De Officio Hominis et Civis* (The Duty of Man and Citizen) appeared.

A new war closed the university in 1677 and Pufendorf moved to Stockholm and became royal historiographer and counsellor at the court. Here he published numerous books on the history of the Swedish kings and one essay on religion. His encyclopaedic historical work *Einleitung Zu Historie der Vornehmsten Reiche und Staaten so itziger Zeit in Europa sich befinden* (Introduction to the history of the principle realms and states of Europe to the present time), in which he used the archives, was published in the years 1682-86. It became a standard historical work across Europe.

In 1686, he moved again and this time to Berlin where he took up the same position at the court of Brandenburg-Prussia. He continued publishing history books and a further essay on religion. On a strenuous return journey from Stockholm, where he had been elevated into the Swedish aristocracy as a baron, he became ill and died in 1694. Samuel Pufendorf is entombed in the St. Nicolaikirche in Berlin.

Pufendorf became a champion of the Enlightenment through his efforts to better life, not only for himself and his family, but through his work and writings for all people. His tools

were his academic writings, his teaching of students, his tutoring of prospective civil servants, and his work as a counsellor to three important enlightened Protestant state leaders. His life works made him the most read scholar in Europe in the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## The Diffusion of Pufendorf's Natural Law

In his natural law works Pufendorf distinguishes between three sciences. 1. Natural law, which is common to all men and derived from reason alone. 2. Civil law, which is valid only in an individual state. 3. Moral theology, dictates of which God has given to Christians in the Holy Scripture. He based his natural law on the dignity of man, human reason, and man's free choice. Natural law encompasses ethics, jurisprudence, government and political economy.

Hugo Grotius had only a few paragraphs of political economy in his great natural law work *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (On the Law of War and Peace). These Pufendorf expanded and made political economy an integral part of natural law. Although his political economy is integrated into a totality, we find his doctrines of political economy in distinct parts. The table below shows where these subjects can be found in Pufendorf's natural law texts, that is his theories of human behaviour, of property, of value and money, his foundation of states and councils, and finally his division of state powers and taxation.

Tab. Political economy in Pufendorf's natural law works

<i>Topics/Books</i>	<i>Elementorum Jurisprudentiae Universalis</i>	<i>De Jure Naturae et Gentium</i>	<i>De Officio Hominis et Civis</i>
Theory of Human Behaviour	Book I. Def. I & III Book II. Obs. I, IV	Book I. i-iv. Book II. i-iv. Book III. i-ii.	Book I. Ch. 1-7
Theory of Property & Four-Stages Theory	Book I. Def. V	Book IV. iii-v. Book V. v.	Book I. Ch.12,13
Theory of Value and Money	Book I. Def. X	Book VI. iii, v, vii-viii.	Book I. Ch. 14, 15
Foundation of States and Councils	Book II. Obs. V	Book VII. i-ii.	Book II. Ch. 5-9
Division of State Powers and Taxation		Book VII. iv-v. Book VIII. iv-v. Book V. x.	Book II. Ch. 11, 12

## A summary of Pufendorf's political economy

### A theory of human behaviour

The foundation of his political economy is his theory of human behaviour. Man has a supreme dignity, is endowed with a distinctive light of intelligence, and the use of reason to evaluate and make choices. Man's ability to distinguish between right and wrong is not innate, contrary to what both the Catholic and the Protestant church maintained. This ability is found in the condition of man, together with the driving forces, or attributes, behind human action. Pufendorf claims that **self-interest is the strongest driving force in human behaviour**. In addition, man is born to cooperate with other men, therefore he has another driving force; he must be sociable. **This sociability**, must be cultivated.

### **A theory of property**

Private property is developed from a stage where everything was held in common. It assumes an act of man and an agreement among men. The process in which private property was developed is genuinely historical. It was progressively introduced, when men under the pressure of a growing population and depleted natural resources moved from one stage of economic development to the next. A stage of gathering and hunting, a stage of herding, a stage of agriculture and finally a commercial society. The commercial society involved trade, growth of markets, creation of prices, introduction of money and the advances of civilization.

### **A theory of value, money and trade**

With private ownership in a commercial society, some people had goods they did not need and, at the same time, they wanted goods that were in other people's possession. Therefore, they traded and prices were needed. The foundation of price is aptitude (utility) and scarcity. The market price is determined by the interactions of demand and supply. Human motives that determine demand are discussed in some details. So is the cost of production and other factors that determine the supply. He discusses changes in price when shifts in demand and supply occur. Finally, he brings up for discussion the information issue.

The origin of money, money and commerce, and whether governments can decide the value of money are discussed. Debasement of money is against natural law. Furthermore, he discusses different forms of monopolies and the role of interest rates.

### **A theory of the foundation of states**

Man, by nature, loves himself more than society. Man enters into a state by his free will to avoid greater evils. States are therefore established to gain security and protection from the evil or wickedness of men. Two agreements, one of association and one of subjection, and one decree in between, which decided the form of government, are needed to create a state. The agreement of subjection between rulers and the ruled is required in all forms of government.

If the power of the state is expressed through a council there must be an agreement, right from the beginning about how to reach decisions. In this connection, he discusses several voting procedures: veto rights, unanimity versus simple majority, weighted voting, qualified majorities, equalities of votes and the paradox of voting. He is aware of the possibility that voting agendas can be manipulated.

### **The division of state powers, and principles of taxation.**

A state is understood to have one will. A unified will can only be produced by having all submitting their will to that of one man, or a council, in whom the supreme sovereignty has been vested. It is the duty of the supreme sovereign, to make clear and prescribe for the citizens what can be done and what should be avoided.

He discusses the division of the highest power of the state, the legislative, the punitive, the judicial, to hire magistrate, to wage war and declare peace and the power to levy taxes. He discusses three forms of states, democracy, aristocracy and monarchy and their advantages and disadvantages. He warns against the evils of corruption.

The business of a state has expenses. The duties of the Sovereign with respect to the levy of taxes and his economic responsibilities are emphasized. Budget discipline are stressed, attention is given to how taxes are levied and collected.

