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CREATION
EMANATION
AND
SALVATION

A Spinozistic Study



MARTINUS NIJHOFF / THE HAGUE

In this new work the author brings to a focus the speculative principles of his early work, *Aeternitas, A Spinozistic Study* (Oxford, 1930), by means of a transition from the prevailingly intellectualistic outlook of that work to one that is fundamentally *activistic*. Thus the seemingly paradoxical "transformation without succession" there held to constitute eternity is here resolved as the evident essence of "action" *par excellence*, which is thus by nature eternal. Durational endeavour, commonly miscalled "action", is then expounded as an "emanation", or private projection of eternal creative action in the reference-system of a finite part of Nature; and inert time receives its appropriate and limited import as a mere complex of relative durational measures.

In the light of this *activistic éclaircissement*, ethical and political principles are brought to the forefront of the speculation as inherent in the metaphysical scheme.

The author thus continues to join issue with the still prevailing interpretation of Spinoza's thought as a naturalism under which all things, both corporeal and mental, are mechanistically constituted, all values are subjective imaginations, all standards arbitrary human inventions, and freedom an illusion.

But though founded upon a more discerning account of the philosophy of Spinoza, the work is not thus historically confined, but it seeks speculatively to elaborate his principles: it is no mere "study of Spinoza", but a "spinozistic study", related to, and contrasted with, theories founded upon alien metaphysical and empiricistic presuppositions.

CREATION

EMANATION AND SALVATION



From a Drawing on Embossed Scraper-Board
by H. F. Hallett

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PREFACE

The present work is intended once again to draw the attention of readers to the resources opened up by Spinoza for the elucidation of the classical problems of philosophy. Today these problems are too often taken to be merely verbal, so that answers to them so far as these are metaphysical are confidently claimed to be “nonsense.” My labours will, therefore, seem to minds thus committed to have been untimely and fundamentally futile. Untimely they may have been, but unless also futile their untimeliness may render them the more exigent; and to judge them as futile is to claim a certainty not available to the honest sceptic.

Vigorous attempts to discredit metaphysical investigation are no new thing, though the latest is, perhaps, the most thoroughgoing, and certainly the most self-confident. Yet it may well be argued that effective criticism of metaphysics is either itself a sort of metaphysics, or has for its foundation presuppositions that could only be metaphysically established. “*Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.*” Metaphysics survives, and can only survive as a true *philosophia perennis*, as the catalyst of scepticism and schism – neither as inexorable dogma “once for all delivered,” nor as “a plant that cometh of the lust of the earth, without a formal seed.”

It is to this essentially catalytic character that we may attribute the persistence of the broad appeal of spinozism after nearly three hundred years of professional neglect and theological obloquy, and I am content if my work is as untimely as spinozism has always been.

Such content, however, is not enough to justify the publication of this new spinozistic study in an epoch given over to positivism and “humanism,” but I am also encouraged by the fortunes of my earlier spinozistic study, *Aeternitas*, to believe that there remains, in spite of appearances, a philosophically-minded public by no means contemptible in weight, nor even in relative numbers, still willing, nay anxious, from such a speculation to seek, not merely relief in “metaphysic dream” from the grammarian’s nightmare of current ‘philosophy,’ but the real profit that truth alone can provide.

Apart from the conception of durational ‘emanation,’ which is fundamental, the most noteworthy developments in the present work from the doctrine of *Aeternitas* consist, in brief, first in the making explicit the *activism* only implicitly and obscurely announced in the notion of “transformation without succession” held to constitute the essence of

spinozistic *aeternitas*,¹ and second, in the use made of the conception of 'diaesthesia,' which I advanced some years ago in various journal-articles.² The first led naturally to greater attention being paid to the ethical and political thought of Spinoza, which received little more than incidental treatment in *Aeternitas*, by way of *excursus*. The second would have been more appropriately deployed in an activist account of Spinoza's theory of knowledge, which for reasons of space has had to be postponed, save in so far as it could not be ignored without serious obscurity. As to the notion of 'emanation': the term, of course, suggests neo-platonic associations which I recommend the reader to eschew.

The distinction which I draw between a 'study of Spinoza' and a 'spinozistic study' is certainly obscure so long as the aim of the work is ignored. Since both involve speculative exposition the distinction of 'fact' and 'conjecture' has no relevance. For "the letter killeth," and dry chronicle is not history, so that he who would make a study of Spinoza must beware of too hasty judgement, forgetting his own alienation of mind as it has been determined by subsequent developments in Western thought, which it is easy to ignore and difficult to correct when recognized. Further, he must keep in mind the oblivion that has fallen upon the Nature-philosophies of the Renaissance, in the twilight of which Spinoza moved before the 'new philosophy' of René Descartes held his keen and delighted attention; the influences of the Jewish theology in which he was reared; the all-pervasive stimulus of Christian conceptions, orthodox or otherwise, acquired from his Gentile environment; the resolution of the hereditary 'Marrano-complex' of Jewish and Christian elements; for with all these influences operating in a mind of singular originality and outstanding intellectual fervour, the process of precise demarcation of 'fact' and 'conjecture' is likely to be one of egregious difficulty, from which a cautious scholar might well shrink, and which in the end would be philosophically fruitless. Thus even for a conservative 'study of Spinoza' speculative exposition, founded on the text, obedient but not servile to it, with constant recollection of the influences at work, so far as they are known, is not only the sole way of escape from the perils that beset the Spinoza-student, but the best service he can offer to Spinoza.³

¹ Cf. *Aeternitas*, pp. 158, note 1, 234, *et al.*

² See "Knowledge, Reality, and Objectivity" (*Mind*, XLIX. N.S., pp. 170-88, 303-32), in which reference is made to other articles also concerned, more or less satisfactorily, with this conception.

³ A summary of the results of such an enquiry will be found in my article on Spinoza in *Chamber's Encyclopaedia* (New Edition), and a fuller account in my *Benedict de Spinoza, The Elements of His Philosophy*. See also art. 'Spinoza' in *Encyclopedia Americana*.

But in service to ourselves as philosophers we are permitted to go further and speculatively to apply the fundamental principles of his philosophy to the problems as they face us today after three hundred years of further reflection, discovery, and dispute; and a 'spinozistic study' must in the nature of things be in this additional sense speculative – though not therefore more fanciful. What alone is fanciful is the assimilation involved of Mijnheer Benedict Despinosa with 'o Spinoza, and this too (*pace* Taylor) has respectable philosophical precedent. Thus my aim has been, in the present work as in *Aeternitas*, to discover and articulate the fundamental principles that often lie *perdus* in the laconic inferences of his massive speculation, with a view, not to the mere recovery of a historical system, but to the clarification of its fecund implications for our own enlightenment.

Something should be said, perhaps, about the order in which I have set forth the topics of *Part I*. Here I have followed the lead of Spinoza in the *Ethics*, adopting the 'order of nature' in preference to the 'order of discovery' – in cartesian terms, the 'synthetic' rather than the 'analytic' order. This may not commend itself to the generality of contemporary readers who by habit and precept prefer to proceed from what is more familiar, however complex, rather than from what is more recondite, however simple. The nature of metaphysical method will be considered below,¹ and I need only say here that the two methods differ, not merely as mutually reversed orders which therefore may be considered as interchangeable (as Descartes suggests), but in nature and aim, so that both are essential in the metaphysical quest. The method of discovery follows the ascending order of increasing intelligibility; that of nature follows the descending order of creation, *i.e.* the intelligible order, most suitable, therefore, for formal exposition. Nevertheless, it is right that account should be taken of currently prevalent prejudices (such as the tacit bias in favour of the temporality and objectivity of the real, or the clamorous objection to metaphysical deduction) likely to prevent the most innocent reader from reaching the standpoint from which alone the order of nature can be surveyed; but as defence against mere bigotry, not its appeasement. And I have sought in some measure to fulfil this duty by dealing first of all, in the *Prolegomena*, with some of the more crucial general topics which are inherent in the discussions which follow, and preconceptions concerning which form the chief sources of misunderstandings most likely to impede progress, or even to bring it to a standstill. This, of course, is a methodological compro-

¹ See pp. 1–21.

mise, and as such cannot be wholly successful, or successful at all without the co-operation and good will of the reader. Full understanding of these topics requires reflection upon the processes in which they are inherent, and by consideration of which they are authenticated.

Of the dangers that beset the philosopher who seeks to compass the problems of ontology and epistemology by an exclusive reliance on the analytic or empirical method, I need say no more than that even where an effort is made (as by Whitehead, and even more urgently and amply by Polanyi) to avoid the objectivistic truncation of the range of empirical *data*, exemplified by Hume and his successors, dangers enough remain in so far as principles adequate enough in the temporal realm are taken to be incorrigible, universal, and primordial; or again, in so far as the nature of truth is subordinated to an ultimate 'personal commitment' which is *justifiable* only by reference to an ideal of truth. And I venture to suggest that had these writers the flair for, and the training in, philosophy comparable with their brilliance and industry in the sciences, some inkling of the nature and essential point of the philosophy of Spinoza might have rendered less labyrinthine and bizarre the conclusions of the one, and his exposition of them less replete with abstractions and *ad hoc* 'principles'; and recognition of the central importance of spinozistic 'emendation of the understanding' for the *justification* of the 'will to believe' might have redeemed the epistemology of the other from its ultimate naivety as the apotheosis of 'wishful thinking.'

In sum, what is above all else essential is that the investigator should grasp the nature, and for man the crucial importance, of the 'human predicament': that *man is not an extrinsic spectator of Nature*, as he is only too prone to assume, but in some sense a 'part' of Nature viewing the whole from within; so that his *partialitas* cannot but, in one way or another, condition his 'speculation': and *the paramount business of metaphysics is to ensure that this conditioning does not involve falsification.*

Finally, to Professor A. E. Teale who devoted much time and thought to the first draft of this book, and made many suggestions for its improvement, both in detail and in general arrangement, most of which I have been glad to accept, I accord my sincere thanks.

H. F. H.

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PROLEGOMENA

See skulking Truth to her old cavern fled
Mountains of Casuistry heap'd o'er her head!
Philosophy, that lean'd on Heav'n before,
Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.

POPE, *The Dunciad*

I. THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT AND METAPHYSICAL METHOD

Though the doctrine of method belongs more properly to the theory of knowledge, for which it has not been possible, within the limits of space set today by economic conditions and modish factors, to provide adequate treatment in the present work, I cannot afford, in the existing state of philosophical opinion, wholly to neglect reference to the dispute concerning the validity of metaphysical speculation, and especially in view of the disrepute into which the 'queen of the sciences' has fallen, even among those who are not prepared roundly to describe all metaphysics as 'non-sense,' all rational principles as elective analytical postulates, and all ethical statements as 'emotive.' Laconic rebuttals of such estimates¹ are of but little service to truth: what needs to be shown is that in the end all 'sense' emanates from an adequate metaphysics, that effective rational principles are essentially synthetic, and that judgements that are truly ethical have 'objective' significance. I cannot hope, and will not pretend to attempt, to fulfil so large a programme in so small a space: at most I shall seek, in considering some of the more important problems that arise in connexion with a speculation such as that of Spinoza, to commend these contrary judgements, or at least to dubitate the over-confident orthodoxy of the moment.

The radical criticisms of traditional philosophy that I have mentioned have never, in fact, occupied the field even among the most modish of our schools which, however united in attack, remain so protean in defence that for the present they can profitably only be left to settle down to some reasonably coherent form. But many, though not prepared to go so far in condemnation, are inclined to take a philosophy such as Spinoza's, while allowing its acuteness and penetration, its intellectual disinterestedness, and its moral impressiveness, as *Dichtung* rather than *Wahrheit*, unwilling to accept the Wordsworthian description of poetry as "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." Even C. D. Broad,

¹ *E.g.*, by claiming that the criticism of metaphysics is itself metaphysical; that the censure of rational principles must be self-condemned; and that the morality of teaching a moral doctrine as *true* cannot be merely 'emotive.'

who in these matters I take leave to describe as a ‘moderate,’ appears to favour some such view – though for him, I suspect, Spinoza’s philosophy seems a clever intellectual toy, magically rather than inherently automatic. Others, again, working uneasily within the restrictions of the presuppositions of a truncated empiricism based on the common-sense conception of knowledge as ‘objective content’ that originally, and in its elements, must be simply ‘given,’ have judged that the method of metaphysics is by ascending analogy from the objectively ‘given,’ after the fashion of the natural sciences,¹ though by its nature necessarily deprived of the final phase of empirical verification – thus lacking the essential ground for belief. Some have even sought to justify, or defend as *pis aller*, such a procedure; but their labour is in vain, for from its very nature ascending analogy, however it may commend, can never justify itself. Nor in all strictness can it be verified by descending analogy, or even by formal deduction, exhibiting an extended agreement with what is objectively ‘given,’ in the manner of the hypothetico-deductive method of the natural sciences. Even those who, like D. M. Emmet, recognize that at no stage of cognizance is the mind confined within the circuit of its own ‘ideas’ – that the ‘given’ which is the foundation of the whole ascending analogical structure, and from which the simplest analogies must somehow be derived, is already, in its degree and manner, epistemically transcendent, is already an other to which the knower is epistemically related, which thus transcends his psychical being – these too share the same doubt. For this concerns, not the *epistemic* transcendence of the ‘given’ object, but the justification of the transition from that object by ascending analogy to an object of more perfect knowledge *metaphysically* transcending it. And the same dubiety ought justly to be felt concerning *scientifically* transcendent objects in so far as these are conceived as concrete entities that might be ‘given’ to beings having superior faculties.

As thus conceived the analogical method, whether in the natural sciences or in metaphysics, suffers from two, not wholly disconnected, defects: abstraction and mediacy, in virtue of which knowledge of the metaphysically or scientifically transcendent object is rendered, not more, but less perfect than the supposedly incorrigible apprehension of the ‘given.’ Though natural scientists are sometimes apt to speak

¹ “It takes concepts drawn from some form of experience, or some relation within experience, and extends them either so as to say something about the nature of ‘reality,’ or so as to suggest a possible mode of co-ordinating other experiences of different types from that from which the concept was originally derived.” (D. M. Emmet, *The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*, p. 5).

and to think as if scientific objects were real things, and not formal abstractions, such a view cannot be sustained – indeed, it is progressively superseded as the ultimate scientific objects turn out to be mathematical functions. The analogy, *e.g.*, of the ‘atom’ with a solar system, though it may be ‘verified,’ in no way justifies the view that an atom *is* a tiny solar system composed of ‘particles’ rotating round a central ‘particle’; for whatever the verified analogy may suggest, the supposed ‘particles’ may be ‘stresses,’ or ‘fields of force,’ or *quanta*, or wave-systems, or what not, located, not in spatial ‘points’ but in fields surrounding them, and focalized in them, not ‘material’ entities at all: in which case the atom would be wholly unlike a solar system, save in so far as a certain formal structure abstractly pervaded it. This is not the place to enlarge upon the very natural, and perhaps excusable, naiveties of much scientific description; the point of importance is that by its very nature and method the objects of science are not real beings but abstractions, and in the end mathematical ‘entities’; and if the method of metaphysics is to be ‘scientific’ its objects too, at best, cannot be other than ultimate abstractions, and at worst, lacking verification by reference to the ‘given,’ mere figments.

So much for abstraction; but these transcendent scientific and metaphysical objects are also epistemically defective since knowledge of them is lacking in the immediacy by which our apprehension of the ‘given’ is said to be certified. As Sigwart argued, to the distress of Bosanquet, and in the end with the disapproval of Bradley,¹ even if full verification could be achieved (which is seldom if ever possible) the result would still fall below the certainty attributed to their ‘given’ foundations: for that which *must* be so is not more but less indubitable than that which authentically *is*. ‘It *is* raining here and now’ is more certain than ‘It *must* have rained last night’ whatever the evidence may be; for the ‘must’ is only *based upon* what I now see and feel, whereas the ‘is’ is its *immediate deliverance*.

(i) ‘DATUM’ AND ANALOGY

If, then, the transcendent object is preferred to the ‘given’ it would seem to be for one of two reasons: either (1) because of its integrative character, coherently and comprehensively relating the multiplex ‘given’ in a form from which that ‘given’ may be derived without abridge-

¹ Cf. Sigwart, *Logic, I.*, pp. 182–83; Bosanquet, *Logic, I.*, p. 379; Bradley, *Principles of Logic*, 2nd ed., *I.*, pp. 201–2, 237 note 9).

ment or distortion; or (2) because we have reason to doubt, not that the 'given' is authentically given, but that in the form in which it is given it can have existence epistemically transcendent. Both reasons may lie at the root of the preference. The former reason, taken alone is hardly sufficient since the transcendent object may nevertheless be no more than a phenomenological 'construct'; the latter can have validity only in so far as our doubt concerning the existential form of the 'given' must have some firm foundation not as yet forthcoming.

The defects of the analogical method so far noted are equally fatal both for science and for metaphysics; but it is often thought that while scientific method and results are legitimate, metaphysical method and results are not. Metaphysics is thought to short-circuit the patient work of the sciences by the use of analogies derived, not from the world as conceived by natural science, but from perceptual nature, or some imaginal prepossession, and so stretched as to be incapable of verification. It "passes too quickly from the many to the One," seeking to determine the nature of the whole without due consideration of the natures of the parts and their modes of relational synthesis. The assumption underlying this criticism is plainly that the method of metaphysics must be identical with that of the natural sciences, so that metaphysics itself can only be an indefinitely postponed ideal of perfected and synthesized natural science.

Yet we find philosophizing scientists engaged in reasonings identical in form though taking analogies derived, not from the world of commonsense but from the special sciences – interpreting nature in general in terms of the current categories of this or that special science, physical, biological, or psychological, without waiting for the perfecting of these sciences, much less for their synthesis. The admonition to patience, and the criticism of their untimely results, must be directed to them equally with those who have by-passed the sciences and relied on commonsense analogies. And certainly, if this is to be the method of philosophy, its results can no more transcend phenomenology than can those of the sciences; and metaphysics must be abandoned as beyond the bounds of human capacity.

It was, perhaps, this attempted reduction of philosophy to the mere synthesis of the sciences that led philosophers, under the influence of Kant and his successors, to claim for it a special function: that of a 'criticism of the categories' employed by the sciences in the ordering of their *data* – thus making of it a sort of 'transcendental logic' from which have developed, on the one hand, idealistic conceptions of metaphysics,

and on the other, various forms of positivism according to which philosophy is a 'grammar of science' (and latterly, a species of linguistic grammar), and metaphysics a rationalized superstition (and thus finally nonsense'). I do not wish, however, to pursue these developments, or directly to discuss their value, but rather to re-examine some of the premisses from which, validly or invalidly, they have proceeded.

First, let us turn our attention to the *data* on which all human knowledge is said to depend, and by reference to which alone in the end it is held to be verifiable. For the most part these have been taken to consist of certain presented 'objective contents' or 'sense-data,' though from time to time mention is also made of emotions, dispositions, abilities and the like. But one of the most astonishing things about empiricistic theories is their *truncation*, by which I mean their uniform omission from the *data* of experience of that which is most notable and immediate of all, in virtue of which alone experience itself can be actual, *viz.* the *agency* by which objective *data* are apprehended, or the *endeavour* by which they are sought. Agency is, of course, no *objective datum*, and empiricists suffer from a bias in favour of the objective. This bias is doubtless derived from the over-riding importance in *practice* of a knowledge of objects; and under the influence of this naive prejudice agency and endeavour, which can hardly be wholly ignored, come to be conceived as identical with a sense of more or less successful effort, which in turn is discovered to be no more than a complex of kinaesthetic and muscular sense-*data*, and thus included among 'objective contents.' *But this is wholly to misconstrue the nature of agency and endeavour*, and it is in virtue of this error that when empiricists think of the experient and of things experienced they take them to be no more than complexes of 'objective contents.' Thus, under criticism, they are led, first towards subjectivism by failure to find anything in things but 'objective contents' intramentally presented, and then towards scepticism by failure to discover among such 'objective contents' any trace of an experient self. But, as Descartes rightly understood, it is the agency of the experient that evinces its reality, and it is the agency of things, and not their passive 'objective content,' that distinguishes them from mere presentations, imaginations or phantasies. To omit these agencies from the *data* of experience is quite fatal for the philosopher. *Reality is agency; to do nothing is to be nothing*: for potency and actuality alike in isolation are unrealizable abstractions. It is by reason of its agency, indeed, that the object of knowledge is epistemically transcendent, and not by reason of its 'objective content' which is neither mental nor extra-mental, but

neutral *abstractum*. It is by relation with the agency of the *cognitum*, as other than the agency of the knower (with which it is also related) that the 'objective content' is 'realized.' To adopt the language of the theory: a '*datum*' must be both offered and received: as offered it stands related to the agency of the *cognitum*; as received, to the agency of the experient – though since *per se* the '*datum*' is nothing real the analogy of donor, gift, and recipient is remote and dangerous, if not wholly inapplicable.