## **De Officio an international bestseller**

Pufendorf's 'student edition' *De Officio* hit the market at the right time and became an international bestseller. It was translated into nine European languages, printed in many editions and sold in thousands of copies. His popularity and fame also led to the translations of his main work *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* into four European languages. It found a place in most university libraries. The translation into local languages of *De Officio* brought it also into the small libraries of ordinary people. An example, the Norwegian professor Francis Bull (1916:234-35) investigated 58 small book collections, in the second half of the eighteenth century. Pufendorf's works, mostly his student edition was found in 33 of these collections.

Pufendorf had taught natural law at University of Heidelberg. From there on, natural law became a compulsory subject at almost all Protestant universities and even at some Catholic. Chairs in the subject were created. His natural law, including political economy, was spread across Europe and North America.

## **Followers of Pufendorf**

John Locke (1632-1704) was the first scholar of any importance to use Pufendorf's natural law works. Like most of his contemporaries he listed very few of his sources. Writings on political economy can be found in most of his works. His theories are very close to Pufendorf's. His labour theory of property is an exception.

Many important 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century French philosophers, used Pufendorf's natural law works when they wrote on political economy. The moralist Pierre Nicole (1625-1714), the legal philosopher Jean Domat (1625-96), the magistrate Pierre de Boisguilbert (1646-1714), the translator Jean Barbeyrac (1674-1744), the great philosopher Charles-Louis Montesquieu (1689-1755), the plagiarist Jean-Jacques Burlamaqui (1694-1748), the political thinker, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), the editor Denis Diderot (1713-84) and the Physiocrats, had all studied and used his works.

The Scot Gershom Carmichael (1672-1729) introduced natural law including political economy, at the University of Glasgow. He used *De Officio* as a textbook. When he retired his former student Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) became professor of moral philosophy and continued the practice. Hutcheson wrote two books on moral philosophy. They both built very closely on Pufendorf's works. However, there are one major difference, neither Carmichael nor Hutcheson could accept Pufendorf's emphasize on self-interest and his view on innate ideas.

Adam Smith (1723-90) was introduced to Pufendorf's natural law works, as student in Hutcheson's moral philosophy class in 1737. He studied these works further in Glasgow and at Balliol College, Oxford, and used them when he prepared his lectures on jurisprudence in Edinburgh and his lectures on moral philosophy as professor at the University of Glasgow. Despite these facts almost no one points to Pufendorf as a major source for Smith.

## **Ludvig Holberg – A True European**

Ludvig Holberg was born in Bergen, at that time the second largest city in the dual monarchy Denmark-Norway, and a very important commercial centre. He attended the German language primary school and later the Latin school that prepared for university studies. During the great

fire in Bergen in 1702, the school burned down and Holberg was, despite being too young, enrolled as a student at the University of Copenhagen. Holberg (1943 [1728]:7).

In the Spring of 1704 he graduated with Examen Philosophicum and Examen Theologiae. In his *Memoirs* he wrote: “*I left the university with the best marks, but with empty pockets*”. Ibid:8. After graduating he had to earn a living and returned to Bergen where he worked as a tutor. Having saved 60 ‘riksdaler’, he in the summer of 1705 went on his first foreign trip. First to Amsterdam and then on to Aachen. However, he run out of money and returned at the end of September 1705 to Kristiansand on the South Coast of Norway, as he did not want to show up in his home town after such a short time.

His stay in Kristiansand was pleasant. He met a fellow student from the university of Copenhagen. Through him he was admitted to “*the most illustrious Citizens of the town*”. Ibid: 26. They gave lessons in foreign languages and together they enjoyed the company of the young ladies of the best families. However, in the spring of 1706, he and his friend decided to leave. They went by sail ship to Gravesend, at the mouth of the river Thames, and from there they went on foot to London and then onwards to Oxford.

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, they paid the fee, took the oath, and were admitted using the Bodleian Library. Holberg writes in his *Memoirs* a flattering description of this library and he made diligent use of it. It was here that he learned to do serious research and he partly finished a book manuscript on geography and history, which he brought with him when he after almost two years returned to Copenhagen. The importance of his stay in Oxford will be brought up later.

Back in Copenhagen he began, to earn a living, to give lectures to students at the university. They came “*in great numbers at my Collegium, but when they should pay they had learned the art of making themselves invisible*”. Ibid:26. His financial situation was therefore precarious. Luckily, in the Autumn of 1709 he was asked by Poul Vinding (1658-1712), who was professor of Greek at the University of Dresden, to accompany his son on his journey to Dresden. On his return journey, Holberg visited and followed lectures at the universities of Leipzig, Halle and Hamburg. In Leipzig, he heard lectures from Adam Rechenburg (1642-1721), who was professor of church history and Burkhard Mencke (1675-1732) who was professor of history. Here it should be mentioned that Mencke caused a sensation and a lot of debate when he in 1715 published in Latin but also translated to English, *Two Oration on the Charlatanry of the Learned*. It contained examples of pedantry and humbug among famous poets, doctors, jurists, and theologians, and in addition titles of stupid disputes. Holberg used it in his comedy writings. At the University of Halle, he made a visit to Christian Thomasius (1655-1728), who was professor of natural law, and a disciple of Pufendorf. Although the famous professor did not think much of his immature and young visitor he most certainly inspired Holberg to do further studies into natural law.

Back in Copenhagen Holberg returned to tutoring students, even if disliked this work. His financial situation was difficult but again Professor Vinding helped him, and in 1711 he was granted free board at the Borches Collegium. A collegium which was established in 1681 to house “*16 poor, God fearing and learned Studiosi*”. In return, he only had to give a few lectures. At Borches he was tutored by Christian Weghorst (1653-1722), who was professor of philosophy, and Christian Reitzer (1665-1736), who was professor of law. Reitzer also had an outstanding library of 17 000 volumes, which Holberg was permitted to use. He stayed at Borches for almost 5 years.

In 1714 Holberg was appointed Adjunct Professor of Philosophy. The fine title meant no pay and what was worse it prevented him from being a private tutor. However, it made it possible for him to present to the King Frederick IV (1671-1730) a little book about the history

of the previous kings. As a reward, he was granted an annual scholarship of 120 'riksdaler' for four years. This scholarship was to be used for three years of travels and studies abroad. He then embarked on a long journey. First to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp. From Antwerp with boat to Brussel and onwards to Paris. In Paris, he stayed one and a half year. He studied at the Mazarinske library, which had the most recent books, and he followed lectures at the Académie des Sciences. In addition, he attended the theatre plays by Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (1622–1673), better known by his stage name *Molière*.