Problems arise, therefore, both with respect to the experient and with respect to his objects: with the experient, as to the source of the imperfection of his agency, as *conatus* rather than *actio* and as limited in scope by relation with a limited objective *datum*; with his objects, both as passive objective appearance of agents, and as confined to those brought into cognitive relation at this or that time. For though *data*, when conceived as confined to 'objective content,' may be taken as incorrigibly 'given,' and thus as setting no problem,¹ when given their full amplitude, so as to include agency, or endeavour, cease to be mere 'facts of experience,' and are seen as *problems* demanding solution. We may even go so far as to say that analogical construction on the basis of merely objective *data* is supererogatory, and its inconclusiveness thus of no importance; but the solution of the problems posed by *data* taken in their full scope, because they are not mere *data*, but *problems*, is the proper work of philosophy; and inconclusiveness in such solutions is a matter of essential philosophical moment.

Further, the manner and degree in which the solution of such problems makes use of analogy is not likely to be identical with that in which it is supposed to be utilized with respect to merely objective *data*,² so that we must examine with some care, though broadly, the nature of the inferences involved in metaphysical transcendence of the

¹ Indeed, as I have elsewhere claimed, the so-called objective '*data*' would be better described as '*ablata*' – as shadows upon the pure 'transparency' of understanding. They do not so much *manifest* the real as set a cloak upon its reality or agency – they are, in Leibnizian phrase, 'occult qualities.' Not understood, they are blindly received, and as such constitute 'blind spots' in the field of intellectual vision. Cf. my contribution to the Symposium: 'The *A Priori*' (*Creativity, Politics, and the A Priori, Arist. Soc. Supp. Vol. XII., 1933*).

² I say "supposed to be utilized," for natural science and phenomenology never begin from mere sense-*data*, but always from perceptual syntheses of these, taken as 'facts' but already, in virtue of their synthesis, problematical. Analogies cannot be drawn from primordial pulverulent *data*. Their use of analogy, therefore, is not merely inconclusive and supererogatory, but in all strictness either incredible or suppositious: incredible if it is supposed that analogies are available in the absence of all synthesis, and suppositious if they are uncritically drawn from commonsense or postulated associations of loose objective *data*, or even such *data* merely related as simultaneous or successive in time. What may be possible, and defensible, with empirical *data* taken in their full scope as related to agencies is another matter with which we have yet to deal.

genuine, untruncated, empirical *data-ablata* (*i.e. problemata*) of durational human experience.

(ii) KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY

Before doing so, however, something must be said concerning the relations holding between knowledge and its modes and modalities and reality which is the essential object of 'knowledge.' I will confine myself to what concerns the matter in hand. In the brief and very inadequate 'reply'¹ that seemed to be the only proper response to Professor Broad's generously conceived review-articles on *Aeternitas* to which I have already referred, I indicated as well as insight then allowed me the relation that holds between the development of a speculation and the ground of its acceptance as true: in effect that since only truth can be the criterion of truth, the grounds of belief are developed *pari passu* with the speculation itself. For well-conducted philosophical speculation is not, in my view, by ideal analysis and construction of the objective *data* of experience taken as verificatory norm – so that the system is first elaborated as a whole, or even completed stage by stage, as 'mere idea' or hypothesis, and then subjected to verification or rejection under comparison of its entailments with other empirical *data*. It is open to question whether this is an adequate description even of scientific method under scrutiny more than superficial, and I am sure that it misses the essence of metaphysical method. As I have said, investigation begins always from *problemata*, and not from *data*, or if you will, the *datum* is always problematic; and its aim is not primarily information by way of foresight of more *data*, but understanding or solution. Such understanding introduces the mind to what transcends *experientia vaga*,² and its credibility depends on the thoroughness of the understanding, not its agreement with more problematic *data*. Now, a problem is solved when its elements are ordered to intelligible form, with or without transcendence according to requirement, so that the more intelligible the theory or speculation the more perfectly credible it is. Thus, it is the formal nature of knowledge, implicit in all cognizance – even in the largely defective and ambiguous, *i.e.* problematic, pseudo-cognizance of *experientia vaga*, though privatively – that determines the reso-

¹ *Mind*, XLIII. N.S., pp. 275–78. See below, p. 10, note 1. The inadequacy of my explanation arose from the lingering 'objectivism' of my standpoint at that time.

² Not 'vague' (as, commonly translated) but 'vagrant', experience. *Experientia vaga* is often very far from vague; indeed, its evidence and vigour on occasion is for most men compulsive; and this because it is 'vagrant.'

lution of all problems. Each stage in successful investigation is a movement from problem to understanding, from disordered, distorted, and pulverulent appearance towards the real in the 'order of the intellect.' *Truth does not arise as a separate question to be independently determined by comparison of theory with 'fact,'* or by any other form of extrinsic test. Resolution of problem is a movement towards truth, which thus reveals and certifies itself and falsity. Truth, in other words, lies not at the beginning of analytic inquiry (for then inquiry would be otiose) but at the end, not in problematical *data* but in understanding. Yet it is the very nature of truth that guides a well-conducted speculation towards its pre-determined goal. And I suggest that even natural science, *i.e.* pure science, depends for its interim-truth, not on verification (which does but widen its problematical bases) but on approximation to intelligibility. Empirical verification does but register the investigator's recognition of the limitation and problematical character of that which he seeks to make intelligible. For if the 'facts' from which he starts are problematic, so also are the 'facts' by reference to which he pretends to 'verify' his theory. Dissatisfaction with *experientia vaga* is his spur, and this is founded on an implicit ideal of intellectual satisfaction already operant; for the recognition of defect implies the ability to transcend it.

Such was my short, and admittedly inadequate, answer to the complaint that neither Spinoza nor I as his expositor had given, or attempted to give, any reason why his philosophy should be believed;¹ and I pointed out that the principle evoked constitutes the essence of the 'ontological argument' for the real existence of 'perfect being'; the ideal object of perfect understanding is the norm of reality, as perfect understanding is the norm of truth. Mere objective *data* are by definition intellectual '*ablata*,' and complete *data* (involving agency) are problematic, and thus no norm of reality. Nor is passive reception the norm of truth, but only of ignorance made manifest.

Professor Broad was, of course, not unfamiliar with this kind of reasoning which had been well-exploited by the school of objective idealists. The complaint most likely to be preferred against it is that the norms of perfect understanding and perfect being are too vague for discriminate application to the problems of knowledge and existence; and indiscriminately applied may be seriously misleading, since much exists (including our own minds) that is imperfect, and in the absence of imperfect appre-

¹ "The theory of Spinoza and Prof. Hallett can be made more or less intelligible by sympathetic interpretation and the use of analogies; what is lacking is any attempt to show cause why one should believe it." (C. D. Broad, "Prof. Hallett's *Aeternitas*" (*Mind XLII. N.S.*, p. 169)).

hension (*e.g.* of problematical *data*) inquiry itself would be impossible. Thus we are forced to have regard to, and respect for, ‘facts’ and *data*. That we have no complete knowledge of perfect being need hardly be denied – certainly it is not denied by Spinoza who affirms it in no measured terms;¹ nevertheless, though he thus does not claim² to have “the best philosophy” he does claim to have “a true one”; and though human knowledge differs *toto coelo* from God’s perfect knowledge,³ yet “the human mind has adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God.”⁴ It remains, therefore, to make clear the *rationale* of these claims, and in so doing to indicate both the nature of metaphysical method and its relation with the human predicament.

The traditional definition of metaphysics is “the science of being as such,”⁵ *i.e.* of the nature of beings as being, as distinct from their natures as distinct beings. The reversal of the ‘pyramid of being’⁶ which characterizes Spinoza’s account of the hierarchy of nature entails a modified contrast between metaphysics as the science of the concrete nature of the Real and knowledge of its appearances, aspects, modes, extraneous characteristics, *etc.* which are in some sense abstractions of that nature. To this is added what would seem to be lacking from the traditional conception: the derivation of the latter from the former in virtue of its own nature and potency. For Spinoza metaphysics is knowledge of the intrinsic, absolute, and perfect essence of the Real as the source of its extrinsic, relative, and partial perspectives and appearances. It is knowledge of the Real *in se* as distinct from, but the origin of, its parts *ab extra*. *Prima facie*, human knowledge of being *in se* would seem to be confined to self-knowledge, since what is other to the self would seem *prima facie* again, to be known only *ab extra*. Knowledge of the *inseitas* of an other must be dependent upon the community, the analogy, or the transeuncy of self and other. Similarly, knowledge of the *inseitas* of God seems *prima facie* to be equally dependent on one or other of these relations. It is thus that the human predicament in the Real becomes of central and determining importance for metaphysical methodology and epistemology, for on this will depend man’s power and manner of self-and other-transcendence.

¹ Ep. xxxii.

² Ep. lxxvi.

³ *Eth. I., xvii. Sch.*

⁴ *Eth. II., xlvii.*

⁵ Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003a 21 *et seqq.*

⁶ Cf. *Aeternitas*, p. 115, note 1.

(iii) TRANSCENDENCE AND THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT

The limitations of the human mind in the pursuit of knowledge of the real have often been emphasized by philosophers in all ages, and especially by empiricists in the modern era taking their cue from Locke's attempt to "examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with"¹ before "we set ourselves upon enquiries" more remote concerning such objects. What has generally been lacking, however, is an adequate realization that the human mind (to confine ourselves for the moment to this part of human nature) is not merely a possibly defective agency for the inspection of a world extrinsic to it, with respect to which it is a mere spectator *ab extra*, but is itself an effective part of that world, which is thus, to that extent, not extrinsic to it. Its cognizance, therefore, may not be merely limited in extent or degree, but may also in form be infected with *pseuditas*. In other words, human cognizance may well vary in authenticity as it is concerned with the self in so far as it is apprehended *in se*, and as it is concerned with the other in so far as it is apprehended *ab extra*. *Prima facie* the self is 'given' as agent, the other as object; but self and other are 'given' in association, so that *the agency of the self is modalized by the objectivity of the other*, and *the objectivity of the other by the privative nature of the agency of the self*. If now we consider man not merely as mind but as integrally psychophysical (as we must, seeing that human nature is 'given' as agency distinctively both psychical and physical – for moving is not a form of thinking, or *vice versa*), the human predicament in nature is seen to be equally, or even more, important for philosophy than the mere limitations in extent and degree of the mind. Psychophysical man does not stand outside of nature to view it, but within nature as actively related to its other, which in turn is actively related to it. Thus man's knowledge of himself is defected by the otherness of his other, and his knowledge of his other by the otherness of the self with respect to it. His nature is 'given' as psychophysical agent limited and modalized by an other; and his other is 'given' as responsive qualified physical object (*i.e.* as we have argued, as psychophysical agent viewed *ab extra*). The problem of metaphysics is thus, for man, the intelligible determination of this 'given' predicament, and the consequent emendation of *prima facie* cognizance of both self and other. What must be the nature *in se* of the active psychophysical self, and of that which *ab extra* is projected, with respect to the psychophysical self, as

¹ *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Epistle to the Reader.

responsive qualified physical object? For to bypass this set of problems is not merely to be confined to a phenomenology of nature but, since the psychophysical self is no mere semi-blinkered spectator, but a functioning 'part' of Nature, to be selfcondemned to imaginational figment. The scientist, for his special limited purposes, may rest content with phenomenological objects, which are his prime concern, but the philosopher whose ends transcend those of science, and concern the *inseitas* of things, their intrinsic being, does so not merely at his peril, but, by foregoing all hope of achieving those ends, is guilty of high treason.

This distinction of the sciences as phenomenological (*i.e.* as studies of things *ab extra*) and philosophy as metaphysical (*i.e.* as a study of the *inseitas* of things), if not absolute (save in so far as the sciences ignore or exclude the agency of their objects), is certainly crucial. Failure to take due account of the 'human predicament' blurs the distinction, and leads inevitably to the prevalent notion that the main work of philosophy is logical – indeed, negative: the exposure of 'category-mistakes' in the descriptions and inferences of the special sciences, which sciences alone are regarded as competent to investigate Nature. There is nothing that metaphysics can do, and what it pretends to do is 'nonsense.' It is true that dissatisfaction with the theory that the sole work of philosophy is logical in nature is not confined to those who have openly realized the importance of due consideration of the 'human predicament' in any theory of human knowledge and philosophical method. R. L. Saw, for example, in her well-intentioned essay, *The Vindication of Metaphysics*, a study of what she takes to be Spinoza's doctrine, proposes to make good this very dissatisfaction by assigning to philosophy, in addition to its negative, or corrective, logical work, a range of positive theory comparable with the special sciences, and differing from them as concerned, not with 'observation-statements,' but with certain analogous 'existence-statements' which depend in no way upon observation. This is 'theology,' which is concerned with the uninvented, but inherited, idea of God (or perfect being) as existing but unobserved; an idea that is available to all men, and the authenticity of which is pragmatically established by the ethical advantages of belief in it, and supported by mystical experience. As we are aware of our own existence without observing the self, so also we are aware of the existence of God as creator and sustainer of our existence. We have only to set our minds free from preconceptions for this idea to "present itself unbidden," and "without sensible evidence"; and it is the work of 'metaphysics' to clarify, ration-

alize, and connect it properly with the deliverances of the observational special sciences.¹

This is not the place to question whether *theology* can be thus 'vindicated,' or to point out the several difficulties inherent in such a theory of the status and authenticity of the 'science.' What is sufficiently clear is that, however one may sympathize with the doctrine as 'a cry of the heart' from one exiled in the wastes of positivism, it is remote indeed from any effective 'vindication of metaphysics.' The author is, of course, aware that her account hardly fits Spinoza's doctrine as he himself understood it, and expounded it in the *Ethics* and the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (where theology is expressly considered, and (in *Chapter xiv.*) the *complete divorce* of philosophy and theology insisted upon). H. Barker, indeed, deprecates Spinoza's use of the term '*Deus*' in the *Ethics*, on the ground that what is thus named "is not the 'God' of ordinary linguistic usage."² Whether Spinoza's '*Deus*' is, or is not, the 'God' of theology, I will not undertake to say, but it cannot be doubted that his idea of the *causa sui* was not one that simply came into his mind "unbidden" by the mere exclusion of preconceptions (or, as a sceptic might say, by the mere presence of a prepossession in its favour), but by rigorous emendation of ideas which, even if phenomenologically incorrigible (if that is possible), are yet subject to metaphysical scrutiny by reason of the 'human predicament' which, ignored or denied, cannot but partially cloud, distort, continue, and truncate the *inseitas* of things. It is by 'the emendation of the understanding' that the idea of the *causa sui* is to be reached, not by unbridled reverie or intellectual submissiveness. And metaphysics is not another special science added to those founded on observation, but the *approfondissement* of the sciences by which their projections of things *ab extra* are transcended by sound 'speculation' into the *inseitas* of things in the order of creation.

Let us, then, briefly examine, in relation to the 'human predicament' thus indicated in the form in which it is problematically 'given', the special problems inherent in the *data* of human experience, as they are concerned with the nature of the self or experient, on the one hand, and, on the other, with the nature of the others, or objective *cognita*, in the forms in which *they* are problematically 'given'; the modes of transcendence involved in their solution; and the real nature of man's metaphysical predicament privatively expressed *sub specie durationis*. That

¹ A similar claim to include psychology in philosophy might have been expected, on the ground that its objects are not observable, yet authentically 'known.'

² 'Notes on the Second Part of Spinoza's *Ethics*' (*Mind*, XLVII. N.S., p. 168.)

is, let us make formal examination of the inferences by means of which the metaphysical 'speculations' of *Part I.* are supported.

(a) *Self-Transcendence*

The finite self is 'given' to itself as psychophysical conator epistemically and dynamically related with a responsive other viewed and operated upon *ab extra*, *i.e.* as reactive object. It is authentically (indeed, 'syn-entically') 'given,' but as problem, not as incorrigible 'real' (*i.e.* as the actuality of wholly intrinsic potency-in-act). It is, we may say, 'empirically real,' *i.e.* for itself ineluctable, but not 'intelligibly real,' *i.e.* eternal agent. Its agency, by which alone its reality may intelligibly be estimated, is defective, and in two connected ways: it is durationally conative, and it is limited in scope by the occult quality of its epistemic object and the relative dynamical irresponsiveness or inertia of its other. Hence its problematic character: for itself, even as defective agent, it is ineluctable (*conor ergo sum*); yet as such it is not intelligibly real. And this is a problem that *demand*s solution, and not merely an entertaining conundrum to relieve the tedium of "dining and backgammon." For the empirical authenticity of the finite self must somehow be derived from its intelligible reality; and the principles of self-transcendence must provide the means by which this derivation is understood and validated.

Now the finite self as intelligibly real, *i.e.* as eternal agent, is as such neither durationally conative nor limited by the relative irresponsiveness of an other (epistemically as partially occult, and dynamically as relatively inert). Its relation with the complement in virtue of which it is finite must therefore be such that this complement is fully responsive to the limit of the finite agency of the self, and thus its harmonious *alter ego* – its agency identical, but as other reciprocal. Finite self and complement must, according to the finitude of the self, enjoy the constitutive *communitas*¹ of finite eternal agency. *For as agents, and not things, self and other are not by union interfused, compounded, or resolved, but in perfect reciprocity realize their full distinctness.* In love, self and other do not merge but perfectly reciprocate in unity of action.

It follows that metaphysical finite self-transcendence is not by ascending analogy from a 'given' real, but by emendation of the durational *conatus* and objective epistemic ablation and dynamical inertia of an authentic but problematic *datum*, to the form of finite eternal agency and *communitas* with a complement. The empirically authentic potency-in-act durationally actualized must be rooted in the intelligible agency

¹ See below, pp. 54–58

of the finite self as eternal, and the partially occult and relatively inert object of authentic perception and endeavour, must be a defective derivative of an intelligible congruently reciprocating complement. The finiteness of the self remains under emendation, though that which is 'given' is in essence a problematical many-in-one, and in existence a one-among-many, and under emendation points to a finite-infinite in the *communitas* of an infinity of finites. And by generalization of these relations the conception of a perfect integration of distinct finite selves, without mergence, in a being perfect in agency, *viz. causa sui*, is brought into view.

(b) *Other-Transcendence*

The other of the finite self is naively 'given' to the self as 'objective content' unintelligible and inert. It is with the other as perceptually 'given', however, that we have to deal, and as so 'given,' according to its status, the other is more or less epistemically¹ and dynamically responsive to the *conatus* of the self. Yet as object it remains partially occult and inert. Now this other is authentically (and indeed, 'synentically') 'given'; but as problem by reason of its simultaneous defective agency and authenticity. Its reality, therefore, must be determined by the solution of its problematical nature. Once more, therefore, we cannot proceed by ascending analogy, but only by emendation in accordance with metaphysical principle, *viz.* that the intelligible reality of a thing lies not in its 'givenness,' its objectivity, or even its durational *conatus*, *i.e.* its counter-*conatus* or inertia, but in its intrinsic eternal agency. The other, as it is in itself, is no object, occultly qualified, irresponsive, spatio-temporally removed, but, adequately identified and distinguished, a finite agent, or community of finite agents hierarchically ordered, reciprocating with the hierarchical agency of the self.