From Paris, Holberg travelled to Lyon and Marseilles and with sail ship to Genova. Here he almost died of fever, but recovered and continued by boat to Rome. On his return journey he went by foot, first to Florence, then across the Apennines through Bologna, and to Turin. He continued over the Alps to Savoyen and Lyon and onwards to Paris. During this journey, his fever had flared up and he spent a month in Paris to cure it, before he returned home via Amsterdam and Hamburg.

After his return, Holberg lived again two years in poverty and '*was not satisfied with his destiny*'. But in 1718, a professorship in Metaphysics became available. Although it was against his '*Inclination*', he accept it to make a living. The salary for this position was also in the lowest class. However, it was the first time Holberg got a fixed salary and he wrote '*it helped my miserable financial situation*'.

In 1720 Holberg was appointed professor in Latin and Assessor (judge) with both a higher rank and salary. His financial difficulties were a thing of the past.

He undertook his last travel during the years 1725-26. The background was that he was worn out after being the director of The National Theatre that was founded in 1721. The theatre had no plays in Danish and Holberg wrote 20 comedies for it. This time he travelled again to Paris, visited the libraries that he knew from his first travel but also the new ones. Among them a library for lawyers, which opened in 1708.

Holberg used his travels to intensive studies and they had a great influence on his career, his literary production and the issues that were debated across Europe at the time. From these travels he brought, according to the American literary critique James McNelis (1973:ix), "*the light of modern learning to those dark degrees of northern latitude.*"

The National Theatre went bankrupt just before the fire that laid Copenhagen in ashes in 1728. The pietistic King Christian VI (1699-1746) prevented a reestablishment of the theatre. However, his son Frederick V (1723-66) eased his father's strict pietistic laws and the theatre was reopened in 1747, with Holberg as its Director. Holberg resumed his writings of comedies and wrote thirteen new ones for the theatre. His comedies gave him recognition as *the Molière of the Nordic*.

In 1730, Holberg applied for a free professorship and was appointed professor of history. Five years later he was elected Rector Magnificus at the University. The following year, he was appointed Chief Financial Officer, but retained his academic title. He held this position until 1751. Over the years Holberg had in addition to his academic career, by his literary production and practical economic sense, acquired many properties and a significant fortune. In 1747, he was ennobled by King Frederik V, as a baron, in recognition for his work and for having bequeathed his estates to the reestablishment of Sorø Academy as an institution of university level teaching. Holberg was active to the end. In 1753, he contracted a lung disease and he died January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1754.



## Holberg Discovers Pufendorf

At the end of the 1690's University of Copenhagen got a new foundation that also introduced natural law as a subject. Tamm (1993:73). The first to teach the subject was the previous mentioned professors Reitzer and Weghorst. Holberg might therefore have heard of the natural law philosopher and historian Samuel Pufendorf during his first years at the university, but it evidently did not make an imprint on him.

However, in Oxford at the Bodleian Library, in a section where it stored its collection of geographical and historical books, he found Pufendorf's History of the European countries. From his later writings, it is clear that this was a discovery that had a lasting influence. Using this discovery Holberg studied, wrote and copied. As mentioned he started and partly finished a planned work on a handbook in geography and history.

Holberg stayed in Oxford for almost two years. He supported himself by teaching languages and how to play the flute. His proficiency in playing made him a member of the Music Club. Although the Oxford that Holberg met was characterized by conservative opinions. Charles Edward Mallet (1927:4) in his book *Oxford University* called it in the years 1700-25, "the capital of the Jacobite reaction." There were also efforts by some colleges to suppress the opinions of John Locke. However, this environment was of little importance for Holberg. He was not enrolled at any College but had many friends among the students and fellows, particularly at the Magdalen College. His friends invited him to dinners at their colleges and at public houses where they discussed philosophy, literature and politics. Here he enjoyed and obtained the taste of academic life, a life that he wanted to pursue.

There has been a discussion, surveyed by Reidar Myhre (1969), on how his stay in Oxford formed his cultural education. Viliam Olsvig (1913) and Francis Bull (1916) claimed that his stay was of vital importance for his intellectual development. Julius Palludan (1915) and Theodor Alfred Müller (1943:45) were of the opposite opinion and claimed that "his stay in England was of very little importance". However, the well-known Holberg expert Frederik Julius Billeskov Jansen (1943:248) protested against this negative view. The Bodleian library was in his opinion Holberg's "first literary workshop". Here he learned to do serious scientific research and he partly finished a book in geography and history, which he brought with him when he returned to his Alma Mater University of Copenhagen.

In this context, it should be added that Erik Solem (1947:31) in his book about Holberg as a lawyer, contends that Holberg during his stay in Oxford had studied Locke's book *On Education* and thereby been strongly advised to study Pufendorf's natural law works.

At the earlier mentioned Borches Collegium Holberg's tutor Reitzer, who thought 'jus justinianum and jus naturae' advised Holberg to read carefully the natural law works of Samuel Pufendorf, and to write a textbook of natural law in Danish. Holberg took this advice seriously.

## Holberg the Historian

As mentioned, Holberg brought with him from Oxford a manuscript on history and geography. On his return from his journey to Dresden in 1709, he heard rumours that a book on European geography was in the process of being published. He therefore abolished that part of the manuscript, and concentrated on the historical part. At Borches he made this his first priority

and in 1711 he could send to the printer his first book *Introduction til de fornemste Europeiske Rigers Historier* (Introduction to the history of the most distinguished European countries).

In the preface, he recognized that there had not been written any better work than Pufendorf's history of the European states. He also admitted that he in his writings had used a book by the German geographer and historian Johan Hübner (1668-1731) called *Kurtze Fragen aus der politischen historie* (Short questions from political history), which was published in 1696. Furthermore, he acknowledged his gratitude to Professor Reitzers for his encouragement and for giving him access to his magnificent library. Two years later Holberg published an *Anhang* (A supplement) to his first book, where he treats the history of Germany, England and Holland. Again, in the preface, he gives his sources and furthermore he admits that his chapter on Germany is drawn from Pufendorf's book *Statu Imperii Germanici* (The present state of Germany). This *Anhang* was incorporated in later editions of the book.