I have said that self and other are 'synentically' 'given' as problem; and it follows that the other-transcendence by which what is empirically

¹ I say 'epistemically responsive' rather than 'intelligible' in order to avoid the apparently paradoxical assertion that the 'intelligible' must be 'intelligent.' Yet the paradox is only 'apparent,' since that which *in itself*, *i.e.* by reason of its own intrinsic nature and potency, is 'intelligible' must be conceived to be 'intelligent.' That which is only intelligible *to another*, by reason of a potency extrinsic to itself, cannot be argued to be intelligent. And Spinoza's *omnia animata* must certainly be read with this qualification. He does not suppose that chairs and tables have minds, though as human 'tools' they are extensions of human bodies, and no longer purely extrinsic, and are thus, in their degrees, 'animated.' And all objects are capable of becoming human 'tools' or 'media,' and thus ceasing to be mere inert 'buffers.' But, of course, what Spinoza says is not that all 'bodies' (*i.e.* pieces of matter), but that all *individual* bodies, are animated, *i.e.* 'minded' in various degrees (*Eth. II., xiii. Sch.*). See below, pp. 117 *et seqq.*

other to the finite self is by that self understood, and relative to it operates as agent, reciprocates with the emendation of the empirical finite self by which its relation with its other, epistemic and dynamic, is transcended to the form of *communitas*. This is what Spinoza calls the passage from 'reference to self' to 'reference to God,' and it involves the realization by the self that the other, too, is self for itself, and the self the other's other. And this universality of selfhood and otherness poses its own problem in view of the *communitas* of self and complement that the emendation of the empirical 'synenticity' of self and other involves. For thus the agency, *i.e.*, the reality, of each is referred to the reciprocity of its complement. Plainly, a transcendent source of finite agency alone can serve to resolve this problem; and in the end recourse must be had to the conception of a self-existent agent, or *causa sui*, self-actualized as macrocosmic uniqueness of infinite microcosmic agents in eternal constitutive *communitas*. And just as both finite self-transcendence and other-transcendence are by emendation and not ascending analogy, so this final transcendent conception depends on no ascending analogy, but contra-riwise, what is empirically 'given' depends on descending analogy from it for any degree of intelligibility that may rightly be ascribed to it.

(iv) ONTOLOGY AND ANALOGY

So far, in the main, we have considered metaphysical method conceived, in cartesian phrase, 'analytically,' *i.e.* as proceeding from authentic, though problematical, empirical *data* towards intelligible being, not by ascending analogy, but by emendation so as to provide solutions to the problems involved in the simultaneous authenticity and partial unintelligibility of the 'given.' The immanent guiding principle of this emendation is plainly that of the *causa sui*, or self-exponential, as the norm of intelligibility and reality. The common notion that metaphysics (and science) must proceed from pulverulent objective *data* by ascending analogy or hypothesis, towards intelligible constructions, to be 'verified' by reference to other similar *data*, is not only impossible (since from such *data* no analogy can be drawn), but even if it were possible it would be inconclusive since the verifying *data* would be of the same kind as those from which the process began. But metaphysics is not the apotheosis of the tentative.

The 'analytical' mode involves a more or less steady movement from a multiplicity of empirical *problemata* towards solutions, *viz.* understanding made possible by the formal nature of knowledge and its

objects, immanent in all cognizance, even in the largely defective and problematical pseudo-cognizance of the empirical human mind. Truth is thus not a final separate question, nor merely a 'given' character of certain 'objective contents'; it is progressive and accumulative with advancing understanding. Thus, as I have already said; truth lies neither at the beginning, nor exclusively at the end of such a process, but is immanent throughout, guiding the speculation towards its pre-determined goal; and even our dissatisfaction with the problematical nature of empirical *data* is founded on an implicit ideal of intellectual satisfaction thus operant in our most unsatisfactory ideation; for recognition of defect implies transcendence of that defect. Perfect intelligibility is the norm of truth to which all truth-claims must be referred; and in that regard mere objective *data*, as intellectual *ablata*, cannot compete, and authentic *data*, as but problematic, are at best but 'in the running.' The 'analytical' mode thus aims at conceptions which provide 'dialectical space' for the paradoxes of durational experience and its objects.

Finally, let us turn to the 'synthetical' mode of metaphysical method, *i.e.* as proceeding from essentially intelligible being, the *causa sui*, towards the differential forms in which this finitely expresses itself, and in the end *sub specie durationis*, in and for empirical human apprehension. Here the procedure must evidently be exponential and retrogressive, as opposed to the emendational procedure of the 'analytical' mode. For 'the way up and the way down' cannot be 'one and the same,' so that our denial that 'the way up' is by ascending analogy does not conflict with an affirmation that 'the way down' *is* by descending analogy, and not, as metaphysical rationalists have often been condemned as supposing, by rigid deduction alone.¹ For though the durational expressions of the *causa sui* in the human perspective are empirically authentic, they are not fully intelligible, but problematic, and must thus be reached, not by conclusive deduction, but by more or less enlightening descending analogy. Doubtless, finite expressions of the

¹ Human metaphysics can be neither purely deductive and ontological, nor essentially inductive and analogical, nor again transcendental and humanistic: its method must co-ordinate and sub-ordinate these methods in the light of the more or less ambiguous human predicament. Neglect of the characteristic conditions of human cognizance and extancy underlies the tacit assumption of man's cognitive and existential neutrality, either in respect of form (by transcendentalists), or of content (by empiricists), or of formed content (by rationalists). This lies at the root of methodological dispute. Defenders of the purely deductive method have assumed a human power attributable only to creative intellect; defenders of the purely inductive method, on the contrary, have assumed human impotence attributable only to objectively 'given' events; defenders of the transcendental method have assumed that the receptive categorizing mind and its categorized *data* are the measure of the real – though Kant himself, of course, went far beyond this assumption in his ethical doctrine, because here, at least, he understood that the 'real' is the *active*.

causa sui, merely as finite, are intelligibly involved in its infinite and eternal nature, and thus deducible, but this cannot apply to their durational privations which must be analogically estimated with dubiety. This is the point of Spinoza's reply to the callow query of his young Catholic-convertite critic, Albert Burgh, as to how Spinoza knew that his philosophy was "the best among all those which have been, are, or ever will be, taught in the world."¹ – "I do not presume that I have discovered the best philosophy, but I know that I understand a true one."² For truth lies in the starting point of metaphysical synthesis and its eternal entailments, not in the durational *problemata* towards which, by descending analogy, metaphysics must proceed, and to which it can only asymptotically approach by deductive procedure. For *only the unintelligibility of the unintelligible can be made intelligible*. The 'best philosophy' would be that which most nearly approximated to the deduction of authentic empirical *data* by the most effective analogical movement – one which reduced them to the status of the creational *nimbus* of finite understanding; and this no durational man can, as such, achieve. But the 'truth' of the philosophy is not thus to be impugned; for it is not founded on analogy, but on ontological principle. What is founded on analogy is such intelligibility as may be imputed to problematic empirical *data*, which *remain always as merely more or less probable*.³

In the 'synthetical' mode that which is the end and immanent impulse and guide of the 'analytical' process is taken as the beginning and transcendent *fons et origo* from stage to stage of all actuality which, according to its status, must be constituted on the analogy, more or less defective, of its source. For only thus can the defectively actual be intelligible in the degree that pertains to its nature. The aim, of course, is to render authentic empirical *data* intelligible by identifying them with the metaphysically derived beings thus expounded. It is the relative success or failure in this aim that is the ground of our estimation of the speculation as 'better' or 'worse,' though not as 'true' or 'false' in principle. It is 'better' in so far as empirical *data* are by it rendered intelligible; 'worse' in so far as they remain problematic in spite of its exposition. But the dubiety belongs to the pseudo-cognized *data*, not to the meta-

¹ *Ep. lxvii.*

² *Ep. lxxvi.*

³ We are not even able to affirm with certainty that man himself is a 'primary part' of nature – much less to know the creative status of this or that empirical thing. Here we only approach to certain knowledge; with the *causa sui* and its eternal actuality, human knowledge so far as it goes may be self-certified. Nor can there be any durational end to the effort to *préciser* the analogy of finite durational being to the eternal *causa sui* and its multiplex actuality, positive and privative.

physical doctrine in so far as it properly explicates the norms of truth and reality.

Now, it is this insistence on perfect being, or the *causa sui*, as the norm of reality that constitutes the essence of the so-called “ontological ‘proof’” of the existence of God as it is advanced by Spinoza, and even by Descartes. The common objections to this, stereotyped by Kant, emanate from a false theory, either of ideas (as with Locke), or of *ideata* (as with the natural realists), *viz.* that they are wholly and essentially constituted by ‘objective content.’ But ‘objective content’ is but abstract *ens rationis* having neither mental nor extramental existence save as alternatively associated with mental or extramental agency, and modalizing it. An ‘idea’ is an objectively modalized mental action, and its *ideatum* is an objectively modalized extramental action – the one actualizing the potency-in-act of the mind, and the other actualizing the potency-in-act of the extramental agent. The claim that ‘existence’ is not a ‘predicate’ superadded to those determining the objective characters of the subject, in no way touches the ontological ‘proof’ as it is understood by Spinoza. For existence is neither a predicate nor anything else superadded to the ‘objective content’: everything has the existence or actuality that its potency-in-act commands under the conditions set by the actuality of its complement in nature (likewise commanded by *its* potency-in-act). It follows that what is infinite, and thus without complement, must fully actualize its potency, be fully actual, *i.e.* exist *par excellence*. This is the plain intention of *Ethices I., xi. Dem. et Sch.:* “To be able to exist is potency (as is self-evident) ... therefore, either nothing exists or being absolutely infinite also necessarily exists” – a proof, *a posteriori* in form, since it seems to argue from the assumption that ‘something exists,’ but essentially *a priori* (as he notes in the *Scholium*), since that something exists is the necessary pre-requisite of all investigation. For what in no degree or manner exists cannot be investigated; and investigation without an investigator is not ‘*Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark’ but lacking the whole *dramatis personae*. And though it may seem, *prima facie*, that in the ‘analytical’ mode we pass from imperfect to perfect being, by analogy as some say, by emendation as I have contended, we do so under the *aegis* of the very ontological principle which determines every stage in the passage, and finds full expression in the self-exponential conception of the *causa sui*. The perfect is not framed on the *ascending* analogy of the imperfect, but the imperfect *understood* on the *descending* analogy, more or less remote according to status, of the perfect.

Nor need it be denied that even in the 'analytical' mode adventitious aid from analogies may facilitate metaphysical emendation of the problematical 'given,' but only that such emendation is determined by, and dependent on, them.¹ The true process of metaphysical analogy is *from* that which is intelligible (in the 'synthetic' mode), not from the essentially problematical 'given.' From that, metaphysical procedure can only be by *emendation*. He who asks whether the intelligible, the self-exponential, exists, "tries for truth truer than truth itself,"² and seeks a chimera.

¹ For the nature of the defect that calls for emendation must first be sought by all the means available – among which analogy must not be neglected. *E.g.* the notion of 'projection' upon the 'axes' or 'reference-system' of the finite self, which I have made use of in the following chapters, is evidently framed on a mathematical analogy. But its emendation by 'reference to God' is not, as such, analogical; and its results are self-substantiated.

² R. Browning, *The Ring and the Book*, xi., 23. For if we ask, 'what is the source of the authority of reason,' it is reason itself in us that asks, and cannot but reply:

"...I hav never doubted of my authority,
"who am the consciousness of things judging themselves."

(R. Bridges, *Testament of Beauty*, II., 696–7).

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II. CAUSATION AND AGENCY

It has sometimes been suggested that Spinoza would more correctly be regarded as the 'last of the medievals' than as among the first of the moderns. If, however, we consider his doctrine of causation (a crucial concept in the transition from medieval to modern thought), though his insistence on the conative nature of causal transeuncy gives some support to this suggestion, his statement that "final causes are human figments"¹ seems definitely to rule it out. Indeed, we shall see that in this matter his position is neither medieval nor modern, but eirenarchical. Transeunt causality is neither coercive nor final, nor is it impotent, but conative – and *conatus* is a privation of real causality which is eternal action.

A recent critic² has questioned the common views that Spinoza "confuses the relation of cause and effect with that of ground and consequent" or "resolves the former into the latter" or even "ignores or rejects the former altogether," on grounds that, first, the two relations are not entirely disparate – both involving *necessary* connexion, the obscurity of which in the former may be due only to the limitations of human understanding; and second, that though the connexion of any given finite mode with its Attribute cannot by us be clearly understood, we do know that each finite mode is, for Spinoza, determined in existence and operation by another finite mode, and this by another, and so *in infinitum*. "Now when Spinoza had in view this series of finite modes, each coming into existence, lasting for a time, and then ceasing to exist, he surely must have thought of the relation of cause and effect in the ordinary sense."³

Though these statements leave much to be desired as explications of Spinoza's position – being seriously infected by more modern views of causal transeuncy as impotent or extrinsically coercive, and of logical implication as merely 'ideal,' they do undoubtedly contain sufficient

¹ *Eth. I., Append.*

² H. Barker, 'Notes on the Second Part of Spinoza's *Ethics*' (*Mind*, XLVII. N.S., p. 175).

³ *Loc. cit.*, p. 176.

truth to offset, if not positively to correct, the saying of Joachim that “the term *cause*, in its more ordinary meaning, has no place in Spinoza’s philosophy,”¹ though it hardly suffices to meet the clause which follows: “nor does he intend it to be understood in a sense implying temporal sequence” – a view founded on Spinoza’s doctrine of time as a mere “aid to imagination”² without a due regard for the principle that though all error belongs to imagination, imagination is not necessarily wholly false.

The fact is that both those who conceive the causality of the finite mode to be temporal, and that of Substance or Attribute to be non-temporal logical implication, have misconceived the standpoint of Spinoza – abstracting the confused and inadequate principles of *Imaginatio*, and the common notions of *Ratio*, from the concrete efficient principles of *Scientia intuitiva*. Spinozistic causality does not operate through an independent time; on the contrary, as I hope will become increasingly clear as we proceed, time is a subordinate product of eternal causality in the confused and mutilated projection of a finite mode self-divided from its complement with which alone it issues from its substantial source. Yet finite modes as such are not related to their substantial source as logical consequents to that as ground, for “whatever follows from the absolute nature of any attribute of God is infinite and eternal”³ and the relations even of modes infinite and eternal to their source appears as logical implication only for reason, *i.e.* for human understanding in its effort to view things *sub quadam specie aeternitatis*. In deed and in truth they are the actualities of divine potency, constituting with it the indivisible divine agency. And the finite modes and their relations must be interpreted exponentially on the same principles.

Before attempting more clearly to expound these matters, let us briefly examine the notions of ‘natural cause’ and ‘logical ground and consequent’ in order to exhibit their peculiar defects as ultimate principles of real production. For the purpose in view brevity and selection will be more effective than exhaustive analysis, nor will it be necessary to break new ground, but only to set forth certain long familiar issues in their broad intent unlikely to be disputed.

¹ *Study of the Ethics of Spinoza*, p. 53, note 1.

² *Ep. xii.*

³ *Eth. I. xxviii. Dem.*

(i) 'NATURAL CAUSE' INCOHERENT

The uncritical acceptance of time as a prior, and of serial natural causation as an ultimate dynamical principle, have always led to certain characteristic difficulties. Even Berkeley, who distinguished 'real causality' or agency from the relation of 'sign and thing signified' seems not to have realized that agency itself, interpreted as involving sequence in time between agency and deed, is open to the same difficulties as arise when we take what is a mere 'sign' as producing what is but the thing signified. Chief among these is the impossibility of conceiving *how* the cause produces the reputed effect. Hume noticed this objection, but concentrated his attention more directly on the prior question *whether* the antecedent produces its uniform successor, or, more precisely, what are our grounds for believing that it does so. His conclusion was that since by the very closest inspection no power can be discerned in the antecedent to form the source of a link of necessity with its successor, not even where the antecedent is an act of will and the successor the movement willed, causation can be no more than a product of 'the imagination,' or it may be a real relation eluding our rational reflection and apprehended only through feeling or by some sort of non-rational evidence.¹

Similar difficulties have always haunted the causal theories of empiricistic and positivistic thinkers; for spatial contiguity and temporal succession cannot, without the surreptitious or overt introduction of some factor which involves or insinuates agency, be made to yield a relation even seemingly causal. The antecedent and the sequent must, as such, be temporally separate, and thus distinct and disconnected; and however narrow the interval may be taken to be, this disconnexion baffles the search for a causal relation of distinct essences. The attempt to avoid this *impasse* by reducing the temporal gap to the ideal limit of a mathematical section, the antecedent lying on one side, and the sequent on the other, must fail because thus also antecedent and sequent must approximate to identity. The defence of 'natural causation' thus requires what *ex hypothesi* cannot be allowed, *viz.* the elimination of the temporal disconnexion of antecedent and sequent, the emendation of the pulverulence of time. Nor is this alone sufficient in the absence of some intelligible relation of essences between antecedent and sequent.

¹ For this alternative see Kemp Smith, *Philosophy of David Hume*, chs xvi-xviii, App. If this was indeed Hume's view, his restraint in making it known, and his failure to draw the obvious conclusion, are perhaps natural but not the less regrettable.

For causation is not merely a process of durational transition, but involves necessity which must be founded in the natures of the antecedent and sequent. It is little wonder, therefore, that empiricists and positivists who resist the introduction of principles that transcend the *schemata* of time and event reject the notion of natural causation, or, what is the same thing, reduce it to a function of probabilities of succession taken as statistically computed.

In this connexion we must note also what is generally overlooked by those who take our knowledge as beginning from observed 'facts,' 'events,' or '*data*,' and proceeding to principles and theories, that the antecedent of any singular event taken strictly as singular is never a single event but an indefinitely great mass of events. Even if we seek to restrict these to those which are (in Lord Balfour's locution) 'relevant' the antecedent must remain extremely complicated and intellectually unwieldy. This complication is commonly mitigated or concealed by taking the events as singular in a special manner, *viz.* as 'instances' of a general kind, and thus named. When, therefore, we speak of one event as causing another we are apt to think of the kinds rather than the instances, and to suppose that one kind of event can be the cause of another kind. But kinds, being abstract universals, cannot be natural causes, and it is in their singularity that alone the instances can operate. Yet however firmly we may grasp this principle it seems impossible in this type of approach to avoid imputing to the instances causal relations abstractly conceived as if they were the relations of the kinds. But if a singular antecedent is to be properly causal its causality must likewise be singular. Its operation cannot be mere participation in the impossible operation of its kind. Nor can this paradox be avoided by conceiving the kind, not as an abstract universal but as an indefinite set of singulars, and the causal relations of the members of two kinds as no more than statistically computable probability of succession. For if the members of the sets are genuine singulars the sequence of one pair of members of two sets cannot depend on the manner in which other pairs are related. Nor, it seems, do those who favour this way of thinking suppose this – their object being to discredit the notion of causation as operation rather than to make it intelligible.

(ii) LOGICAL GROUND INEFFICIENT

Difficulties arising from temporal transeuncy are, of course, absent from the notion of logical ground and consequent, for implication is timeless.

Here we have to consider the nature of the relation of ground and consequent only in so far as it affects the question whether, and in what manner, this relation may serve as a metaphysical principle of real production without transeuncy in time. Can real production be mediated by a logical nexus? By a 'logical nexus' in this connexion is meant an implicatory linkage of essences or, to use an unfashionable locution, of 'ideal contents.' Certainly it would seem that such grounds, though they may be called the 'formal causes' of their consequents, can never be their 'efficient causes.' Nor do consequents as thus conceived¹ require causes that are efficient.

This remains true of logical implication as such however the relation may be conceived as itself being grounded – whether in terms of mere analysis of the logical ground, or synthetically by reference either to axioms and postulates explicitly or tacitly presupposed, or again to the requirements of a 'whole' which dominates the elements that form the ground and consequent of the implication. In no case is the 'following' of the consequent from the ground to be conceived as its 'production' by the ground, but merely as the explication or unfolding of the nature of the ground, either in isolation or in its normal or special setting. Nevertheless, it is in virtue of this relation that whatsoever posits or produces the ground must *thereby* posit or produce the consequent also; so that it would seem that though logical implication as such is unproductive, it may yet *mediate* production among the real things the conceptual essences of which are related as logical ground and consequent, or in so far as they are so related.

In his two books on Spinoza, one dating from his earlier life and the other posthumous, Joachim is unwearied in pointing out that in regarding 'substance' as the ground of which the 'modes of substance' are the consequents, Spinoza fails to observe that a logical *nexus* never connects a 'whole' with its parts, but always parts within a 'whole.'² This is a criticism, he says, that is aimed at "the very heart and vital centre" of Spinoza's philosophy; and we must agree that should it hit the mark it must be fatal. One difficulty about Joachim's account, however, concerns the nature of the relation of the 'whole' with these parts – a relation not to be conceived as implication. He speaks of the 'whole' as 'dominating' its elements, and of the deduction of one element

¹ It must be remembered that Spinoza's theory of the nature and relations of concepts is activist, not objectivist; so that the *real* ground of every consequent is its *efficient cause*, the potency which it actualizes. Logical ground and implication are *entia rationis*.

² *Study of the Ethics of Spinoza*, pp. 230–31; *Spinoza's Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione A Commentary*, p. 69.

from another as resting upon the 'controlling conception' of the 'whole' – expressions that seem to imply some form of connexion between the 'whole' and its parts or elements which in a logical reference can hardly avoid involving implication in some form or manner. If it is the 'whole' that determines its parts and their relations, surely the concept of the 'whole' must be the logical ground of the concept of the 'implicatory linkage' of the parts or elements. Unless indeed, the 'whole' is but an *ens rationis* – the ideal expression of the implicatory linkage of a contour of elements – incapable of domination or control.

Joachim would probably object that the 'whole' is not other than its parts which it implies, but *is* its parts as linked by implication: that it is in so far as the ground expresses the 'whole' that it implies the consequent as an expression of the same 'whole,' so that it is the 'whole' that 'dominates' the implication as its 'controlling conception.' If so, it would seem that his shaft misses the 'heart and vital centre' of Spinoza's doctrine in so far as it concerns the relation of the finite modes to *Substantia* since this is Spinoza's own doctrine.¹ As to the relation of the infinite modes to *Substantia* the case is less clear, for here it might seem that infinite substance as such *is* regarded by Spinoza as the ground of which the infinite modes are the consequents.² It is here that the distinction between Spinoza's conception of causation and both that of logical implication and that of natural or transeunt causation becomes most clear; and to this we must now turn our attention.

(iii) SPINOZISTIC CAUSE: AGENCY AND 'CONATUS'

The reader will not expect in this preliminary discourse more than a rough delineation of the general trend of what the whole book may not unjustly be said to be an elucidation, *viz.* the causal theory of Spinoza. It has often been regarded as one of the chief triumphs of scientific thought in the modern era that its interpretation of nature has eliminated all reference, not only to supernatural, but also to natural, agencies in favour of those uniformities or probabilities of co-existence and succession that are styled 'laws of nature.' Agency, it is thought, conceived as observable 'effort' has no more power than any other observable *datum*: and conceived as unobservable 'power-in-act' cannot be more than mere unverifiable hypothesis. It is true that the *words* 'action,' 'agent,' 'reaction,' 'reagent,' 'effort,' 'endeavour,' 'resistance,' and the like activistic

¹ Cf. *Eth. II. ix; xlv.*

² Cf. *Eth. I. xxi.*

terms remain in frequent use in scientific discourse, but only in a 'Pickwickian' sense, and by way of concession to linguistic brevity and style. If this exclusion of agency as an identifiable factor in natural process or an appropriate category of scientific thought, can be taken as characteristic of the modern era, as it well may be, Spinoza would have to be regarded as a medieval thinker, for in his view 'causation' is essentially agency – the actualization of potency. Though 'potency' *as such* cannot, of course, be found anywhere as actual, all that is 'actual' is such as the expression of potency. He would have regarded the notion of a mere 'event' occurring without thereby expressing a power to occur, of a 'datum' powerless to be given, as incomprehensible. Hume's famous search for the original 'impression' of power,¹ from this point of view at least, seems so naive as to be really disingenuous – very like a chemist analysing the lodestone in an effort to isolate the magnetism, or the physiologist seeking the soul in the brain. It was not Hume's 'reasonings'² that were at fault, but his presuppositions.

For Spinoza, then, the causality of a cause lies in its power or potency; but this potency is to be discovered, not among the actual properties of the cause as such, but only as actualized in its effects. The effect *is* the actuality of the potency of the cause; the cause *is* potency made actual in the effect. Thus the reality of a thing lies not merely in its actual being as *datum* or event, but in this as the expression of its potency: it is its potency-in-act, *i.e.* its agency. And it follows, therefore, that causation is not essentially a temporal process from the potency of the cause to the actuality of the effect; indeed, essentially it is not temporal, for the potency of the cause is nothing actual save as the actuality of the effect. Fundamentally, causation or agency must be conceived *sub quadam specie aeternitatis*, for unactualized potency and impotent actuality, mere *datum* or event, are alike abstractions and as such chimerical. This is not to say that there can be no derivative sense in which a durational process can be said to be causal or to involve agency in some form; but the manner in which this follows from the essentially non-temporal nature of causation or agency cannot be abstracted from the manner in which duration issues from eternity, and fruitful endeavour from perfect agency.

Little further need here be said on this topic which forms, with related questions, one of the main subjects of our study. Let it suffice to say that nothing but misunderstanding, and resulting futile criticism, of

¹ *Enquiry*, §§. 50–57.

² *Treatise*, Appendix *sub* Personal Identity.

Spinoza's doctrine can arise so long as the presuppositions of the empiricistic approach to philosophy are applied to his statements and reasonings. It is this too common and fatal error that makes of the *Ethics* the most misapprehended important work of the modern era. From a jigsaw of mere 'events,' inactive '*data*,' 'ideal contents,' and the like no knowledge of the real can be derived or constructed, and the empty results of this kind of thinking have value only as a supererogative establishment of this negation. The real issue between metaphysical rationalism rightly conceived, with its method of *a priori* analysis, and presentational empiricism or positivism, with its method of *a posteriori* synthesis, lies in the activism proper to the former, as opposed to the radical objectivism of the latter.¹ The 'rationalism' so often and so easily refuted by empiricists is but a lay-figure on which to practice.

In view of what has been said about the unreality of mere events, *data*, 'ideal contents,' *etc.* when divorced from the agency of which they are the acts, and especially of the 'quasi-medieval' character of Spinoza's conception of transeunt causation, it may be necessary to exonerate him from any imputation of adopting the easy and empty ways of medieval 'natural magic,' *i.e.* that of positing for each individual or set of events or *data* a proper agency as the source of its occurrence. It was, perhaps, as a legitimate reaction from such fatuities that the notion of agency in nature came to be rejected in the modern era; and in this Spinoza is, of course, entirely 'modern.' Though for him that which is objectively presented is to be conceived as 'act' or effect rather than as agency or cause, the series of events or *data* is not to be conceived as resulting from a parallel series of postulated agencies; for that would be to confuse eternity with time – and indeed to place eternity in time. There is but one perfect, and infinite, agency the 'acts' of which, as expressing that agency, are derivative and constitutive agents to infinity; the durational flux which constitutes the projection of this eternal crea-

¹ This 'objectivism' even infects the Kantian 'criticism,' with its method of *a priori* synthesis, and makes of it no true eirenicon – at least in its theoretical construction. For though implicitly it draws upon agency (*viz.* the agency of 'judgement') this is represented in objectivistic form (*viz.* as space, time, and the categories) as agency exhausted in act; so that the only possible result is a positivistic phenomenalism – in itself a contradiction in terms. This, of course, is not the whole of Kant's doctrine, any more than Berkeley's 'idea-ism' is the whole of his doctrine (for Kant's ethical theory, and Berkeley's assignment of real agency to mind, are very different in character) but, in the main, the Kantianism that was influential in the development of the idealistic school was that which was emphasized in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It may be added that Bradley's resort to 'feeling' in the account of the Absolute is but another example of the attempted objectification of the agency essential to the real by which the original empiricistic presuppositions even of this supposedly anti-empiricistic doctrine finally reveal themselves. The more stubborn the metaphysical effort the more certainly must it issue in activism.

tion in the reference-system of any of its elements exhibits this eternal agency as an indefinite complex of individual 'efforts' (*conatus*) constituting the 'actual essence' of enduring agents;¹ and the atomic events and *data* distributed in a metric time, the product of sophisticated analysis, are but the 'flotsam, jetsam and lagan' that remain from that shipwreck of the intellect on the rocks of finite relativity that Spinoza calls passive '*Imaginatio*.'

In the last section it was said that the identification of Spinozistic 'cause' with the relation of logical ground and consequent cannot be maintained because a logical ground lacks that real efficiency which the philosopher assigns to causes. This is, indeed, a much more damaging defect than that adduced by Joachim on the presupposition that there is no distinction between them, *viz.* that all implication is of parts within a whole, and not from a whole to its subordinate parts. We have now to explain the manner in which Spinoza, not indeed *reduces* efficient causality to logical implication, but on the contrary *elevates* and vivifies the relation of logical ground and consequent to the status of efficient intellectual causality. This is not only characteristic of the *Ethics*, but is already fully manifest in his earlier work, the *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*; and it was doubtless this identification, wrongly interpreted, that led Joachim to suppose that Spinoza had overlooked "a commonplace of Logic, a familiar and indisputable doctrine,"² and that in spite of his own description of *Natura naturans* as a 'power,' and not an 'object' or 'thing.'³ More careful reflection on this notion of 'power' might have been expected from so noted an Aristotelian scholar but for the strange failure of many generations of scholarly labour devoted to the works of Aristotle to elicit the importance of his doctrine of 'potency' (*δύναμις*) and so to develop and apply it as to bring out its metaphysical implications.

Let us begin with Spinoza's statement that "from the definition of a thing the intellect infers many properties which necessarily follow from it (*i.e.* from the very essence of the thing), and the more properties as the definition expresses more of the reality of the thing, *i.e.* as the essence involves more of the reality of the thing defined."⁴ This makes the fruitfulness of the definition in determining the properties of the thing defined depend on its adequacy – a principle that condemns as inadequate any merely conventional definition framed to subserve some

¹ *Eth. III., vii.*

² *Spinoza's Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione, A Commentary*, p. 69.

³ *Loc. cit.*

⁴ *Eth. I. xvi. Dem.*

special purpose, and from which, taken alone, few if any properties can be deduced. The statement quoted was objected to by Spinoza's eminent correspondent von Tschirnhaus on the ground that only one property can be deduced from the definition (*e.g.* the uniformity of the circumference of the circle from Euclid's definition)¹ – an objection that does but reinforce Spinoza's estimate of the inadequacy of the definition. "A definition, said to be perfect, should explain the inmost essence of a thing, and beware of assuming in its place certain properties,"² *e.g.* if the circle is defined as a plane figure such that lines drawn from a centre to its circumference are equal we have only a conventional definition from which, taken alone, few if any properties can be inferred. Or again, "in order to investigate the properties of the circle, *e.g.*, I ask whether from this idea, say that it consists of infinite equal rectangles³ I can deduce all its properties. I inquire, I say, whether this idea involves the *efficient cause* of the circle."⁴ The adequate definition must state the mode of genesis of the *definiendum*, must be 'genetic:' we must say that the circle is the figure traced out by one extremity of a moving line the other extremity of which is fixed. It is not sufficient to

¹ *Ep. lxxxii*. According to A. E. Taylor ("Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism" (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., 1937, p. 145)) "you can deduce none." The uniformity of the circumference of the circle is deducible from Euclid's definition only as this is put into operation and actualized as a 'circumference.' In this, perhaps, von Tschirnhaus was more just than Taylor since the definition is always more than a mere statement. But however that may be, what Spinoza contends is that such a definition is inadequate as a statement of the fundamental nature of the figure, though useful enough for the purpose in view. The same point is involved in Joachim's claim that inference is always from part to part under a dominant whole, and not from whole to part; or, as Taylor puts it "empty space," cannot produce "triangles, parallelograms, circles, hyperbolas" (*Loc. cit.*, p. 140). But this, of course, is the negative aspect of what Spinoza was himself positively contending. For him Extension was not conceived as 'empty space,' but as a divine potency actualized in infinite extended things and in their 'common properties.' Though the mathematician's 'circle' is an *ens rationis* common to this or that 'circle in nature,' its definition, if it is to be adequate, must state not merely the minimum properties requisite to distinguish it from all other figures, or to imagine it in order to facilitate 'constructions' (requirements for a Euclidean definition) – it must explain "the inmost essence of the thing" (*De Intell. Emend.*, § 95). It must set forth the potency thus actualized which, with a created thing, must include its 'proximate cause,' *i.e.* the potency by the actualization of which it comes into being. And this in the end must involve reference to the infinite and eternal original potency which is 'Extension.' But this is not to say that inadequate definitions are wholly impotent. The common view of geometry, *e.g.*, as a science of passive geometrical species that must be worked upon under investigation, however sufficient for the elementary class-room, is a mere crudity. The triangle has a will of its own, and dictates the operations of the geometer and their results (if not their occurrence). The properties are the properties of the triangle as defined, however inadequately, and not increments provided by the geometer. They are actualizations of the potency involved in, or imputed to, the definition with the axioms and postulates, or again, of the figure as a spatial determination, *i.e.* as Joachim would say, as a part of that 'dominant whole.'

² *De Intell. Emend.*, § 95.

³ *I.e.* the rectangles determined by the sections of all intersecting chords. (*Euclid, Elem. Geom.*, III, xxv).

⁴ *Ep. lx.*

say that the radii are equal, for the proximate cause of the circle is the *motion* of the line, and this does not belong to the line as such. From such a genetic definition the equality of the radii and other properties can be inferred.

That Spinoza chooses to explain his meaning by means of a geometrical example (so as to avoid any dispute about the identity of the thing defined – for the circle is the same however it may be defined) shows that the principle is to be applied universally, though it “counts for little” with “figures and other *entia rationis*” but “for much” with “physical and real things.”¹ It is the “inmost essence” or derived causal potency of the circle itself that is actualized in and determines all of its properties, just as it is the divine potency that is actualized in and determines “the make of the whole universe,” and the derived potency of its parts that is actualized in and determines them.² For Spinoza, therefore, the logical implications of the properties of things are themselves grounded in the potency actualized in such things, real or ‘rational,’ singular or ‘common,’ so that the genuine logical ground from which this or that consequent follows is the potency as actualized in the one, which potency determines also the actuality of the other. The diverse effects or actualizations of the same cause or potency are related by implication. The adequate apprehension of the ‘ground’ involves also the adequate apprehension of the ‘consequent’ – a relation which is or is not symmetrical according to the proximity or remoteness of the things thus related in the hierarchy of nature. It is in this sense that Spinoza may be said to ‘elevate’ the relation of logical ground and consequent to the status of efficient causality – not that the abstract ground in its mere actuality produces the abstract consequent, but that both ground and consequent, adequately apprehended, flow from the same potency, original or derived.

Finally, a brief comment on Spinoza’s conception of inadequate

¹ *De Intell. Emend.*, § 95.

² But not their temporal occurrence, duration, or number: for these depend also on the temporal occurrence and duration of other parts actualizing the original divine potency. Cf. *Eth. I. viii. Sch. ii.* Indeed, the divine potency (*Natura naturans*) alone certifies eternal actuality (*Natura naturata*); the potency of the parts conceived as ‘selves’ over against ‘others,’ i.e. their *conatus* cannot do this save under the licence or toleration of their ‘others’; and the potency of *entia rationis* is actualized only in the community of the singulars that participate therein, and must be conceived neither as durational nor eternal, but *sub quadam specie aeternitatis*. Cf. Bosanquet, *Logic, I.*, p. 227: – “Rose in the abstract does not exist. But it is a concrete universal which has power in the context of the real world to which we refer it, to dictate the epoch, place and quantity of its individual embodiment.” Here the phrase ‘power in the context of the real world’ stands in need of very careful explication if it is not to be supposed that the time, place, and number of roses is determined primarily by the power; the potency, of the ‘concrete universal, rose.’

causation, to which incidental reference has already been made, must for the present suffice. Inadequate causality is that which belongs to finite things as ‘imagined,’ *i.e.* as durational – coming into being, enduring for a while, and then passing away. This causality is inadequate not because such things are ‘modes’ and not ‘substances,’ for the causality of the ‘infinite and eternal modes’ in Spinoza’s system is not inadequate, but because as projected upon, or referred to, this or that finite mode as ‘self,’ both the finite self and its ‘other,’ *i.e.* its complement in nature as inadequately realized, are durational, with potency-in-act reduced to *conatus*. How this comes about we shall see in due course. Thus, though a ‘mode’ is defined as “that which is in, and is conceived through, another,”¹ the ‘other’ through which it is conceived, and in which it is, is never another separate mode to which it is temporally sequent, or even with which it is co-existent, taken as a mere fact or occurrent, as Barker assumed in his interpretation of *Ethics I., xxviii.*: “Spinoza had in view this series of finite modes, each coming into existence, lasting for a time, and then ceasing to exist ... We are referred back from mode to mode indefinitely, and can never see, with full comprehension, *how* any particular mode is necessitated to be what it is. ... The physical world ... is *for us* a mere chain of causes and effects or a complex of such chains.”² It is, in fact, because, and in so far as, we are apt to suppose that causes in nature are purely transeunt that the natural causation imagined is inadequate; and in so far as this is openly postulated – as by Hume – the causation as such must be denied. What Spinoza “had in view” was a situation far more complicated than any simple series of occurrents in time, *viz.* the dependence of the finite mode, whether adequately conceived as eternal, or inadequately as durational, upon its complement in nature, hierarchical or serial, by reason of its nature as a partial expression or actualization of the divine potency which is also expressed in or actualized as that complement. Thus when the finite mode is conceived, whether adequately or inadequately, we cannot but regard it as dependent on its ‘other’ for existence and operation. It is in so far as the preceding mode (or natural cause) actualizes a potency (*i.e. conatus*) originally derived from the infinite, one, and indivisible divine potency, and thus implies the actualization of the succeeding mode by way of necessary supplement (issuing from its co-derived *conatus*) that it can be conceived as in any manner or degree its cause. This principle is expressed by Spinoza as applied to

¹ *Eth. I., Def. v.*

² ‘Notes on the Second Part of Spinoza’s *Ethics*’ (*Mind, XLVII. N.S., p. 176*).

the *ideas* of singular things in *Ethices II., ix.*: “The idea of a singular thing actually existing has God for cause, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he is considered as affected by another idea of a singular thing actually existing, of which also God is the cause in so far as he is affected by a third, and so to infinity.” It is the preceding mode, not as mere ‘event,’ but as the actuality of *Deus quatenus finitus est* (*i.e.* the divine potency partially actualizing itself) that is the cause of the succeeding mode similarly conceived. We might almost go so far as to say that the relation of the serial modes is one of ‘implication’ rather than causation since it is the potencies actualized in the events that alone are properly causal. The causality of each lies in its *conatus*, derived from the divine potency which is indivisible and thus demands actualization in a hierarchy of finite modes, or, as projected upon or referred to this or that finite mode, demands durational modes in serial order. Thus, the temporal sequence of transeunt causes that holds the field in the world of *Imaginatio* is genuinely causal only as a projection in the finite reference system of the hierarchy of immanent causes actualizing the divine potency; its temporality is but an ‘aid to imagination’ in the arrangement of its mutilated content in a degraded projection of the eternal order of essences.

What the serial order of natural causes requires, therefore, is not analysis into its elements of events and *data*, supplemented by constructive synthesis, but the emendation of its fundamental relativity to finite reference systems. Mathematical physicists have made a beginning in the emendation of finite perspectives; but spatio-temporal relativity does not exhaust that which infects the concrete world of duration. Indeed, the most difficult part of the work of de-relativization remains to be done, though it is here suggested that Spinoza first clearly saw the need, and outlined the principles that must govern the ‘general metaphysical theory of relativity.’

PART I

NATURE

. . . That sustaining Love
Which through the web of being, blindly wove
Burns bright or dim as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst . . .

SHELLEY, *Adonais*

'NATURA CREATRIX'

It is to Aristotle that we owe the earliest and most far-reaching analysis of 'action' as a relation of 'potency' to 'actuality,'¹ though the results of his discussion are limited, both in so far as his conception of action is mainly confined to 'motion' and 'becoming,' *i.e.* to corporeal and temporal action, and also because the notion of 'potency' in his use is so abstract as to include the passive 'potency' of being acted upon, as well as the mere 'possibility' which comes of the absence of opposing causes or principles. It is by reason of the former limitation that he holds that actuality is prior in time to potency since potency must belong to something actual if it is to take part in action: "There is always a first mover, and the mover always exists actually. We have said that ... everything that is produced is something produced from something and by something."² Further, for him the actuality is 'substantially' prior, because it is the actuality *for* which the potency is acquired or exists, so that the 'end,' though in time it follows the exercise of the potency, is nevertheless prior as determining the nature of that potency.