Holberg (1943[1728]:32) discloses in his memoirs that these books were compiled after "Puffendorf's Method", that is a method consisting in a comprehensive use of available archives and other written sources. But, he dissociates himself from a Danish historian that accused him of having plagiarized Pufendorf. He claimed that a closer inspection will show that it is mostly collected from other authors, except the part on Germany. The question is if he used more than Pufendorf's method. Did he just copy him? In the table below the chapters in Holberg's and Pufendorf's European history books can be compared.

Tab. The European history of Pufendorf and Holberg

Samuel Pufendorf <i>An Introduction to the History of the Principal Kingdoms and States presently in Europe</i> 1682-86. Edition of 1695.	Ludvig Holberg <i>Introduction to the History of the Principal Kingdoms of Europe</i> 1711. Edition of 1757.
Acknowledgements To His Excellency Charles, Duke of Shrewsbury	Dedication To His Royal Highness Prince Christian, heir presumptive to Denmark and Norway
Preface to the reader	Preface to the readers
List of chapters	Content of this work
Chapter I. Of the Ancient Monarchies, and more especially of the Roman, out of whose Ruins arose several Kingdoms and States	Chapter I. Of the Greek country Chapter II. Of Rome
Chapter II. Of the Kingdom of Spain	Chapter III. Of Spain
Chapter III. Of Portugal	Chapter IV. Of Portugal
Chapter IV. Of England	Chapter VII. Of England
Chapter V. Of France	Chapter VI. Of France
Chapter VI. Of the United 'Provinces'	Chapter XIII. Of the Netherlands
Chapter VII. Of the Swiss	
Chapter VIII. Of the German Empire	Chapter V. Of Germany
Chapter IX. Of Denmark	Chapter VIII. Of Demark Chapter IX. Of Norway
Chapter X. Of Poland	Chapter XI. Of Poland
Chapter XI. Of Moscovy	Chapter XII. Of Moscovy

Chapter XII: Of the Spiritual Monarchy of Rome: or, of the Pope	
Chapter XIII: Of the Kingdom of Sweden	Chapter X. Of Sweden

From this table, it is clear that Holberg follows Pufendorf chapter by chapter. Using today's standard, Holberg can rightly be accused of being a plagiarist. However, Carl Engelstad (1984:41) points out that at least the last quarter of each chapter, that is the history from the years 1670-1710 was fully Holberg's own.

Holberg's history books were received with great interest. For the first-time, people could read in their vernacular, a description of the historical and political forces that drove the developments in different European countries. As a result, he was, as mentioned, appointed adjunct professor in 1714, with the promise of being full professor when a chair became vacant. This happened in 1718 when he, as promised, was appointed professor in metaphysics and logic. In 1720, he became professor of Latin literature. During the next years he produced several satirical works. When the Danish Theatre opened in 1722, there were no plays in the Danish language. Holberg wrote several comedies.

However, he was not satisfied with his position at the university, he therefore studied and did research on history in general and on Pufendorf's work on North European history in particular. This led, in 1729, to the publication of *Danmark og Norges Beskrivelse* (An Account of Denmark and Norway). It became one of his most popular works. It was published in several reprints and editions, and it was also translated into German.

Finally, in 1730, he therefore became professor of history and he continued to write books of history. These works are today considered works of lasting value.

## **Pufendorf and Holberg on Natural law**

After the publication of his first history book on the history of the European countries Holberg continued his historical studies. But at the same time his eyes were opened for the new science natural law. According to Billeskov Jansen (1969:45) it was professor of law Christian Reitzer that made the subject interesting for Holberg. He followed his advice to write an exposition of natural law in the Danish language and concentrated on the study of Pufendorf's natural law works. After two years of hard work, he had a manuscript ready for publication just before he in the spring of 1714 started on his journey to France and Italy. This work was printed during his absence but not published before he returned in 1716.

It had the title *Moralske Kierne eller Introduction Til Naturens og Folkerettens Kundskab Uddragen af de fornemeste Juristers, Besynderlig Grotii, Puffendorfs og Thomasii Skrifter* (The Core of Morality or Introduction to the Law of Nature and Nations Extracted from the distinguished Jurists, particularly the works of Grotius, Pufendorf and Thomasius). What is startling, given what was common among writers at that time, is that Holberg even highlighted whom he built on. Pufendorf is his primary source.

This work saw 5 editions in his life, a second in 1728, a third 1734, a fourth 1741 and finally a fifth in 1751. After his death, a sixth edition was published in 1763. There is in addition a German from 1748 and one in Swedish from 1789. Since then it has been published in *Holbergs collected works* from 1913 and in *Billeskov-Jansen selected works* from 1969. A new edition, in Norwegian, is due to be published this year.

When writing, he had, according to Billeskov Jansen (1969:383) the last editions of Pufendorf's main natural law work *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* (The Law of Nature and Nations) and his 'student edition' *De Officio Hominis et Civis* (The Duty of Man and Citizen), ready at hand. In addition, he had at his disposal the works of Grotius and Thomasius and books of Danish, Norwegian and Roman law. Erik Solum (1947:34-35) in his book *Holberg as a jurist* also contends that Reitzer had allowed Holberg to use his lecture notes on Danish law, and Holberg used them without giving his source. Furthermore, that he frequently used a judicial Glossary by Christen Ostensen Vejle from 1641, which Gerhard Gran (1905) first and then Kåre Foss (1934) has pointed out. Furthermore, he refers to the Law of Scania, the Law of Zeeland, the Law of Jutland, Eirik Glipping's Coronation Charter 1284, Christian III's Recess 1558, Frederik II's Law of the Sea, Christian IV's Norwegian Law 1604, Christian IV's Great Recess, the Kings Coronation Law 1665 and Danish Law 1683. Tamm (2012:57-60).

Here it should also be added that Holberg, during his travel in 1714, visited Paris and there he came to be acquainted with Jean Barbeyrac's comments in his 1708 translation into French of Pufendorf's *De Jure Naturae et Gentium*. He also became familiar with the works of Johan Locke (1632-1704), Pierre Bayle (1647-1706) and Christian Thomasius. In the fifth edition from 1751, which we are using here, he has several references to these authors.

Holberg's *Natural Law* is, as pointed out by several authors, collaborated from Pufendorf's natural law works. The content is based on the structure of Pufendorf's *De Officio*. A comparison between the chapters in Pufendorf's *De Officio* and *Holberg's Naturens- og Folkerettens Kundskab* is done in the table below.

Tab. The natural law of Pufendorf and Holberg.

Samuel Pufendorf <i>De Officio Hominis et Civis</i> (The Duty of Man and Citizen) 1927 [1682, 1673]	Ludvig Holberg <i>Naturens og Folkerettens Kundskab</i> (The knowledge of the law of nature and nations) 1969 [1751, 1716]
Greeting to the Reader	Dedication to the Reader
<b>Book I Chapters</b>	<b>Content First Book</b>
1. On human action	1. On human action
2. On the norm of human action, or law in general	2. On the norm of human action, or about the law in general law.
3. On natural law	3. On the law of nature
4. On the duty of man toward God, or natural religion	
5. On the duty of man toward himself	4. On the duty of man toward himself
6. On mutual duties, and first, that of not injuring others	5. On the duty of man toward his neighbour
7. On the recognition of the natural equality of man	6. On the natural equality between all men
8. On the common duties of humanity	7. On common duties towards his neighbour
9. On the duties of contracting parties' in general	8. On pacts and associations
10. On the duty of the users of language	9. On language
11. On the duty of those who takes oath	10. On taking an oath
12. On the duty as regard to the acquisition	11. On acquisition of ownership of a thing

of ownership	
13. On the duties which results from ownership per se	12. On the duties which results from ownership
14. On value	13. On value
15. On contracts which presuppose the prices of things, and the duties thence derived	14. On contracts and the duties thence derived
16. The methods of dissolving obligations arising from agreements	15. How obligations and duties can be resolved
17. On interpretation	16. On interpretation
<b>Book II Chapters</b>	<b>Second book, chapters</b>
1. On the natural state of man	I 17. On ways to plead the natural liberty
2. On conjugal duties	1. On marriages
3. On the duties of parents and children	2. On the duties of parents and children
4. On the duties of masters and servants	3. On the duties of masters and servants
5. On the impelling cause for the establishment of a State	4. What have driven men to establish State
6. On the internal structures of States	5. On the internal structure of States
7. On the functions of the supreme authority	7. On the functions of civil authorities
8. On the forms of government	6. On establishment and forms of republics
9. The characteristics of civil authority	
10. On the methods of acquiring authority, especially monarchical	8. On the methods by which authority acquires
11. On the duty of rulers	9. On the duties of supreme sovereigns
12. On civil laws in particulars	10. On civil laws in particular
13. On the power of life and deaths	11. On the right the authority has over the lives of subjects
14. On the reputation	12. On name and reputation
15. On the power of the supreme authority over property in the State	13. On the right authorities have over public and private property
16. On the war and peace	14. On war and peace
17. On alliances	15. On alliances
18. On the duties of citizens	
	16. On the privileges of diplomats
	17. On the right to a funeral

De Officio Hominis & Civis Cambridge edition of 1682, Photografic reproduction of the Latin text and with a translation by Herbert F. Wright, Oxford University Press, New York 1927. Natur og Folkerettens kunnskap is here the fifth edition of 1751 published by Rosenkilde and Bagggers 1969. Translation into English is the responsibility of the author of this presentation.

From this table, it is clear that Holberg in his outline follows Pufendorf almost chapter by chapter. Kåre Foss (1934:361-68) in his comprehensive study *Ludvig Holbergs Naturret på idehistorisk bakgrunn*. (The natural law of Ludvig Holberg on the background of the history of ideas) from 1934 has analysed the content of Holberg's natural law book. He found that the content of a few chapters is very close to the chapters in *De Officio*. But in most chapters the content is drawn from Pufendorf's *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* and in many cases, he just copies him.

It should be mentioned that in volume Holberg's Natural law is roughly 50% longer than Pufendorf's *De Officio*.

Holberg's first 1715 print, had many mistakes which he corrected, and a new print was published in 1716. The title was also changed. He removed the *Moralske Kjerne* (Moral Core) and the reference to the authors he built on. Furthermore, he included a *Dedication* to the readers. This was based on Jean Barbeyrac's introduction in his translation into French of *De Officio*. Holberg had bought a copy in Paris.

The question about plagiarism also arises in Holberg's Natural Law. Has he in his writing been plagiarizing Pufendorf? Again, if we use the standards of today Holberg would have had to answer some questions. From reading the above-mentioned book by Kåre Foss it is tempting to conclude that Holberg, at least using today's standard, was a plagiarist. However, more recent research seems to take a different attitude.

Sebastian Olden Jørgensen (2015) in his book *Holberg som pragmatic historiker* (Holberg as a pragmatic historian) presents the results from a research project called 'Holberg ideologies'. In this project, the question of plagiarism in both his history works and his natural law work was brought up. Inga Undheim took part in the project. She claims that it is not her task to judge in this old strife. In her opinion is Holberg more moralising than Pufendorf, who is more present in his natural law and more systematic. Tim Berntzen, who also took part in the project claimed that the question of plagiarism is less relevant. Holberg's natural law "*is simply one among the many Pufendorf adaptations and a splendid one*".

## Holberg on Political Economy

Holberg's writings on Political economy started with the publication of his natural law where he, as determined, builds closely on Pufendorf. Like Pufendorf, Holberg treats his topics of political economy in distinct chapters and sections of his book. The next table shows where the theory of human behaviour, the theory of property, the theory of value and money, the foundation of states and councils and finally the division of state powers and taxation, can be found in Holberg's and in Pufendorf's texts.