Again, by reason of his abstract conception of 'potency' he is led to deny that 'eternal things' "exist potentially" on the ground that what is said to be 'possible' either may or may not exist: "Every potency is at one and the same time a potency of the opposite ... Everything that is capable of being may ... either be or not be."³ But an eternal thing is ingenerable and imperishable, and thus cannot be "potentially existent" but must exist actually. Hence the curious conclusion that though it is "ever active" and "untiring," and though 'action' is the actualization of potency no eternal thing has potency.⁴ It is true, of course, that

¹ It is strange how little this part of Aristotle's doctrine has been exploited by Aristotelean scholars. This is not *de mon métier*, but only one book in recent times comes to mind in which it takes a prominent place, *viz.* F. W. Bain's *On the Realization of the Possible* – an odd, polemical work in which, through excess of zealotry, genuine insight is turned to the futile uses of contemporary odium.

² *Metaph.* © 8.

³ *Loc. cit.*

⁴ It is true, of course, that nothing can be said to be 'possibly existent' in the absence of

the potency of an eternal thing is eternally actualized, and in this sense the existence is necessarily actual; but it does not follow that that eternal actuality is impotent (for thus it would be *non-ens*) but only that, as necessary, no eternal thing is merely 'possible,' *i.e.* capable of being generated or corrupted. That which is actual, whether eternal or temporal, necessary or contingent, is so by reason of the potency thus expressed – potency which is of itself or of another, and is expressed in itself as actual. The potency of 'God' is expressed in his actual existence, and his potency with respect to all the things which he creates is immanent therein. It would be an anomaly if that which is eternally actual had no potency for existing because it exists necessarily, potency being confined to what is temporally actual because it alone can be said to be 'possible.'

Actuality, then, does not exhaust, and thus negate, potency, but expresses it, so that the potency is immanent in the actuality. Indeed, since a potency and its actuality are not, as such, in temporal sequence, any such exhaustion would negate the very principle of 'action.' The durational character of empirical temporal agency, or *conatus*, is the very symptom of its privation as action, and not of its perfection; and even here the agency is a continuous striving in which potency and act vary concomitantly throughout, both the varying potency and the changing action being durational and not temporally separate.

Now 'creation' is action *par excellence*: it is the eternal action of an absolutely infinite agent, the potency of which expresses itself in an infinite and eternal actuality. It is not to be conceived as the production *e nihilo* of an indefinite assemblage and series of finite temporal beings – a conception which has been the source of most of the insoluble riddles which have perplexed, and must always perplex, candid thinkers who would at once maintain the perfection of the creator, and also the manifold (and indeed manifest) defects of his supposed creation.¹ The place and status of such finite temporal beings in, or under, the created order remains to be considered in Part II.: here we must first consider

some potency, but a thing is said to be 'possible' only in so far as this potency is not necessarily overcome by some opposing cause or principle. Thus 'potency' is intrinsic whereas 'possibility' depends on what is extrinsic. Alternatively, though actuality proves possibility, mere possibility as such (*viz.* the absence of impossibility, intrinsic or extrinsic) cannot prove actuality. If, then, (*pace* Leibniz) it is held that there cannot be any unrealized possibility, this belief can only be founded validly on the relation of all possibilities with the source of all positive potency-in-act, *viz.* the infinite and eternal *causa sui*.

¹ Hardly to be met in these days by a mythical account of 'original sin' and punishment, though as we shall see, a rational account in analogous terms is the very essence of Spinoza's doctrine of imaginational life – 'self-reference' and 'bondage' being the analogues of original sin and punishment, and 'reference to God' the way of salvation or enfranchisement.

the nature of creation as such, and with respect to its finite derivatives. In order to do this certain root-conceptions must be elaborated.

(i) POTENCY, AGENCY, AND ESSENCE

That of which the existence is but an empty possibility without *power* to exist, in itself, in its source, or in its co-derived context, is not a possible existent. Again, the *mere* power to exist, power wholly unactualized, is a chimera. All real potency is potency-*in-act*. As this principle may seem to conflict with the conditions of temporal development and durational striving, let us begin by considering its application in this durational sphere.

(a) *Durational Potency, Conatus, and Becoming*

The notion of the possession of power prior to its exercise is among the commonest of commonsense beliefs.¹ It is swept aside, however, by 'radical objectivists' who reject the notion of power in general on the ground that power is no object of contemplation. "It is impossible," says Hume, "that the idea of power can be derived from the contemplation of bodies, in single instances of their operation; because no bodies ever discover any power, which can be the original of this idea";² and he adds in a footnote that Locke's account of the idea of power as the product of reasoning is in direct conflict with that philosopher's own assertion that no reasoning can ever give us a new, original, simple idea such as the idea of power. As criticism of Locke this is fair enough, but it does not follow that because the idea of power is neither an object of contemplation, a complex idea or relation, nor the product of reasoning, it is philosophically nugatory. Nor, again, does this follow from Hume's assertion that the particular nature imputed to any supposed power must be gathered from that which is taken to be its empirical result. On the contrary, this is inevitable seeing that power and deed are the two poles of the single principle of *action*, the deed expressing the power. But empirical actuality is no mere 'given,' occurrence, or event: it is the issue of agency, *i.e.* of power in expression, of potency-*in-act*. The event is the actuality of a power, and only thus transcends

¹ For the sake of the more naive or hasty reader it is perhaps worth while to note that this part of my speculation does not fall under the lash of Molière's wit, the point of which lies in the futility of the attempt to find the *natural cause* of a process in the *actual* presence of some 'virtue,' 'power,' or 'faculty' operating *a tergo*. The 'dormitive virtue' of opium is not among its *actual* properties, and as so conceived is nothing but the somnolence hypostasized, *i.e.* a potency falsely conceived as actual prior to its actualization.

² *Enquiry*, § 50.

the status of mere "objective ideal content" or 'presentation.' We do not *reason* to the power; it is intrinsic to the event which is its actuality or expression. Events neither merely occur nor are originally and exclusively 'caused' by prior or other simultaneous events.

Nevertheless, the manner in which this fundamental principle has embodiment in the durational sphere must carefully be elucidated if serious error and confusion are to be avoided. Commonsense takes the power of a thing to be a possession, unobservable indeed, but existing prior to the exercise which actualizes it. So the acorn is said to be potentially an oak-tree – with the suggestion, and often the belief, that even the dormant acorn houses some non-empirical querci-potency. Now such a view must be inadmissible, not merely because in the absence of a context of moist humus and air it *cannot* grow into an oak-tree, but rather because until planted with this context, its supposed potency is not merely without actuality (for that is true of all potency *qua* potency), but is not potency at all because it is not *in act*. For only potency-in-act is real: inert potency is a chimera.

If, then, we inadequately conceive the development of the acorn into the fully grown oak-tree as a series of momentary stages, we should have to say that each stage is the actuality of its own intrinsic potency-in-act, and not that each stage bears the inert potency springing into action at the next.¹ If, now, it seems that for the development of the tree no potency is available, this laches results from the inadequacy of the conception of durational development as proceeding by isolable stages. For duration as such is continuous, not composed of temporal instants;² and the actual development of the acorn into the fully grown oak-tree can only be conceived as the durational actualization of a congruently developing potency-in-act.

I turn next to the relation of the developing acorn with its necessary context of moist humus and air, and their distinction. Without this context the acorn must remain dormant and wither away; yet however this may be varied, if the acorn grows at all it grows into an oak-tree and no other. Evidently, then, the specificity of the querci-potency-in-act lies in the acorn from start to finish, and not in the context. Yet this is no ground for supposing that this permanent specificity consti-

¹ Thus even durational agency is rightly conceived only *sub quadam specie aeternitatis*: e.g. the durational agency of vision is complete as vision throughout its duration, for one either sees or does not see, though the objects seen are changing. Similarly, the potency of the oak is querci-potency throughout its growth.

² *Ep. xii.* To say that between any two instants, however near, there is always a third instant, is formally to admit this transcendence – not, as many have supposed, to dispense with it.

tutes an element of inert potency in the dormant acorn. The acorn is the fruit of a parent oak-tree, and part of the actuality of its quercipotency-in-act, and until separated from it nourished from its context. Thus, on separation from its parent the acorn needs a substitute context of moist humus and air, without which its potency-in-act must lapse or change its nature.¹

It is in the light of this distinction and relation of agent and context that some of the egregiously jejune remarks of B. Russell on the notion of potentiality² are best discredited. "The concept of potentiality," he says, "is convenient in some connections, provided it is so used that we can translate our statements into a form in which the concept is absent. 'A block of marble is a potential statue' means 'from a block of marble, by suitable acts, a statue is produced.' But when potentiality is used as a fundamental and irreducible concept, it always conceals confusion of thought."³ But the confusion of thought is plainly Russell's: the "suitable acts" do not just happen, and the statue not merely *is* produced, but *can* be produced, though only by a sculptor exercising *his* potency. For no one supposes that the potentiality of becoming a statue (say of Apollo *and no other*) lies in the marble which is but the sculptor's context or material. Without the potent, active, sculptor it *is not* produced, and *cannot* be produced.⁴ It is no 'event' which just happens, but the issue of an action not its own, but to which it contributes a necessary context. It is the actualization of the sculptor's artistic potency-in-act. Not that the marble is wholly devoid of potency-in-act: its actuality evinces this.

Thus, though there is no actual entity called 'potency' housed in this or that actual thing (for the notion of an actual potency is self-contradictory), every actual thing is the actualization of potency. Its being issues not from a chimerical inert potency pre-existing in itself or another, but from potency-in-act – the reality of things lying in this agency, and not in any miraculous donorless 'givenness.' Reality is agency of which potency-in-act and actuality are the poles. And of these the potency is metaphysically, but not temporally, prior. Nor

¹ The notion of dormancy is, of course, relative. A completely dormant acorn is dead, and thus no longer an oak-seed. Yet even the dead acorn, though it is not quercipotent, actualizes its own proper potency-in-act.

² In his *History of Western Philosophy*.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 189-90

⁴ In other words, Russell's analysis or 'translation' illegitimately eliminates the concept of potentiality by using the verb '*is* produced' where '*can be* produced' is required. The quercipotency-in-act lies in the developed acorn; the Apollo-potency-in-act lies in the sculptor – not in the marble.

does the full actuality of any potency involve its negation as potency; it involves its reality as potency-in-act without which actuality is inconceivable.

Further objection may now be raised on the ground that an example has been chosen which conceals what is patent enough with durational beings such as ourselves, where powers never actualized are credibly imputed. We commonly believe that a man has the power to do many things that, in fact, he never does, and can never at one and the same time do – a belief that amounts to inexpugnable conviction – for what that may be worth. Our theory, it may be thought, renders this impossible, making of choice an illusion. It is the ethical consequences, perhaps, that chiefly seem to bring our theory into serious disrepute as undermining the notion of man's moral responsibility. The proper discussion of these matters must, however, be postponed to a later stage, but since these objections apparently have great weight with many, I will at once briefly add that they arise from an inadequate application of the principles involved. For potency-in-act is no force impelling the agent *ab extra* (for thus he would be no 'agent'), but his very essence, which *sub specie durationis* is 'economically' and (according to individual status) morally, *elective*.¹

(b) *Eternal Potency, Actio, and Being*

Little remains to be said concerning agency as such, from which all passivity is excluded. It is the actualization of potency undefected by opposition, and it is thus eternal, whether finite or infinite. Finite agents, however, are not self-existent, but depend on some 'proximate cause' or potency, and in the end upon an infinite agent that is self-existent, *i.e.* upon a potency the actualization of which is wholly self-dependent, and for which essence and existence are indiscernible, and discernible only by abstraction. This primordial infinite and eternal potency-in-act Spinoza calls '*Substantia*,' 'God,' and '*Natura*,' according to the requirements of his exposition, the distinction of potency and actuality in *Natura* being expressed by the use of the medieval locutions, *Natura naturans* and *Natura naturata*. With the terms '*Substantia*' and 'God,' however, the emphasis is on the potency; while the actualities which necessarily and eternally "follow from" the potency are styled the 'infinite and eternal Modes of Substance,' and the 'fashion or make of the whole Universe.'² This infinite and eternal agency is 'creation,' which, as has been

¹ I return to this topic in *Chapter VI, section iii*.

² I will repeat what I have elsewhere emphasized, that the translation of '*facies*' in Spinoza's

said, must not be conceived as the production of finite durational being *e nihilo*. The avoidance of this error is a matter of crucial importance for the interpretation of Spinoza, and more especially in view of the long-prevailing tendency of both expositors and critics, under the influence of an habitual 'radical objectivism' to consider '*Substantia*' as an indeterminate, but determinable, object or thing, rather than as agent.

It is self-evident, says Spinoza, that "to be able to exist is a potency";¹ the simple converse, which is perhaps less obvious, but no less self-evident, is that potency is essentially the power to exist, *i.e.* actually to be: eternal potency, to exist eternally; or durational potency, to continue in existence durationally, *i.e.* actually to become; and according to the nature of the potency is the nature of the actual existent or persistent so determined. Now, a finite eternal being derives its potency from a proximate cause or power, and in the end from the primordial infinite potency or Substance, but Substance itself suffers no such dependence: it is '*causa sui*,' and thus self-existent or actual as eternal *Natura*. The potency and the actuality of *Natura* are identical in their distinction – for this is the very nature of agency. Further, potency so far as it is only potency is indeterminate, and actuality so far as it is only actuality is determinate; thus Substance, or infinite potency is wholly indeterminate, and thus involves no negation,² hence as actual it is wholly determinate without negation as the eternal universe. "From the necessity of the divine nature there must follow infinite things in infinite ways,"³ *viz.* 'the make of the whole Universe.' The manner in which these infinite things constitute the indivisible whole will be discussed in due course: what is important here is that though the absolutely infinite indeterminate potency is logically prior to its absolutely infinite determinate actuality which 'follows from' it, this actuality does not have to *come into* existence, for by its very nature as independent the potency is eternally in act, and as such exists eternally. For its existence is not added to it: it *is* its actuality. This is the very essence of the 'ontological proof' of the existence of God as advanced by Spinoza. A thing exists by reason of its power-in-act, and it fails to exist only when that

often quoted phrase from *Ep. lxiv.* by 'face' is to be deprecated. 'The face of the whole universe' cannot but suggest the *durational* appearance of the world, but 'the make (*facio*) of the whole universe' is its *eternal* reality.

¹ *Eth. I., xi. Dem (3)*. Cf. also: 'The potency of God is nothing but the active essence of God' (*Eth. II, iii Sch.*).

² *Ep. I.,*

³ *Eth. I., xvi.*

power is deficient, by reason either of extrinsic opposing power, or intrinsic impotence. And by definition Substance can suffer neither defect. Indeed, the question of the existence or non-existence of Substance does not arise, for defined as infinite potency, it necessarily exists as *causa sui*, *i.e.* self-actualized. It is its *nature* in detail that alone can come into question. Thus if the 'ontological proof' is to be discredited, it must be by arguments other than those by which it has generally been assailed, and seemingly so easily destroyed.

(ii) SPINOZISTIC SUBSTANCE AND ATTRIBUTE

To these questions concerning the nature of Substance we must next begin to turn our attention. Spinoza speaks of Substance as "consisting of Attributes," indeed, of "infinite Attributes,"¹ and he defines an 'Attribute' as "that which the intellect perceives of Substance as though constituting its essence."² I will not waste space in refuting the naive idea that the Attributes of Substance are to be thought of under the analogy of the qualities of a body, and that the '*tanquam*' of the definition is to be rendered by 'as if,' so as to suggest that they are not truly attributed. Substance is no qualified thing, but infinite agency, and its Attributes are ways in which this infinite potency-in-act may be conceived by intellect. Furthermore, all the conceptions of intellect (as distinct from 'imagination') are true and adequate. Yet Substance is not thence to be conceived as an indefinite plurality of Attributes, for in itself Substance is indivisible and indeterminate. Substance 'consists' of distinguishable Attributes only from the standpoint of intellect, which is a 'mode' or actualization of the primordial potency, and which as occupied with thoughts must attribute thinking potency to its source, *i.e.* the Attribute of Thought. And Substance consists of *infinite* Attributes because Substance as thinking (or any other distinct) potency prompts supplementary conception under some other determinate Attribute involved in the inverse of Thought, to make good the indeterminacy of Substance. For example, intellect conceives Substance as an infinite power of thinking; but thought requires an object other than itself, so that Substance must be conceived as an infinite power actualized as other than thought (*e.g.* as infinite physical potency). Nor can intellect rest here (as the 'Experience'-philosophers have done), for a psychophysical potency is also determinate, and points towards what it

¹ *Eth. I., xi.*

² *Eth. I., Def. iv.*

excludes. And so to infinity: for each Attribute or parity of Attributes points to the inverse which, as determinate, it excludes.¹

Some have thought that this account of the Attributes gives to the Attribute of Thought status superior to that of all other Attributes, and that this argues a defect in the theory. That Thought has a unique place among the Attributes need not be denied, but only the implication that in Substance itself the thinking potency is superior to all others – for in it all are indeterminately identical. The primacy of Thought reflects only the relativity of the Attributes to intellect so far as the philosophic quest for understanding is concerned.² It is because we are thinking beings that we philosophize, and philosophy must thus find the intellectual standpoint unique. And the human intellect confines man to a psychophysical conception of Substance (with the necessary formal admission of what transcends that conception). What the divine intellect apprehends beyond the ‘make of the whole universe’ of animated body, and how it apprehends it, are questions that lie beyond the competence of the human understanding.

It remains briefly to consider what has commonly been regarded as a fundamental objection to Spinoza’s doctrine of Substance and its infinite Attributes: “No ingenuity and no straining of language are equal to the task,” says Barker,³ of expounding “a combination of three inconsistent doctrines: (1) that the substance consists of the attributes, (2) that the substance is one, (3) that the attributes are many and all wholly different from each other”; and he illustrates by quotation from Pollock, Joachim, and L. Robinson (whose account, oddly, he thinks to be the *right* one in spite of its being not what Spinoza said, but what he thinks that he ought to have said) to show “into what straits commentators are brought in the attempt to do so.”

The difficulties are plain enough so long as Substance and its Attri-

¹ Even with finite modes, there are none of one Attribute only (*omnia animata*). But neither are modes of *more* than two Attributes *conceivable*, for ‘conception’ is an intellectual action, and intellect is essentially *bipolar*.

² The relativity of the Attributes to the modes of the other Attributes will have concomitant result with those Attributes. But since these relations necessarily transcend the competence of the philosopher as such (*i.e.*) as intellect, we cannot even say that the result is rightly described as ‘giving superior status’ – or indeed that it can be ‘described’, ‘description’ being an intellectual process. In so speaking we are, it must be remembered, thinking of intellect human in form, though without its durational defects; the divine intellect, *i.e.* the infinite potency actualized under the Attribute of Thought, may not, and indeed can not, be subject to human restrictions. For in Substance the Attributes are identical in their potential distinctions. Man’s knowledge of God, even when it is true or adequate, is after all *human* knowledge, and differs from divine knowledge as the Dog in the heavens from the barking animal – being the same in little more than name.

³ H. Barker, ‘Notes on the Second Part of Spinoza’s *Ethics*’ (*Mind*, XLVII. N.S., p. 283).

butes are 'conceived under the analogy, more or less idealized, of a 'thing' and its 'qualities.'¹ Even the account which Robinson gives (*viz.* that the Attributes are the real substances, and Substance but the single order which prevails in them all)² labours under the same false analogy. As we have seen, Substance is not a 'thing' but infinite potency-in-act; and the Attributes are not 'qualities' or 'characters' of a thing but the infinite potency-in-act as reflectively apprehended by intellect which is itself an actualization of that potency – and one that is implicitly self-transcendent. And why should not an *identical* infinite potency be truly conceived as having infinite *equivalent* forms? Why should not that which in and for itself is indeterminate be discernible by intellect as involving infinite determination? Doubtless it will be said that this is impossible because it involves a plain contradiction: genuine equivalence would commonly be held, by the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles, to exclude multiplicity. What Spinoza asserts, however, is not that the infinite forms of potency are indiscernible (for as perceived by intellect they are certainly discerned as wholly different one from another) but that originally, and in themselves, they are equivalent, so that the primordial potency is absolutely indeterminate. Yet intellect is not thus involved in error: the discernible equivalent forms of potency are not intellectual figments.