Tab. Political economy in Pufendorf's and Holberg's natural law works

<i>Topics/Books</i>	<i>De Officio Hominis et Civis</i>	<i>De Jure Naturae et Gentium</i>	<i>Naturens og Folkerettens Kundskab</i>
Theory of Human Behaviour	Book I. Ch. 1-7	Book I. i-iv. Book II. i-iv. Book III. i-ii.	Book I. Ch. 1-6
Theory of Property & Four-Stages Theory	Book I. Ch. 12, 13	Book IV. iii-v. Book V. v.	Book I. Ch. 11, 12
Theory of Value and Money	Book I. Ch. 14, 15	Book V i, iii, v, vii-viii.	Book I. Ch. 13, 14
Foundation of States and Councils	Book II. Ch. 5-9	Book VII i-ii.	Book II. Ch. 4-8
Division of State Powers and Taxation	Book II. Ch. 11, 12	Book VII iv-v. Book VIII iv-v. Book V x.	Book II. Ch. 9, 10

Holberg follows Pufendorf very closely but there are also distinct differences. These differences will be emphasized. His theories of political economy start with his theory of human behaviour.

### **Theory of Human Behaviour**

Holberg starts out as Pufendorf and contends that “Man’s Magnificence ... *is entrusted with a rational soul, that contains a glorious light, by which he can know and judge a thing and a particular motion to accept or reject it*”. NF I.i:59. Man’s decisions are made using his intellect, reason and free will, “*a Man has this from his Will, that he can do a thing by himself and freely, ...*”. NF I.i:64. Like Pufendorf, he claims that the most important reason why the Creator could not grant men the freedom to live without laws is because of the “*dignity and excellence of human nature*”. Their actions should be carried out after some rules and regulations. NF I.iii:78-79.

However, it is important to note that Holberg also departs from Pufendorf. He could not agree with Pufendorf’s claim that self-love or self-interest is the strongest human attribute. He claims, that it was man’s need to live in society with others that was the driving force. “*The foundation of natural law is, that each human being, as far as it is possible for him, have to maintain sociability and association, whereof it follows, that what usually helps to maintain society and sociability has the natural law commanded, and, what struggle against, is associated with the same Natural Law: just as the common law contains all other commands.*” NF I.iii:80. He develops this further in a chapter of man’s duty toward himself. The Creator has granted man with magnificent gifts so that he can extend his honour and be a useful member in human society. Man should therefore not abuse these gifts but use them to the best for human society. NF I.iv:81. This is the same view as Professor Francis Hutcheson at University of Glasgow, who was also a follower of Pufendorf, later based his writings on.

Like Pufendorf, Holberg also emphasized the importance of education. Although Holberg must have been aware of Pufendorf’s view on innate ideas, that human beings was not born with the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, and the reaction to this view from the clergy of several dominations, and also many academics, he does not discuss this important issue. We might ask the question why?

### **Theory of Property**

Holberg’s theory of property is outlined in two chapters. One on the duty of the acquisition of property and one on the duty that follows from property. His treatment is the most extensive of all issues of natural law in his book. This reflects his view on the importance of the topic. He starts out, copying Pufendorf, that since God has made the constitution of the human body such that it needs, food and clothing, it has also given man the power to use the earth’s resources. NF I.xi:157.

Like Pufendorf, Holberg claims that in the beginning everything was held in common. But early on, **men made an agreement** among them, formally or informally, that what everyone had taken of common things, other men should not take away. When people multiplied private property was introduced to avoid quarrels and introduce good order. NF I.xi:160-61. The introduction of property was therefore a human convention. There can however not be found, as in Pufendorf, any reference to scarce resource or that property was introduced in four-stages.

Holberg claims that Locke disagreed with Pufendorf regarding the necessity of an agreement but he does not seem to be aware of Locke’s labour theory of property. However, he

discusses many important questions related to property. He brings for example up the question of ownership to the oceans and, in this connection, the dispute between Hugo Grotius and John Selden (1584-1654). He debates the right to waterways and Denmark's right to impose a custom for ships to pass the Sound. But he has no reference to Pufendorf's criticism of this right.

Furthermore, he also discusses inheritance and how one can acquire right of prescription to a thing. In his extensive discussion of these and many other significant questions he makes references to Grotius, Pufendorf and Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43) and he makes extensive use of Danish and Norwegian law books.

### **Theory of Value and Money**

Holberg starts out as Pufendorf, claiming that when private property was introduced, people developed different needs and started to trade. It then became necessary to set a value on things so that they could be traded and that no traders suffered. He follows Pufendorf very closely and distinguishes between value in use and exchange, and in money. *"The same quantity or the worth of goods and services is called value. Such value is of two kinds, the first consists of the goods and services themselves as far as they give people utility and when a thing is exchanged with another, which has been the case since the earliest times. The other kind of value consists of money and the like, in so far as it is understood that they contain virtually the value of goods and services in a common measure."* NF I.xiii:191.

However, like Pufendorf, he is also aware of the fact that some things are more useful even if they do not have a price, and that rare things can have high prices although they are not very useful. Ibid:192. He concludes like Pufendorf, that it is utility and rarity (scarcity) that determines the price. In addition to usefulness and rarity he, as Pufendorf discusses several human motives that will play a role in the determination of value. Ibid:193.

Finally, he points out that the quantity of commodities and the number of buyers, that is supply and demand, and that cash or credit payment will influence the determination of the value or price.

When society developed, it was no longer practical to exchange a good for another good. Man, therefore set the price of a thing that could be used as a measure for all other thing. Money was therefore introduced as such a measure and the use rare metals such as gold and silver was found to be best.

Although Holger Ludvig Bisgaard (1902:40) in his book about *Den danske nationaløkonomi i det 18. Århundre* (The Danish national economy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) from 1902 admits that Pufendorf was Holberg's source he found it remarkable that Holberg as early as 1715 treated *"as well as all the elements, which the theory of value included until the mathematical School with Jevons, Walras and the Austrians with Menger and Böhm-Bawerk at the point, introduced new stimulating views and standpoints in it."*<sup>1</sup> Bisgaard exaggerated, but it is startling that one at this point could read in Danish a presentation of the theory value, where the price of thing was determined by utility and scarcity and that the so-called *"value paradox"* was solved.

### **The Foundation of States and Council Decisions**

Holberg starts out, as Pufendorf, by asking why man is not content with the pleasure and advantages of the first societies, that is families and clans, but has established states. Pufendorf stress that it is not enough to say that man is by nature herself drawn into civil society. Since

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<sup>1</sup> William Stanley Jevons (1835-82), Leon Marie Esprit Walras (1834-1919), Carl Menger (1814-1921), Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk (1851-1914).



man is an animal of the kind that loves himself and its interest to the utmost degree. If he seeks society it must be because he can derive some utility from it. And though outside of society with his kind he would be miserable, his natural desires could be satisfied through the first societies. Therefore, it cannot be concluded from man's sociability that his nature tends to civil society. Holberg do not agree with Pufendorf's emphasize on self-love but, strangely enough, he reach the same conclusion. He repeats word for word Pufendorf's conclusion. "*The right reason therefore, why societies and nations are created, is fear, as one man has for the evil of the other, therefore have the first men subjected to laws and authority, that could protect the weak against the strong, and punish the evil that earlier prevailed, because, if Law and Right was not, as the proverb sound, the one man will swallow up the other.*" NF II.iv:284. He likes Pufendorf, claims that men are also wicked, and men established states to protect themselves from this wickedness. NF II.iv:284. Do we here find a contradiction in Holberg? Can a man whose attribute is to be social also be wicked?

Furthermore, Holberg follows Pufendorf, it is two agreements, one on association and one on subjection, that is necessary to form a state. In between the two, there is one decree, which decide the form of government of the state. NF II. v:287. He also, as Pufendorf, discusses the advantages and disadvantages of three forms of government, aristocracy, democracy and monarchy. Holberg favours, as Pufendorf, an enlightened absolute monarchy. When he discusses regular and irregular republics he draws attention to Pufendorf's criticism of the *Wholy German Empire* in his *De Statu Imperii Germanici*. NF II.vi:291-4.

Holberg discusses only three; equal votes, majority voting, and weighted voting, of Pufendorf, many voting procedures.

### **Division of State Powers and Principle of Taxation**

Holberg follows Pufendorf on the question of the will of the state and the duties of the sovereign. NF II vii:297-303.

Likewise, in his discussion of the duties and the different powers of the ruler. The legislative, the punitive, the judicial, the power to hire magistrates, the power to levy taxes and finally the power to secure internal peace and being prepared for foreign unrest. Ibid:311-314. Holberg's views on tax policy is the same as Pufendorf. Taxes should be levied equally and mildly. Ibid:340. One citizen should after his wealth not be levied a greater burden than another. No one should be exempted from paying tax. Ibid:341.

## **Holberg as a Political Economist**

All through his life Holberg used his *European history* and his *Law of Nature and Nations*, together with the works he built on when he wrote them, first of all Pufendorf's *European history* and his natural law works. From the discussion of Pufendorf's and Holberg's treatment of issues of political economy it is clear that Holberg follows Pufendorf and in many instances just copies him.

Discussions of topics of political economy can be found in many of Holberg's later writings. In his many comedies, he discusses again and again economic themes in a witty, shrewd and unprejudiced way. He also expresses his views on the development of trade and industry in two essays, in English entitled *Conversation by the Elbe* and *Conversation between two merchants*, which was published in 1728 and 1729 respectively. In these essays, he advocates a mercantilistic view.

Issues of political economy is also central in *Niels Klims reise til den underjordiske verden* (Niels Klims travels to the underworld) which was first published in Latin in Leipzig in 1741. A second extended edition appeared in 1745. Zealous circles tried to have it banned but failed. It became a best seller and was translated to French, Dutch, Danish, English, Swedish and to several other languages. In this book, he deliberates many of the issues that was discussed in European journals and books. Issues of political economy is also discussed in his *Moralske Tanker* (Moral Thoughts) from 1744 and in several of his *Epistler* (Essays) published 1748-50, but probably written many years before. In these essays, he ponders many important subjects. For example, in Essay 21, *The importance of luxury for economic development*. Essay 49, *Praise of agriculture*. Essay 79, *Lack of competition leads to apathy*. Essay 93, *Appointment of magistrates and taxation*. Essay 341, *Who benefit from a period of high prices?* And finally Essay 469, *How should taxes be imposed?* It is clear that issues first discussed in his *Natural Law and Nations* have reappeared.

From our discussion, it is clear that Holberg built on Pufendorf, sometimes he used his writings as a point of departure but every so often he just copied him. There are, however, important differences between them. Pufendorf emphasize self-love or self-interest as the strongest human attribute. Self-interest as an inclination is not only central in his theory of human behaviour. It also plays a part in his theory of property, where it is a driving force in his four stages theory of economic development. Self-interest is also important in the development of a commercial society, which again is the basis for a prosperous society.

Pufendorf was fiercely attacked because of his view on self-interest and innate ideas by the clergy and theologians of all Christian domination. However, important scholars supported him. John Locke building on him claimed that men is borne '*tabula rasa*', that is with minds that hold no preconceived notions. Education was therefore very important. This view was also supported by Charles Louis Montesquieu and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. But others like, Gershom Carmichael and Francis Hutcheson, two important predecessors of Adam Smith, did not support Pufendorf on this issue. However, self-interest became a foundation in Smith's political economy.

Holberg could not accept Pufendorf's emphasises on self-interest and the important question if human ideas are innate ideas he escaped! However, the question of self-love as an important factor in economic development and the inquiry if increasing wealth would make people better off became issues that Holberg struggled with his whole life. A discussion of these issues can be found in *Niels Klims travels*, in his *Essay 21* and also in his comedy *Plutus*.