Spinoza's argument is, in fact, quite simple and evident: intellect must be conceived, not as the extrinsic spectator of *Natura*, but as a determinate actualization of the primordial indeterminate potency. As such it truly conceives this source as a potency-in-act of which both itself and what is essential to it (*viz.* its primary *ideatum*) are determinate actualizations. It thus conceives that source as a *determining* potency, and thus as *reflectively determinate* (*i.e.* as being, say for man, thinking and extensional potency). But further, an *absolutely* indeterminate potency cannot be adequately conceived as *finitely* reflectively determinate, for every negation inherent in determination must be made good; hence intellect must conceive the primordial potency-in-act as constituted by infinite reflective determinations, or Attributes. And this *is* the nature of Substance, not in and for itself, but with respect to modal intellect, which is one of its determinate actualizations. In itself it is absolutely indeterminate, involving no negation, not even (as with modal intellect) negation made good. For the divine 'Intellect,' unlike the finite modal

¹ Though even here it would seem that contemporary physicists, with their alternative wave- and quantum-theories, are not prepared to agree that the writs of Elea run universally.

² *Kommentar zu Spinozas Ethik, I., Exkurs I. Cf. also under II. vii. Cor.*

intellect, from which it differs “as the Dog in the heavens from the barking animal,”¹ the infinite Attributes are not merely indiscerptible, but indiscernible. Nor is this a limitation of the divine Intellect.

‘Generically’ determinate intellect, then, being actual issues from thinking power in the primordial potency-in-act; and since this, as such, is indeterminate, intellect must also impute to it equivalent actualization as other-than-intellect, so as to make good the negation that would otherwise be involved in its own ‘generic’ determinacy. This otherness, which for intellect is thus numerical, must, with the Attribute itself be conceived as self-transcendence to identity with indeterminate Substance. Thus, in Substance the Attributes are wholly identical, yet for intellect as the actuality of one of them they are wholly diverse – their self-transcendence as Substance being actualized as essential relation with an other.

It is thus that the actuality of the infinite potency is congruent with that potency although the ‘generic’ diversity of the former seems *prima facie* incongruent with the indeterminacy of the latter. For though intellect which actualizes the Attribute of Thought fully manifests infinite Thought-potency as such, it is never, as it were, *in vacuo*, but has ‘objective reference.’ That by which intellect is determinate, *viz.* its other, and in particular, for us, its ‘primary object,’ is as such essential to it as referent, though no part of it; and intellect which is the actuality of Substance is intellect *with* its essential ‘object’ as other or complement.² And so for all the Attributes.

Yet, finally, it may be objected that though intellect cannot be conceived as actual save, primarily, as apprehending an object other than intellect, *physical* actuality, *e.g.*, is not in analogous ease, but is self-sufficient. Here there is nothing corresponding to the ‘objective reference’ of intellect by which it is self-transcendent. Certainly, the physical and the intellectual being wholly other, the self-transcendence of the physical is not by way of ‘objective reference,’ nor indeed by any way that lies open to intellectual apprehension humanly limited. Nevertheless, this is no ground for the denial of the self-transcendence of the physical. It is now generally recognized that a man, *e.g.*, is not a body *plus* a mind, but an animated body, or an embodied mind – not, as

¹ *Eth.*, I., xvii., *Sch.*

² That intellect in man refers to the actuality of one other Attribute only is *nihil ad rem*, for the divine intellect cannot be thus limited since it is the actuality of the Attribute of Thought in its self-transcendence as Substance. Nor is it true without qualification that man is wholly secluded from the Attributes other than Thought and Extension: for as determinate, Thought and Extension not merely involve or imply, but *are*, the negation of the remainder, which is thus inversely operative.

Spinoza would say, a mode of Thought tied to a mode of Extension, but a mode of Substance actualizing these identical potencies – a single individual, a psychophysical actuality. And for Spinoza all physical things are animated in the degree of their individuality.¹ Yet this unity of body and mind, even with man, could hardly be sustained if the body were not in some manner self-transcendent. And the limitation of the human intellect to psychophysical modes (known as such, and thus recognizing the limitation) is proper to man but not therefore to be imputed to the divine Intellect, which is not thus, as it were, bipolar, nor multipolar, but an all-embracing ‘intellectual love’ for which otherness is the very exposition of selfhood.

¹ *Eth. II., xiii. Sch.*

CHAPTER II

'NATURA CREATA'

Creation, we have said, is the action *par excellence* in which absolutely infinite potency is exhaustively actualized: it is, therefore, eternal; nay, this is that primordial 'transformation without succession' which is the very essence of eternity.¹ *Natura creata* is thus (it must again be urged) not to be confused with the 'common order of nature' involving the co-existence and succession of durational things or temporal 'events' which, though in some manner privatively related to the world as eternally created, by no means at any time, or epoch however extended, can be regarded as the actuality of absolutely infinite potency. Here, then, we consider the nature of the completely determinate actuality of a potency wholly indeterminate, *i.e.* an actuality which makes good the negation involved in the determination of every distinction and part by the complementary determination of its other. So far as distinctions of kinds of actuality are concerned, what has been said in the preceding chapter about the Attributes of Substance will at present suffice, so that here we shall consider mainly the structure of the actuality which flows from Substance itself under all the Attributes, without reference to their 'generic' distinctions. What is to be understood is the eternal 'make of the whole universe,' or *Natura naturata*, which, according to Spinoza, is at once 'infinite, one, and indivisible,' yet also composed of infinite finite beings in their degrees. To God "matter (*i.e.* creative power)² was not wanting for creating everything from the highest indeed to the lowest grade of perfection; or, speaking more properly, ... the laws of his nature were so ample that they sufficed for producing everything which can be conceived by infinite intellect."³

¹ See *Aeternitas*, p. 234 *et passim*.

² The identification may strike the reader as bizarre, 'matter' being traditionally conceived as remote from, or even as hindrance to, rather than the source of, the 'form' to which alone reality is ascribed – 'pure matter' being *non-ens*. Elsewhere (see *Aeternitas*, p. 115, note 1) I have noted the reversal, by Spinoza, of the traditional order of essences, of which this is another example. For him 'matter,' as such, is indeed nothing *actual*, but so far from being therefore nothing *real*, it is the potency, original or derived, which is actualized as determinate being of every grade of perfection, whether eternal or durational.

³ *Eth. I., Append.*

(i) SPINOZISTIC MODE: MACROCOSM AND MICROCOSM

Natura creata is thus at once an individual whole and exhaustively individuated in infinite parts all of which are in perfect and eternal community according to their status and amplitude. The infinite and eternal primordial potency or Substance requires (as it is the purpose of this chapter to explain) an indivisible but infinitely individuated actualization in hierarchical order from the whole individual universe or macrocosm, through infinite constituent microcosms, from highest to lowest, each in its manner and degree actualizing the indivisible original power: for all the modes, both infinite and finite, are 'modes of Substance.' Spinoza's formal definition of 'mode' does not, perhaps, immediately bring home to the uninitiated reader the identity of 'mode' and 'actuality': "By mode I understand the affections of substance, or that which is in another, through which also it is conceived,"¹ the term 'affection' being ambiguous in common use. Yet if we recall that to 'affect' a thing is to do something to it (*adfacio*), and that Substance cannot be acted upon by another, it becomes clear that the only affection that can be attributed to Substance is its self-actualization. We have said also that the order of *Natura creata* is hierarchical, and this follows from the indivisibility of the primordial potency, and thus also of the macrocosm, with the infinitude of the microcosms of which the macrocosm is constituted, each of which in its degree actualizes the same potency which, to use a phrase of Bruno,² is "wholly in the whole and wholly in every part of the whole" – like the sentence of the speaker which is heard as a whole throughout the auditorium but variously clear and intense.

The contrast and analogy of macrocosm and microcosm in one form or another is of great antiquity, and has had many applications more or less philosophically respectable. For the most part it has been 'man' who has been styled the microcosm of the world, analogy being imputed, as by certain Stoics, between the physical universe animated by the world-soul or divine reason, and man as an embodied rational soul. Man, it was said, epitomizes the universe, and the universe is man 'writ large.' Such a doctrine, reinforced by, if not originating in, the interpretation of human knowledge as involving the incorporation in mind of the 'images' of the external things known, so as to make of mind a world 'in little,' haunted minds of many medieval alchemists

¹ *Eth. I., Def. v.*

² See *De Immenso et Innumerabilibus, II, xiii; De la causa, principio, et uno, Dial. II. Cf. Aeternitas, p. 155, note 1.*

and astrologers, played an important role in the speculations of Renaissance thinkers such as Bruno, Campanella, and Paracelsus, was a fundamental source of the mysticism of Eckhart and Boehme, and suitably defined and rationalized became a root-idea of the monadic philosophy of Leibniz. There can be little doubt that it also has its special place and significance in the thought of Spinoza, though no longer as directly applicable to the durational nature of man and his sempiternal universe, nor as confined to man alone as a mode of Substance. For him it has application to *Natura creata* as the eternal 'fashion of the whole universe' exhaustively and hierarchically individuated as finite modes 'from highest to lowest' in the scale of being – 'man' being but one of these. Durational beings exhibit these relations at best only confusedly, and at worst hardly at all, by reason of the privation by which eternal agents are thus corrupted.

With this corruption we shall deal at a later stage; here we are concerned with the structure of eternal *Natura creata* as an eternal macrocosm within which infinite eternal microcosms of all grades of perfection are at once distinct individual agents, and also woven together in perfect community to form the seamless whole. According to this scheme the finite actualizations of Substance constitute not an aggregate of externally related parts or sections but a perfect 'identity in difference' of microcosms congruent with the 'infinite, one, and indivisible' macrocosm. This must be so expounded as to reconcile the infinite diversity of the parts with the indivisible unity of the whole; for so only can the infinite indeterminate potency find completely determinate actuality. To halt at any stage would be to leave determination incomplete; to fail in adequate integration of parts at any stage would imply impotence in the source; and to fall short of eternity would be to abridge the individuation and disrupt the integrity.

(ii) THE INDIVIDUATION OF THE MACROCOSM

The main questions that must be met in the account of the genesis of the finite individual from the infinite potency-in-act are (a) why an infinite source should entail the existence of finite individuals, and (b) what must be the nature of the individuality and finiteness thus entailed? The two questions are, of course, inisolable, and their short answer is that because the infinite potency is indeterminate, and its actualization involves determination, this must be exhaustive – not excluding any, but involving every, grade of perfection "from highest to lowest." *Natura*

creata must thus be perfectly determinate as a whole and throughout its nature: it must be an infinite macrocosm composed of infinite finite microcosms each, according to grade, more or less adequately expressing the whole. Such multiplex individuation cannot therefore consist of mere subdivision. The individual 'parts,' as finite expressions of the infinite 'whole,' must be so embedded in it that its integrity is not merely unbroken, but only thus fully actual. Again, creation being eternal, this exhaustive individuation must be conceived, not as ensuing upon the creation of the 'whole,' but as involved in this essentially. The macrocosm is a fully integrated hierarchy of microcosms, not superadded, but exponential – each microcosm actualizing the infinite potency-in-act more or less adequately according to its grade. Each is a finite eternal agent. Each is embedded in a complement of finite eternal agents. Each expresses the 'whole' and is thus inisolable from that complement. This is the interpretation to be placed on Spinoza's characteristic phrase "*Deus quatenus tantum humanae mentis essentiam constituit*,"¹ which many have found so puzzling² – as eternally created a man is not an independent 'thing,' but an agent actively integrated with a congruent complement of agents; and this total stage in the hierarchy of *Natura creata* (subject to what transcends it, and governing what proceeds from it) is the divine actuality at that stage.

The finite mode, or microcosm, then, is a created agent, not by subdivision of the creative potency congruent with a segmentation of the macrocosm, but by causal derivation congruent with hierarchical subordination. Conceived (*per impossibile*) as isolated, it would be a partial and derived expression of the divine potency; but as such its supposed isolation cannot stand, for the same undivided divine potency is likewise expressed in its complement, and the microcosm must thus be conceived as integral with that complement in so far as it is congruent, and as thus constituting a stage in the creative self-exposition of the primordial potency. Its finiteness is intrinsic, not extrinsic.

We are thus led to consider the manner in which the nature of each microcosm, in its grade, must be conceived as analogous with the nature of the macrocosm. This is a topic discussed in some detail in *Aeternitas*,³

¹ Examples of this kind of locution may be found in *Eth. II., ix., II. xi. Cor., et passim.*

² E.g., Barker ('Notes on the Second Part of Spinoza's *Ethics*', *Mind*, XLVII. N. S., pp. 436-7), who suggests that '*Deus quatenus tantum humanae mentis essentiam constituit*' (which he calls "*Deus qualified*") is not *Deus* at all, but simply 'man,' i.e. the periphrasis is a mere question-begging device. I will add that Barker's special difficulty about the 'reference' of ideas to '*Deus qualified*' and '*Deus unqualified*' arises from failure to distinguish, '*Deus qualified*' from *durational* man, and thus does not arise at this stage of our inquiry.

³ See pp. 206-15.

and to which symbolic expression was guardedly attempted in my *Benedict de Spinoza, The Elements of His Philosophy*.¹ Here we may confine ourselves to the general principles involved. It must be admitted that Spinoza himself offers no *ad hoc* account of the required analogy, the nearest approaches to it being found in the *Lemmata* following *Ethices II., xiii.*, and the letter to Oldenburg of November 20th, 1665.² In both places, however, what is under consideration is the manner in which continually changing bodies can be conceived as constituting an individual *tota Natura* not subject to change; and though clues to the analogy of macrocosm and microcosm may perhaps be gathered from this, direct light is hardly likely to be forthcoming from such objectivistic physical reflections. More promising is the discussion in the letter to Oldenburg of the manner in which the human *mind* is a part of *Natura* (*i.e.* of the 'infinite intellect'). Though the treatment runs very largely on lines similar to that of body (mind being the 'objective essence' of body) yet it offers a more pregnant clue to the true solution: "I hold that (the human mind) is also a part of *Natura*, for I posit in *Natura* an infinite thinking potency which in so far as it is infinite contains in itself by way of knowledge (*objective*) the whole of *Natura*, and its thoughts proceed in the same way as *Natura* itself, which is, indeed, its object (*ideatum*). Thence, I hold the human mind to be this potency, not in so far as it is infinite, perceiving the whole of *Natura*, but in so far as it is finite, namely, in so far as it perceives only the human body; and in this way I hold the human mind to be a part of an infinite intellect." It follows that the human body *is*, for the human mind, the whole of *Natura*, and if this is in any sense or degree *true*, the human body can be no mere *sector* of *Natura*, but a finite expression of its wholeness.³ As the durational body exists only as 'affected' by other bodies, so the eternal microcosm exists only as integrated with its complement in *Natura*, and is therefore *Deus quatenus finitus est* – a stage in the hierarchical actualization of the primordial potency-in-act. It is a self-transcendent finite-infinite.⁴

¹ Athlone Press, 1957, pp. 36-39.

² *Ep. xxxii.* But *cf.* the caveat: "I do not know how the parts are really interconnected, and how each part accords with the whole; for to know this it would be necessary to know the whole of Nature and all its parts." Fully detailed knowledge may be beyond, but the general principles lie well within, human competence.

³ The same principle is implicit in the propositions *Ethices II., xiii.* and *xix.* between which the *Lemmata* are interposed. The mind knows *only* the body, but knows it *only* as 'affected,' for it exists only in relation with an other which 'affects' it, and with which its nature is so far integrated.

⁴ *Sub specie durationis*, of course, the finite mode is no finite-infinite, but a finite-indefinite both in duration and in amplitude of relation.

The microcosmic parts of the macrocosm, then, though finite are nevertheless actualizations of the infinite, undivided, potency which is exhaustively actual only in the macrocosm. Because this potency is infinite, the parts are infinitely multiplex; but for the same reason each part, actualizing in its own fashion a potency unlimited, must be conceived as framed on the analogy of the macrocosm, and thus its limitation as finite self made good by community with its complement therein. Each part of the macrocosm is at once a finite agent analogous in nature with the whole – but this, not in isolation from the other parts, but one with them in the degree of its analogy. Its finiteness lies not (as with ‘objective things’) in its *exclusion* of and from its other but (as with *agents*) in its *co-operation* with its other, *i.e.* in the degree of its actualization of the infinite potency, its grade of being in the hierarchy of *Natura*. And all grades are eternal in the “infinite, unique, and indivisible” *Natura*.

(iii) THE ‘COMMUNITAS’ OF THE MICROCOSMS

The next question that must be met is that of the nature of the interrelations of the infinite microcosms. These are, of course, determined by the mode of individuation of the macrocosm in which they are rooted. *Prima facie* they are paradoxical because the microcosm is at once a ‘part’ and also an ‘expression’ of the nature of the macrocosm. We have seen how the paradox may be resolved by the substitution of a hierarchy of more or less adequate expressions for a collection of segments – differences of grade maintaining the discernible identity, and community the indivisibility, of the original potency. The finiteness of the microcosm must be such as to involve inadequacy of expression without exclusion of analogy with the macrocosm. Mere division, mutual exclusion, extrinsic limitation, of self and other cannot even inadequately express the unity, self-containedness, intrinsic infinity, of the macrocosm. Nor, as a ‘part’ of the macrocosm can it be a *mere* grade in its actuality, but a grade in intimate relations with all other grades in the eternal hierarchy of *Natura*.

These conditions can be fulfilled only because eternal actualities are not ‘things’ conceived on the analogy of presentable spatio-temporal objects,¹ mutually exclusive and only extrinsically related, and thus susceptible to unification merely by aggregation in a collective unity,

¹ The term ‘object’ is, of course, ambiguous. The ‘objects’ of knowledge need not (and in the end cannot) be ‘objects’ in the sense of presentable spatio-temporal things.

but *agents*, so that if they are finite their complements in the infinite agent are intrinsically related to them so far as they are congruent, and thus, though their congruency is limited, not merely superadded. For the complement too is microcosmic.

We ask, then, what must be the nature of the relations of the infinite ontologically distinct but fontally related microcosms? As finite agents their relations must, in some manner, be extrinsic, but as expressions of the infinite agency equally, in some manner, they must be intrinsic. If the problem should seem to be insoluble, the reader may reflect that an analogous situation is evident with durational agents, or conators, for here the nature of the agent at once involves relations with its field of endeavour, and distinction from it. Social relations are at once intrinsic and extrinsic to the individual, and in general the conator strives with an extrinsic other, which thus permeates the self. Both heredity and environment are operative in determining the individual character. And these relations are perfected where the finite agent is eternal and eternally complemented, for in so far as the eternal microcosm and its eternal complement of microcosms are congruent in agency, the self at once co-operates with the other, and is constituted by it. If it is objected that this implies the indiscernible identity of all microcosms in the macrocosm (a common objection urged against Spinoza's doctrine of finite individuality) the objection can only arise from a misinterpretation of the nature of real being as 'thing' rather than agent – for while indiscernible 'things' are identical, it is the agreement of *agents* alone that enhances their individual efficiency. Wherein, then, it may be asked, lies the finiteness of the microcosm, seeing that it is *constituted* by its other? I reply, it is constituted by its other only in so far as they are congruent; and since the differentiation of the macrocosm is essentially hierarchical, this congruence is limited. All have something in common, but none everything. It is thus that they are finite in their grades; for the incongruence of the other, and its congruence with respect to the self are indiscernible in its microcosmic nature.

Now, this identity in congruency of the eternal microcosms is what I have called their '*communitas*,' using the Latin form in order to distinguish their relations from those of empirical durational individuals which are privative expressions of it *sub specie durationis*. In common use the term 'community' signifies the character of a plurality bound as one, and in this sense it is used for the common ownership of property, the fellowship of a political or social group, the inhabitants of a locality, a racial or professional class, and so on. Here, however, the relations

of the members, though based on a common character which is enhanced thereby, are largely extrinsic and superadded to the natures of the members by whose endeavours they are sustained. They are expressive, rather than constitutive, of their conative natures. But eternal finite agents cannot be conceived as devoid in any degree of constitutive *communitas* in the hierarchical differentiation of *Natura creata*. Their finiteness is thus both qualified and realized by their *communitas* one with another throughout their determinate being – a *communitas* by which each is itself what it is as involving its complement according to the degree of its analogy with the whole. And the macrocosm *is* thus the perfect synthesis of the distributive *communitas* of its infinite microcosms, and the *communitas* of the infinite microcosms the exhaustive analysis, stage by stage, of the unity of the macrocosm in the eternal actualization of the infinite primordial potency.

If, now, the microcosm is considered in its aspect as finite *intellect*, we can understand that it is by reason of this *communitas* of each with its macrocosmic complement that *Ratio*, Spinoza's 'second kind of knowledge,' which is concerned with the 'common properties'¹ of finite *singularia*, *i.e.* the *communia* in which they participate, can be regarded as adequate, and as viewing its objects *sub quadam specie aeternitatis*;² for each microcosm is, as it were, a hierarchical synthesis of *communia* at its level in *Natura creata*. For though the 'common properties' in abstraction from the beings to which they are common "constitute the essence of no *singulare*,"³ all *singularia*, as eternal, are constituted by the *communia* in which they participate, and are thus, as we have seen, self-transcendent finite-infinites. The finiteness lies in the degree, the infinity in the amplitude, of the *communitas*.

Finally, returning to our more general account, we can now see that because each microcosm is constituted by its *communitas* with its congruent complement in *Natura*,⁴ it follows, further, that its integrity lies in the finite analogy with the infinite whole which it enjoys in the eternal efflux of creation (or, as Spinoza expresses it, "as referred to God"). Nevertheless, this complement *is*, with abstracted reference to the self, that self's other, and in so far as this relative otherness is abstracted from

¹ *Eth. II.*, xxxviii. – xxxix. (Cf. also: *I.*, Ax. v., *II.*, Lem. iii.). With these references I need hardly warn the reader that a 'common property' is not an abstract universal, but a concrete, though common, possession of *singularia*.

² *Eth. II.*, xli, xliv. Cor. ii.

³ *Eth. II.*, xxxvii.

⁴ *I.e.*, its complement in so far as it is congruent with the self. For the complement of the finite microcosm, in itself, indefinitely transcends it in potency. It is thus that the self is finite.

their fontal relatedness as *co-creata*, the *communitas*, too, must suffer abstraction and privation, to the impoverishment of both self and other. I say 'in so far as,' for complete abstraction would necessarily mean complete isolation, which spells nonentity. The abstraction, privation, and impoverishment are the less as the microcosm stands higher in the hierarchy of *Natura*. As referred to the microcosm in abstraction from the common *fons et origo* of both self and complement the *communitas* of self and other takes the form or appearance of *pseudo-communitas*, the *pseuditas* of which issues from, and is in proportion to, the degree of finiteness of the microcosm. Nor are the resulting natures and relations merely fictitious, but genuine appearances, authentic 'projections' of the parts of *Natura creata* in eternal *communitas* under an abstracted 'moment' of the dialectic of finite creation.¹

If, once more, the microcosm is considered in its aspect as finite intellect, we can understand also that *Imaginatio*, Spinoza's 'first kind of knowledge,' cannot be simply excluded from the finite intellect – not even in its perfection as a part of the infinite intellect – but only duly subordinated to *Ratio* and *Scientia intuitiva*. For it is a species of knowledge, not of ignorance, and is thus *bene fundata*, though not adequate, and its objects, taken at their face value are genuine, but eccentric, appearances of eternal *creata*. Thus *Imaginatio* and its objects are not wholly excluded from *Natura creata*, though they bear abstracted respect to its microcosmic parts. But for these parts, as eternal *creata*, they are duly subordinated under the dialectic of finite creation.² Now the 'common order of nature' and its striving durational parts issue from the failure of this due subordination under the unilateral self-reference of the finite agent – a privation, partial, indeed, according to the grade of perfection of the microcosmic self, which so far as it remains undetected, makes of appearance an objective reality more or less sophisticated.

¹ This 'projection' under finite self-reference is what I shall call the 'emanation' of the durational world of genuine appearance as privatively implicated in the eternal creation of finite individuals by the infinite and eternal potency-in-act. This subject belongs more properly to chapters III-V below, where it is more fully considered.

² This explains the persistence of imaginal objects in spite of the rational assurance of their inadequacy (*Eth. II., xxxv. Sch., IV., i. Sch.*); and it may also help to relieve the surprise often occasioned in the tyro by Spinoza's commendation of *Imaginatio* and its objects, e.g. in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* where *Imaginatio* in the 'prophet' is extolled for its ethical effectiveness, and in the *Ethics* where power and virtue are attributed to it when it is 'free' (*Eth. II., xvii. Sch.*), and where its objects are recommended to the 'free man': "pleasant eating and drinking, with sweet scents and the beauty of green plants," "ornament," "music," "sports," "the theatre," etc. – he should make use of these, and delight in them as much as possible (*Eth. IV., xlv. Cor. ii. Sch.*). On Spinoza's account of two human conceptions of 'actuality' see *Eth. V., xxix. Sch.*

By this partial disintegration and bifurcation derived finite eternal potency-in-act is degraded to durational *conatus*, eternal actuality to vicissitude, and eternal *communitas* to variant temporal sodality. To the problems involved in this descent we must next turn our attention.

CHAPTER III

'NATURA EMANATA'

We turn, then, to the consideration of the imaginal, penumbral 'nimbus' of finite creation, its nature, its status, and its privative potency as the source of the spatio-temporal 'common order of nature.' For, as has been said, though *Natura creatrix* is the *fons et origo* of the *prima facie* world of common experience and perception, this is no *creatum*, no eternal actuality, but an *emanatum* or projection of *Natura aeterna* upon the reference-system of the microcosmic part, whereby *Natura naturata* is at once relatively pulverized and debilitated to durationality. Doubtless, it is because the 'common order of nature' is thus a derivative of eternal *Natura creata* that it transcends mere 'mechanism,' that it exhibits a durational production of novelty which modern 'creationist' literature is apt to mistake for genuine creation; but the potency by which, as Whitehead¹ has said, the "flying dart" is "hurled beyond the bounds of the world," the "throbbing emotion of the past" passes into "a new transcendent fact," has its source beyond the 'world' and the 'past,'² because these are but eccentric projections of *Natura creata* and *aeternitas*, for in mere 'events' and time, as such, there is no potency. The anxiety of the modern world to 'take Time seriously' (in the phrase of Samuel Alexander)³ has overreached itself in the acceptance of time as an absolute prior in which all existence is located or moves; but as well might we take the ever present liability of man to disease as belonging to the original ground of human existence, and its prophylaxis as the very nature and essence of human life-process—as if 'life' were definable as struggle with disease. To 'take disease seriously' means not merely to provide preventive measures, much less to work a cure, but to trace it to its source; so also to 'take Time seriously' is not to erect it as an

¹ *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 227.

² And in the 'common order of nature' all time is conceived *sub specie praeteriti*. Even the 'present' is conceived, not as the moment of temporal *action*, but as temporally actual, *i.e.* done (*factum*) and thus already past; and the 'future' as the temporal 'place' of what will have been done, *i.e.* as future perfect. Nor is any other conception of time possible so long as we confine our attention to events and their order as mere actualities actualizing nothing, as mere 'facts.'

³ *Spinoza and Time*, I.

ineluctable absolute prior with a prophylactic 'creativity' to make it tolerable, and to undo its incidental mischief, but to probe to its metaphysical sources for the eternal creativity whereby it emanates, sustains itself, and is actual. The 'philosophy of creativity' is no more than the 'empiric's cure' – the nemesis of the pathological objectivism of the modern mind which takes no account of man's immersion in nature, and the consequent metaphysical relativity of his *prima facie* objects.

Further, just as the pseudo-creativity of spatio-temporal nature demands the exhibition of that world as *emanatum*, so also does its entire nature as 'given fact.' For we regard that only as primarily 'given' which eludes understanding, *i.e.* which cannot be intelligibly derived from elements more primitive and more truly so described. So far, therefore, from verification by reference to perceptual experience being the sole safe road to truth (or, indeed, a road to truth at all), the temporal perceptual experience of the finite percipient itself requires deduction from an intelligible which carries its own certitude: temporal 'fact' must be exhibited in its derivation from eternal agency, *i.e.* reality. In the nature of things the deduction of the empirically extant from that which is in itself intelligible must, for the finite mind, at once immersed in and seeking to apprehend nature, be more difficult, complex, and perilous than its simple unquestioning apprehension. Small wonder, therefore, that radical empiricism, which takes as 'given' that which is intellectually occult, is the most popular of philosophical doctrines: for it thus avoids a problem which, once faced, demands an unpostponed solution, and concentrates upon a set of problems, essentially insoluble, but indefinitely patient of procrastinatory and piecemeal appeasement, under cover of the principle that to be 'given' is to be real 'beyond a peradventure,' *i.e.* that that is real *par excellence* which is intellectually occult.¹

The symbolical deduction referred to above² however inadequate and *prima facie* misleading if the distinction of 'thing' and 'agent' is overlooked, may also be used, by referring the elements of this or that

¹ Even a mitigated empiricism which confines human knowledge to what falls within human experience, and holds that that alone is real which forms a coherent whole under the categories of the human understanding, must be rejected as an error falsely founded on a mere truism. That all human knowledge falls within human experience is patent, but it affords no ground for supposing that as knowledge it cannot transcend human experience and the categories of human impotence. As well might it be argued that since a man's actions belong to his nature, no man can operate beyond his own nature, and in accordance with principles not properly applicable to himself. For knowledge is not a 'thing' but an 'action'; and it is in virtue of its agency that the microcosm is at once an individual and a part of the indivisible macrocosm.

² P. 53.

individual to the elements of its other, to suggest the manner in which the world of change and durational effort is related to eternal *Natura creata*. The microcosms which at once in their community constitute the macrocosm, and in their singularity are its more or less perfect analogues, thus bear to it a double relation: the creative, as all things are 'referred to God,' and the emanative, as all are 'referred to self.' In the former relation each is identical with the whole up to the limit of its community with its complement in the macrocosm, *i.e.* in the measure of its selective partiality or *microcosmicity*; in the latter relation each is distinct from all others in its macrocosmic complement by reason of its *microcosmicity*, wholeness, or individuality, so that they stand related to it as others, and involved in it only by projection upon its own reference-system. And in virtue of the validity of both sets of relations, and of their incongruity, the microcosm comes to be involved in a sort of 'dialectic.' It is at once an *abstractum* of the whole and also one of its parts to which all others are referrible. The resolution of this 'dialectic' lies in the nature of creation, and is complete only in *Natura creata*; with this or that microcosm the incongruous relations remain more or less unsynthesized, and their incongruity unresolved. We shall see in due course that this is the very arena of morality which is thus momentous as involved in creation itself.

It is with the microcosm taken as mind that this situation is for us most notably apparent; for thus to the finite mind there are available at once both adequate rational knowledge of 'itself and God and things,' and also, side by side with this, inadequate imaginational knowledge of itself and things and even of God. According as the one or the other takes precedence in the finite mind, the 'dialectic' of finite creation is, for it, either avoided by immersion in the life of the senses, or faced in the 'intellectual life,' and if not resolved, at least mitigated and deprived of its sting.¹

So much, then, by way of defence of the procedure here to be adopted: mere sorting, analysis, and construction of empirical '*data*,' however ingenious and however ample in scope, cannot in the absence of metaphysical transcendence of the eccentric conditions of temporal apprehension serve the most stubborn purposes of human thought. And since there can be no sure passage from the merely 'given,' either by analysis

¹ As we shall see in due course, Spinoza also envisages a pseudomorality for those immersed in the life of the senses based on the operation of political sanctions; a morality of obedience for those not adequately gifted with rational discernment (*vide* the account of 'prophecy' in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*); and a 'beyond-morality' of full enlightenment and self-realization for such as can participate in the 'intellectual love of God' (*Eth. V., xxi-xlii.*)

or construction or even analogy, to its emended intelligible nature, this can only be sought by descent from the perfect, and perfectly intelligible, by the use of analogy, analysis, and construction, to the penumbral limits of intelligibility in *experientia vaga*.¹

In thus turning to the aetiology of the 'world of commonsense,' its durational sources, and (in the following chapter) its spatio-temporal elaborations and sophistications, we reject *à outrance* the special status commonly assigned to it as the ultimate criterion of veritable existence. We seek its sources in the intelligible order, not its rationalization as a spatio-temporal order of 'events' under categorial 'laws' or equations, supplemented or not by naive additions of 'emergent qualities,' 'vital forces,' 'creative energies,' or the like, to be accepted with 'natural piety' in a spirit of intellectual appeasement.

(i) THE 'BERGSONIAN' INCHOATION

It has been said that our symbolical deduction is likely to be seriously misleading if its elements are taken to be 'things' and not 'agents'; for thus it will be, and has often been, said that the synthesis of the microcosms in the macrocosm involves their suppression as individuals. On the contrary the community of agents is *based on* their individuality. But the mischief of ignoring this distinction does not end here but is especially potent in dealing with the passage from the eternity of the created macrocosm and microcosms to the duration of the eccentric projections of these on the reference-system of this or that microcosm, and the resulting durational existence of the microcosm itself.

We are only too apt to conceive duration, and even eternity, as objective 'forms' in which events are temporally or simultaneously distributed, or a sort of 'space' through which enduring things pass and eternal things stand. But duration, like eternity, is a mode in which agents exist and operate. "By eternity I understand existence itself in so far as it is conceived necessarily to follow from the definition alone of the eternal thing";² "Duration is the indefinite continuation of existence."³ An eternal agent exists and operates eternally because the potency which it actualizes suffers no extrinsic dependence or frustration; similarly a durational agent exists and operates durationally in so far as the potency which it actualizes is actualized only in dependence

¹ Questions relating to the human predicament and metaphysical method are more fully discussed in *Prolegomena I*, above, pp. 1-21.

² *Eth. I., Def. viii.*

³ *Eth. II., Def. v.*

upon the co-operation of other agents and is frustrated by their opposition. While the eternal agent *acts*, the durational agent *endeavours* – its ‘action’ is ‘effort’ (*conatus*), and this effort and its actuality in relative success or relative failure determines the existence of the agent as durational. The age-old riddle as to how time is contained in eternity is seen, therefore, to be wrongly envisaged, and thus incapable of an intelligible, or indeed any, solution.

Prima facie, few theories may seem to be more remote from that of Spinoza than that of Henri Bergson – in nature and procedure as it is among the most radical of empiricisms. Yet in spite of the apparently discouraging results of his early concentration upon the philosophy of Plotinus,¹ and his obtuse misinterpretation of that of Spinoza as mechanism,² there is much to be learned from his discussion of the distinction between duration, or ‘real time’ as he calls it, and the ‘spatialized time’ of commonsense and science. Indeed, the disparity of the two doctrines may well be conceived as the product of the variant incidence of an essentially identical principle within an empiricistic *schema* on the one hand, and a metaphysical or transcendent *schema* on the other. Self-confined within the empirical range of the finite enduring consciousness, Bergson was philosopher enough to push his analysis back to the very limits of utter naivety, and to discover the sophisticatory origin of our commonsense and scientific exposition of this “pure duration” under the “aid” of “time, measure, and number” – or, as he expresses it, “as spatialized”; but because he does not go further and understand that naive duration is no metaphysical ultimate, but a distorted and privative projection of eternity on the eccentric reference-system of the microcosmic part of the eternal macrocosm, he is forced to elaborate the conception of a ‘pure duration’ the ‘successiveness’ of which is ‘qualitative’ and ‘spontaneous.’ He rightly sees that genuine efficiency cannot be temporal – a relation of unrelateable ‘simultaneities,’ and he is fain to understand it as an ultimate ‘given’ order of spontaneous qualitative ‘emergency.’ Yet, lacking metaphysical transcendence, such spontaneity can no more be identified with real efficiency than can mere precedence in spatialized time. Mere spontaneity of durational emergence ‘cries aloud’ its identity with *inefficiency*.

What, then, is the principle which has been suggested to be identical in these two opposing doctrines? It is that ‘time’ as a durationless

¹ Cf. ‘Some Reminiscences by the late J. H. Muirhead’ (*Philosophy XVII.*, 1942, p. 344, note 1.

² *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience*, 18ième ed., pp. 159-160.

enumeration of ‘simultaneities, a ‘neutral order of externality,’¹ a ‘fourth dimension of space,’ or the physicists’ ‘*t*,’ is but the generalized measure of the related durational existences of things as referred to other parts of the eternal macrocosm – or if this is to go too far in the interpretation of Bergson’s doctrine, at least that duration belongs to the *existence* of living beings, whereas time is applicable only in reflection upon existence that is past, that has ceased to be.

Bergson, it will be remembered, makes use of this principle to elaborate the conception of what he calls ‘pure duration’ – “the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states. ... In recalling these states, it does not set them alongside its actual states, but forms both the past and the present states into an organic whole, as happens when we recall the notes of a tune, melting, so to speak, into one another. . . A mutual penetration, an interconnexion and organization of elements, each one of which represents the whole, and cannot be distinguished or isolated from it except by abstract thought.”² And this “is the account of duration which would be given by a being who was ever the same and ever changing”³ – indeed, we are led to assume that in his view this is also the account which in principle we should have to give of our own duration if we had no idea of space to mislead us into setting our states side by side in “a continuous line or chain, the parts of which touch without penetrating one another.” What is, perhaps, less clear is why, if the duration we immediately experience is so entirely non-spatial, we should be liable to be thus misled by the idea of space. This suggests that our duration is not ‘pure’ in Bergson’s sense, but already implicitly, and perhaps explicitly, spatialized in our immediate experience. Certainly, it possesses both present and past, though unseparated. Our experience, as living, “need not be entirely absorbed in the passing sensation or idea; for then ... it would no longer *endure*.” It may well be admitted that our duration is more or less temporal as we take it as experienced in the ‘specious present’ or under sophistication as it is rationalized for the purposes of metric science, but the notion of a ‘pure duration’ wholly exempt from temporality is a chimera – an empiricistic ‘ideal limit,’ asymptotic approach to which points to passage beyond duration to eternity. And it is from eternal existence that we must proceed in the exposition of existence

¹ Cf. *Aeternitas*, p. 31, et *passim*.

² *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience*, 18ième ed., pp. 76-77.

³ *Loc. cit.*

durational, and thence to its measurement under the categories of time.

In thus describing Bergsonian 'pure duration' as a chimerical ideal limit, however, stress is being laid on the impossibility of at once maintaining the distinction in it of 'present' and 'past,' and also making this distinction the mere product of the spatializing intellect. This is not to deny that duration as a mode of existing and operating is wholly distinct from spatialized time which is a sophisticated hypostasis of the co-existences of durational efforts. Duration is imaginal; but time is only an aid to imagination in comparing durations. Again, in describing 'pure duration' as an empiricistic 'ideal limit' we do no more than allow that in so far as effort is directed to an undifferentiated other, the distinction of 'present' and 'past' remains congruently vague (as when one first begins to emerge from anaesthesia).¹

Duration, then, is the mode of existing and striving under relative impotence and frustration that belongs to a finite agent and its complement as 'projected' upon its 'axes,' *i.e.* as referred to itself – or rather, *in so far as* this self-reference shortcircuits, truncates, and inadequates the creative potency-in-act (for the total inadequation of causality can spell only non-being). As created, as "referred to God," all are eternal agents in their grades, actualizing the primordial potency-in-act, and known as such by intellect; but so far as the reference-system of the microcosmic 'part' of the macrocosm is eccentric, all suffer privation of agency (without elimination) to the form of durational *conatus*, and as such appear as the objects of *Imaginatio*. For not only is their eternal agency impoverished by reduction to durational *conatus*, but also the objective transparency of the intellectual apprehension of perfect agency is stippled by those intellectual opacities which are the empirical 'objects' of *Imaginatio* and are the inverted complements of the privations of agency. These occult *data* are, in truth, intellectual '*ablata*,' and are imaginatively realized only in so far as their objective opacity is supplemented by their *conatus*.

By such paths, then, the finite self discovers itself as if placed in a

¹ The example may remind us of a further defect in the doctrine of Bergson, *viz.* that it seems to draw no distinction between duration and the consciousness of duration – or at least that it attributes duration exclusively to consciousness. This idealistic trend finds no place in Spinoza's distinctive doctrine (for the objects of *Imaginatio* are partial, fragmentary, and eccentric rather than illusory). Indeed, it has sometimes been wrongly supposed that for Spinoza it is the duration of the *body* that limits or clouds the eternity of the mind (*Cf. Eth. V., xxi.-xxiii.*). For him everything that in any degree or manner *acts*, thereby exists in the manner and degree of its agency – the adequate agent eternally, the inadequate agent, or *conator*, durationally. Atomic 'events,' being impotent, cannot eventuate, much less endure. To take them, therefore, as incorrigibly 'given' as the bases of all genuine knowledge, and its verificatory norms, is to build not upon sand but upon a *chimera*.

more or less pulverulent world of striving things with which it holds unceasing commerce of co-operation and frustration, upon the issues of which must depend its survival and wellbeing as durational, and upon the 'patience' of which its temporal emergence must depend. Its imaginal life is durational because existence means agency, adequate or inadequate, and inadequate agency can, as such, be none other than the piecemeal relative success or relative failure of a continuant *conatus*. Duration is nothing but the mode of such existence, as eternity is existence unfrustrated.¹

So much, then, for the aetiology of durational existence as such. But it has been said that save as an empiricistic 'ideal limit' 'pure duration' is a chimera; for the very conditions of its emanation involve it in temporality, though not to the point of reduction to mere spatialized metric time. In what form, we must next inquire, is duration genuinely emanated?