In Niels Klim's travels he also gives an eminent description of this paradox. He let the protagonist visit the Republic of Siklok, which consists of two federal states with opposite laws. In the first state Miho all luxuries are strictly prohibited, temperance and thrift are the basis for this society. Niels Klim is surprised. Why can such a society with such distinguished laws have so many beggars? But after a closer inquiry he found the reason to the misery in people's practice of economy. "*I learned that parsimony and thrift have the same effect in a State, as blood constipation in the human body.*"

In the other state Liho people lived in abundance and saved nothing. "*As a consequence arts and handicraft bloomed everywhere. Its citizens are encouraged to work, therefore they not only avoid shortages, but they often enrich themselves, and even if someone lives in destitution, it is the fault of their laziness, since they nowhere lack the opportunity to earn their*

*bread. Therefore, the wastefulness of the rich gives the state a sort of life, like the circulation of the blood gives the limbs of the body health and strength."*

Essay 21 is a criticism of Bernard Mandevilles (1670-1723) *Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Public Benefits*. A beehive where all lived in vice and driven by self-interest, was rich, but a neighbouring beehive where all lived virtuously was poor. In this essay Holberg does not accept Mandevilles view. However, there is no doubt that he understands his arguments that it is consumption and not savings that creates activity and employment. But what about happiness? He claimed that living in luxury did not bring happiness. If the sins of such living disappeared, the freed resources could be used in a better way. The most important industry, where workers, freed from industries based on people's sinful life, could be exploited for the good of the community, was agriculture.

There has been written many books and articles about Holberg as a historian, as a jurist and as a comedy writer. However, there has been written little about his views on political economy. It limits itself to the previous mentioned book by Holger L. Bisgaard from 1902, in which a small part of the first chapter is devoted to Holberg. Max Kjær Hansen's book from 1954 *Økonomen Ludvig Holberg* (Ludvig Holberg The Economist). Professor Hector Estrups article in *Danske økonomer* (Danish Economists) from 1976, entitled *Dyd og Rigdom* (Virtue and Wealth), in which he discusses Holberg's contribution to political economy. Two articles, *Holberg as the first Dano-Norwegian economist* from 2006, and *Holberg as the founder of the first professional education in economics* from 2010 by the author of this presentation should also be mentioned.

Bisgaard's thesis is of great importance, because he rediscovers the thriving economic literature from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in this regard, especially because he presents Holberg's clear interest in economic and financial problems. Kjær Hansen's book, which builds on Bisgaard, was written to honour Holberg on the occasion of the 200 years commemoration of the day of his death. Both Bisgaard and Kjær Hansen was looking to find economic theory and analysis in Holberg's writings, but they found very little. Bisgaard (1902: 30) claims that Holberg's economic vision must *"be found here and there in his works, where they occasionally occur, in the passing, often merely between the lines."* Holberg's contribution was mainly that he created a climate that paved the way for his successors.

Estrup (1976:34), however, has a slightly different view. *"If one in this manner, on a preliminary basis, where we are today, say anything about Holberg's economic philosophies, one ought to disregard what since then has been accepted as economic science, and keep in mind, that Holberg primarily was a natural and moral philosopher that is in general a social philosopher and that he was a historian by profession. Measured by this standard, and it should be used in this tentative article, Holberg should be seen as an economist that sees it as his task to look at economic phenomena and problems in the light of moral reasoning, and who sheds light on his results, not with numbers, but with historical examples. The demonstrative power is nevertheless there when Holberg instead of the story mobilizes his mighty literary imagination, as in the comedies, and, of interest for our purpose in particular, in Niels Klim."*

It is Estrups hypothesis that Holberg's economic thoughts circles around the same fundamental problem as Adam Smith, namely the relationship between a nation's wealth and

happiness and welfare of its citizens that many of his seemingly detached economic ideas are a result of his battle with this moral issue. But unlike Smith, who according to Estrup, emancipated himself from his original profession as a moral philosopher, Holberg still kept the formulation of the issues he discussed within the framework of moral philosophy. What is the substance of wealth and progress and what is the relationship to the citizen's welfare?

None of these Danish authors have looked into the content of Holberg's *Law of Nature and Nations*.

## Conclusion

Ludvig Holberg expressed his opinion on most of the economic problems that were up for discussion during his life. He also held unconventional views on many of these questions. His lasting importance for political economy as a science will only in part be found in his writings. His significance is also to be found in the influence his collected literary production had on the cultural development in Scandinavia and his direct and indirect contribution to the advancement of the science of political economy. In *Niels Klims travels*, he clearly expressed which sciences should be promoted. The studies pursued in the state of Putu (Utopia) were history, political economy, mathematics and law.

When Holberg could not get response for his views at the University of Copenhagen he, as mentioned, bequeathed his considerable estates to the reestablishment of Sorø Academy as an institution of higher learning. The objective was to create an alternative to the university, which was marked by a strong theological influence, and to give the modern sciences a central position in its curriculum. Holberg had great influence on the foundation of the Academy. It had five chairs included one in political economy and one in cameral science. The Academy proved a great success. In the second half to the 18<sup>th</sup> century it functioned as the home for social scientists and social critiques. It is therefore not an exaggeration to state that Holberg laid the foundation for the flourishing that took place in the fields of political economy and the teaching of the subject from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The breakthrough of political economy as a science in Denmark-Norway took place after Holberg's death. During his lifetime, he was the only one who publicly wrote and discussed issues of political economy. But the change was there and it came like a cloudburst. Already the next years, economic questions were debated, by the staff of the Academy, and from many contributors to the journal *Danmark og Norges Oeconomiske Magasin* (The Dano-Norwegian Economic Magasin) which started in 1757, with the former bishop of Bergen, the author of many scientific essays and books, and professor at the University of Copenhagen, Erik Pontoppidan (1698-1764) as its progressive editor.

All these activities contributed to the economic reforms that were introduced in Denmark-Norway at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It should also be noted that when *Kieltraktaten* (The Treaty of Kiel) was concluded in 1814, the newly elected Norwegian Parliament contested the Treaty, that handed Norway to Sweden, and declared its independence. The Parliament claimed that the Treaty had broken the Sovereignty Act from 1661 and the Kings law of 1665, which had made King Frederick III absolute king. The President of the Parliament, Wilhelm F. K. Christie claimed that the Norwegian right "*was based on Nature's eternal and unchangeable Right*". Pufendorf's and Holberg's natural law was known by many of the Parliament members.

Although Professor Kjær Hansen perhaps goes too far when he suggests that Holberg was the real founder of political economy in Denmark-Norway. It is certainly true that Holberg measured by the standards of the time was a significant economic thinker and that he was the first to put political economy on the map as a science in Denmark-Norway. It all started with his discovery of the writings of Samuel Pufendorf.

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