(ii) THE PERCEPTUAL WORLD

We have seen that the Bergsonian emendation of perception seeks to "bring us back into our own presence"² from a world that is distributed in moments or 'simultaneities' external to each other: to lead the mind from the naive realism of commonsense back to the 'solipsism' of immediate experience.³ Having rejected the empiricistic approach in favour of metaphysical deduction, we have now to reverse our procedure and, having passed from eternal agency to durational *conatus*, to show how from this 'solipsistic' inchoation we pass to the apprehension of a world of common experience, *viz.* of spatio-temporal *conators* in more or less imperfect active relation. For the ordinary world of common experience is plainly not a durational permeation of private conscious states with their vague imperfectly differentiated object, but a world of qualified spatio-temporal agents taken as objects common to all minds. In considering the aetiology of the *prima facie* perceptual world, therefore, we have to reflect on its nature as composed of perseverant objects enduring for various periods in a common metric time, their objectivity being a function of their qualified spatio-temporality, and their agency a limited

¹ Cf. *Eth.* I., Def. viii.; II., Def. v.

² *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience*, 18ième ed., p. 101.

³ "Il n'y a dans l'espace ni durée ni même succession, au sens où la conscience prend ces mots." (*Op. cit.*, p.91). Reference has already been made to the implicit idealism or panpsychism of Bergson's theory. But, unlike Berkeley who assigned 'real causality' to mind, Bergson never wholly emancipates himself from empiricistic 'objectivism' in his account of the 'real duration' of the experient. Thus the promise of the original title of his essay is disappointed.

durational *conatus*. Thus the factors to be considered here must be those of (a) temporalized duration or perceptual time, (b) perceptual space, (c) sense-quality, and (d) *conatus*.

(a) *Perceptual Time*

We have seen that the agency of the self-referent microcosm is emanated as durational *conatus* with respect to its complement thus projected as a relatively durational other with which it has durational commerce as a privative expression of their eternal *communitas* as created or referred to God. Further, that this primitive durationality of existence cannot, in Bergson's sense, be 'pure duration.' This follows from the very nature of *conatus* the actualization of which is necessarily piecemeal: for *doing* is actualized as *deed* which, under the frustration envisaged, falling short of full actualization by reason of the counter-*conatus* of the other, must remain as static *done* in a past which is superseded by the persistent present of conative duration characterized by perseverant doing. Thus that which is accomplished is temporal – an order of past actualities emitted serially and *stillatim* from a doing which is durational, and which defines the present. And only the past (and the present and the future conceived sophistically *sub specie praeteriti*) is temporal. The present is no mere punctual meeting place of past and future thus sophistically conceived, but the active durational source of the temporal order which does but measure its continuance in terms of its accomplishments under conditions of dependence on, and frustration by, its emanated other. That action is confined to the present is thus no wonder since the present is so defined – not as a moment of time but as the very source of time, and itself not temporal but durational, and an emanation of eternity. The objective perceptual world is thus wholly past just because the potency which it actualizes so far as may be in face of the frustration by, or dependence on, an other, is subject to the privation of self-reference. The potency is durationally operant; its actuality lies distributed in a duration temporalized in congruence with the multiplicity of acts involved in the congress of self and other. For duration is essentially serial and persistent, and time past is its measure in terms of its serial actuality. Doing, in itself, is not temporal, but only deed; and only the false assumption of the real priority of time makes us think of action as *confined* to a temporal 'present,' instead of *defining* it under self-reference.

Thus, while the duration of the self¹ is an effort generating, in relation

¹ It may be well to warn the reader that by 'self' reference is made not merely to percipient

with the counter-effort of the more or less responsive other, a seriate past *stillatim*, in relation to which the durationally operant effort is reflectively dated as 'present,' the duration of perceptual objects is imagined as a temporal and impotent series of moments or events – their relation to the active duration of the generating self and other being ignored or deleted. And this abstraction is further imaginatively corroborated as the objects are taken as common to many percipient selves, and their duration communized *sub specie praeteriti* on the pattern of their original time-relation to each other in the eccentric perspective of the individual percipient. Times as present and future are chimerical.

The temporality of all *percepta* is thus the product of the durationality of the percipient in its relation with its partially occulted complement as multiplex perseverant object. The *conatus* of the self and the reciprocal more or less counter-*conatus* of the other are mutually involved in the active duration of self and other. It is thus that the duration of the self is temporalized as a past of accomplishment relative to the other, and the duration of the other temporalized as a past of accomplishment relative to the self, though in each case the 'accomplishment' may be either by way of co-operation or frustration, or both in due measure. Thus the whole comes to be sophisticatedly conceived as occupying a common time-sequence – the mutual active duration of self and other, from which the related distillations of time proceed, being taken as continuous common occupation of a time-order. But indeed, as we have seen, the 'occupation' of the 'present' as durational is wholly different from occupation of the past as temporal, and only appears the same through the reflective dating of the 'present' *sub specie praeteriti*.¹ This is but a by-product of the radical objectivism that seeks to understand the real as 'fact,' as something given and done, and not as agent, self-giver, and potency-in-act.

The temporality of the objects of perception must therefore never be taken as a metaphysical prior, nor as an empirical *datum*. Taken as given it cannot be other than problem demanding solution denied to it as given. And taken as metaphysically prior, its necessary purification from relation to the percipient self by abstraction from his durational 'present' (from which it is distilled), reduces it at last to a mere 'dimension'

mind (as here), and by 'other' not merely to *percepta*. 'Self' and 'other' have universal application respectively to things themselves under reference, and to the things from which they are distinguished. Thus duration and time are not confined to percipients and *percepta* as such.

¹ The so-called 'specious present' is a duration-*datum* combining past and future elements in an extended present only when speciously read in terms of spatialized time; and so read presents an insoluble problem. It can be interpreted only in terms of the action by which conative duration gives birth to time past.

of space, or some 'neutral form of externality' without temporal 'sense.' Extension of the form of the past to cover present and future, and the generalization of the distinction of past and future as 'earlier' and 'later,' yield, not an objective time independent of the beings that occupy it, but a mere 'senseless' 't' lacking the very essence of time. So also it is the imagination of the future as 'future perfect,' thus divorcing temporal occurrence from durational effort, that renders insoluble the problem of durational freedom.

In short, then, the fontally inchoate durational existence of the self-referent microcosm in its relation with its partially alienated complement, is limited and serialized in congruence with the multiplex privation by which its self-reference impoverishes the eternal *communitas* of all as referred to God, *i.e.* as eternally created. The durational efflux of eternity is temporalized by the impedance of conative actualization by which a metric past of time is distilled from the otherwise dateless duration of *conatus*. Just as eternity is the mode of existence of the microcosm as referred to God, in its *communitas* with its co-created complement, so duration is its mode of existence as self-referent, in its intercourse of strife and love with its alienated complement. Durational existence belongs, as Spinoza says, to the '*affectiones*' of self and other, *i.e.* to the confused remainder of the eternal *communitas* of self and complement. And this otherwise indefinite duration is serialized, limited, and measured in accordance with the relative *conatus* of the fragments to which the eternal macrocosm of microcosms is reduced by the distributive¹ eccentric self-reference of the microcosmic parts. In the next chapter something will be said about the manner in which this limited perceptual temporalization of duration is sophisticatedly generalized and de-activated to the form of pure time, a 'neutral order of externality,' a fourth dimension of space, or the physicists' 't,' under the misguided impulse to totality; here we are concerned only with the inevitable native temporalization of emanant duration at the naive perceptual level by reason of the conditions governing the emanational '*nimbus*' of microcosmic being under *distributive* self-reference as it exploits its individual wholeness in distinction from its genetic partiality, as it is thus involved in a dialectic of emanation and salvation, inescapable and momentous, but intelligible only in the light of its synthetic creative source. Untranscended perceptual apprehension can no more, nay far less, lay bare the concrete nature of things than can study of the two-dimensional circle, ellipse, parabola, and hyperbola reveal the three-dimensional

¹ See below, pp. 197-201 *passim*

cone of which they are the sections. For the distortion issuing from metaphysical projection is far more profound than that produced by geometrical projection, reducing constitutive *communitas* to partial strife, eternal fruition to dated durational process, action to endeavour, and the limitation of physical potency to space more or less occupied by qualified others.

(b) *Perceptual Space*

The reader will be familiar with the bold speculation advanced by Berkeley: "When I excite a motion in some part of my body, if it be free or without resistance, I say there is *Space*. But if I find a resistance, then I say there is *Body*: and in proportion as the resistance to motion is lesser or greater, I say the space is more or less *pure*. So that when I speak of pure or empty space, it is not to be supposed that the word *space* stands for an idea distinct from, or conceivable without, body and motion. Though indeed we are apt to think every noun substantive stands for a distinct idea that may be separated from all others; which hath occasioned infinite mistakes. When, therefore, supposing all the world to be annihilated besides my own body, I say there still remains *pure space*: thereby nothing else is meant but only that I conceive it possible for the limbs of my body to be moved on all sides without the least resistance: but if that, too, were annihilated, then there could be no motion, and consequently no Space."¹ Obviously, it is easy enough to object that the theory thus advanced is circular in that it seeks to derive space from bodily motion conceived as motion *in space*; and the objection remains valid in the absence of any alternative account of physical motion devoid of the spatial factor (*e.g.* in terms of physical *conatus*). What is chiefly lacking from the philosophy of Berkeley is a critical account of the nature and status of the percipient's own body, for in the absence of this it is almost inevitable that his body should be taken as merely one among the many objects composing the physical universe, and perception conceived as mentally resulting from, or concomitant with, the interaction of other bodies with it – the usual 'external' view of perception, as a physical and physiological causal chain plus a psychophysical miracle. Then, on Berkeley's principles, the other bodies are desubstantialized as mere collections of 'ideas' – but not, at least overtly, the percipient's own body, though this should similarly be reduced to a collection of 'ideas' in his mind. This hiatus in Berkeley's analysis is at once excusable, and essential for its success: excusable, be-

¹ *Principles of Human Knowledge I.*, § 116. Cf. also *De Motu*, § 55.

cause *in the very act of perception* the percipient must always fail to identify as an object his own body so far as it is engaged in the very act (*e.g.* a man in seeing does not see his own eye); and essential, because the desubstantializing of the percipient's own body would destroy the original sources of the theory of 'ideas.'

It is plain, therefore, that if Berkeley had concentrated his attention as much on the nature and status of his own body as he did on that of external bodies he would have been compelled very seriously to modify his account of the latter. In particular, his doctrine of perceptual space might have become really significant, since the motion of his own body in the act of perceiving space, empty or occupied, would be no perceived objective locomotion in space, but a physical 'doing' or *conatus* determining relative locomotion in the reference system of another percipient (or the percipient himself in some other act of perception, *e.g.* he *sees* his hand move during the exercise of the effort to move it).

In order to expound the aetiology of perceptual space we must, therefore, first of all clearly distinguish two views of perception: the 'external' view (which is seriously misleading and essentially false, which is the source of problems imaginary and thus insoluble, concerning the relations of body and mind in perception) and what has elsewhere¹ been called the 'diaesthetic' view, which takes the standpoint of the percipient himself in the very act of perception. And plainly this is the true view which alone can yield perspicuous results under analysis. Now, in order to exploit the possibilities of the diaesthetic view, it is of first importance to recognize the confusion that may arise from the multiplex nature of the human percipient, both physically and mentally. The almost universal failure to do so is responsible for the general attempt to investigate perception as if it were an asymmetrical relation of two objects, a conscious sense-organism and an external thing, in which the latter affects the former, which again affects the mind with which it is associated, or in some other way conditions the affection of that mind – that it is, as has been said, a physical and physiological causal series followed by a psychophysical miracle. But in all strictness, in the very act of perception the sense-organism is not a physical *object* of perception at all, and we are only led to suppose that it is because though (*e.g.*) the eye does not see itself as a physical eye when it looks out, yet the finger can feel it there as a physical object, and the eye can see it reflected

¹ Cf. 'On Things in Themselves' (*Philosophy XIV*, 1939, pp. 155-79) with other references therein named. On Berkeley's 'immaterialism' I would venture to direct the attention of the reader to my article: "Dr. Johnson's Refutation of Bishop Berkeley." (*Mind, N. S. LVI* 1947, pp. 132-147).

in a mirror as a physical object. And so for all the senses. To understand perception as it is in the very act, the objective sense-organism as perceived by another or by the self in a different act, must be eliminated *as object*, though not as *agent*. It falls on the side of the percipient agent as a vigilant physical concomitant. It acts but does not appear as object.

Abstract now the simplest of all forms of percipience, that of touch, intra- and extra-organic. To external perception there is, let us say, a tactual sense-organism capable of locomotion, with the muscular and articular percipience normally associated therewith. The percipient himself, *quatenus* tactual percipient, will perceive nothing of all the objective elements in this description: of the finger, the arm with its muscles and joints, nor therefore of its locomotion towards the external object. His percipience will be confined to what we may perhaps call the 'objective tactual contents': a series of these terminated by a distinguishable 'content' concomitant with a resistance encountered. Of the locomotion of the limb, as locomotion, there can be no such 'objective tactual content,' though the relative suavity of the series may be noted as distinct from the abrupt introduction of the terminal 'content.' For no perception of locomotion, as such, is possible save as that of bodies distributed in space, so that any attempt to derive the perception of more or less occupied space from that of locomotion, as suggested by Berkeley, cannot but be circular. But this is not to say that the percipient's physical effort, and the resistance thereto, while he is perceiving these 'objective tactual contents,' though imperceptible as object, plays no part in the perception of more or less occupied space, nor that the non-objective character of *conatus* involves the agent's unawareness of it. For agency is of the essence of being, and a conscious being is actively conscious, and thus consciously active so far as its consciousness extends.¹

¹ In justice to Berkeley it must be noted that he too has resort to this effort in order to distinguish real from apparent motion, *i.e.* motion relatively absolute from motion absolutely relative. The motion of the pedestrian and the road is relative, nevertheless the pedestrian really moves along the relatively stationary road in so far as the relative motion is referrible to the effort of the former. In other words, that motion is relatively absolute which involves physical effort overcoming resistance, and in the absence of such resisted *conatus* the motion would be absolutely relative. But the notion of motion absolutely relative is paradoxical since where there is relative motion *something* must be assumed to be in motion *not* absolutely relative, but at least relatively absolute. And this motion must be assigned to this or that body as proper to it, *i.e.* as the actualization of its potency with respect to that which resists it. That there is no motion absolute *sans phrase* follows from the very nature of the finite durational conator as not located in a prior space but itself the origin of its space, which remains private only so long as the agent ignores his dependence on a complement of similar agents. That is to say his proper motion is relative to a fulcrum *taken to be at rest*. A body, like Spinoza's 'flying stone' (*Ep. lviii.*), without fulcrum or resistance encountered would neither "strive"

Our abstracted tactual percipient, then, is primarily aware of variations of resisted *conatus* in the course of the presentation of the series of 'objective tactual contents' with its terminal 'content'; and though these variations of resisted *conatus* are not, as such, objectively presented, yet in association with what is objectively presented, *viz.* the 'tactual objective contents,' and under the urge of the practical need to arrange these in an order of related existents co-existently enduring, and thus not merely temporally serial phantoms (for they are concomitant with the resistance which, opposing the agent's own conscious effort, is, as such, with it involved in the conscious agency of the self), the varying *conatus* and counter-*conatus* of self and other is objectified as an order of co-existents over against the percipient self; and this order is more or less occupied space. Under the stimulus of resistance, or physical counter-*conatus*, physical *conatus* is objectified as relatively vacuous space, and physical counter-*conatus* as relatively rigid and immovable body qualified by the 'tactual objective contents.' It is thus that 'distance,' more or less freely directional, is derived, and thus that the circularity of Berkeley's account is avoided. The 'free motion' of the body that is for him the essence of space, and the 'resisted motion' of the body that is the occupation of space by body, are not locomotion and locomotory retardation respectively, but physical *conatus* variously resisted, and thus more or less concomitant with the serial and terminal 'objective contents.' Because there is no unresisted *conatus* there is no 'pure' space; because there is no irresistible *conatus* there is no fully occupied space; the vacuum and the plenum are but chimerical 'ideal limits' of space more or less occupied, itself but an *auxilium imaginationis*.

Objection may, perhaps, be raised against the use of the term 'objectification' for the relation of space (with its characteristic passivity and impotence) to active *conatus*. The defence of the usage is as follows: if, *per impossibile*, we suppose a completely isolated durational conator, such a being would not imagine itself as confronted with a space wholly empty. Thus what is objectified is not agency as such, but always under privation. By reason of this privation every *conatus* is opposed by counter-*conatus*, so that its space is more or less occupied, and as so occupied not wholly impotent. Thus it is the privation of *conatus* that is objectified as space so far occupied, and the privation of the counter-*conatus* that is objectified as space so far unoccupied. In other words, the relative

nor have a proper motion. Meeting resistance it would strive against it, and thus, if conscious, it would not regard itself as "completely free." (Though Spinoza's example is thus faulty, it serves the purpose to which it is put).

in a mirror as a physical object. And so for all the senses. To understand perception as it is in the very act, the objective sense-organism as perceived by another or by the self in a different act, must be eliminated *as object*, though not *as agent*. It falls on the side of the percipient agent as a vigilant physical concomitant. It acts but does not appear as object.

Abstract now the simplest of all forms of percipience, that of touch, intra- and extra-organic. To external perception there is, let us say, a tactual sense-organism capable of locomotion, with the muscular and articular percipience normally associated therewith. The percipient himself, *quatenus* tactual percipient, will perceive nothing of all the objective elements in this description: of the finger, the arm with its muscles and joints, nor therefore of its locomotion towards the external object. His percipience will be confined to what we may perhaps call the 'objective tactual contents': a series of these terminated by a distinguishable 'content' concomitant with a resistance encountered. Of the locomotion of the limb, as locomotion, there can be no such 'objective tactual content,' though the relative suavity of the series may be noted as distinct from the abrupt introduction of the terminal 'content.' For no perception of locomotion, as such, is possible save as that of bodies distributed in space, so that any attempt to derive the perception of more or less occupied space from that of locomotion, as suggested by Berkeley, cannot but be circular. But this is not to say that the percipient's physical effort, and the resistance thereto, while he is perceiving these 'objective tactual contents,' though imperceptible as object, plays no part in the perception of more or less occupied space, nor that the non-objective character of *conatus* involves the agent's unawareness of it. For agency is of the essence of being, and a conscious being is actively conscious, and thus consciously active so far as its consciousness extends.¹

¹ In justice to Berkeley it must be noted that he too has resort to this effort in order to distinguish real from apparent motion, *i.e.* motion relatively absolute from motion absolutely relative. The motion of the pedestrian and the road is relative, nevertheless the pedestrian really moves along the relatively stationary road in so far as the relative motion is referrible to the effort of the former. In other words, that motion is relatively absolute which involves physical effort overcoming resistance, and in the absence of such resisted *conatus* the motion would be absolutely relative. But the notion of motion absolutely relative is paradoxical since where there is relative motion *something* must be assumed to be in motion *not* absolutely relative, but at least relatively absolute. And this motion must be assigned to this or that body as proper to it, *i.e.* as the actualization of its potency with respect to that which resists it. That there is no motion absolute *sans phrase* follows from the very nature of the finite durational conator as not located in a prior space but itself the origin of its space, which remains private only so long as the agent ignores his dependence on a complement of similar agents. That is to say his proper motion is relative to a fulcrum *taken to be at rest*. A body, like Spinoza's 'flying stone' (*Ep. lviii.*), without fulcrum or resistance encountered would neither "strive"

Our abstracted tactual percipient, then, is primarily aware of variations of resisted *conatus* in the course of the presentation of the series of 'objective tactual contents' with its terminal 'content'; and though these variations of resisted *conatus* are not, as such, objectively presented, yet in association with what is objectively presented, *viz.* the 'tactual objective contents,' and under the urge of the practical need to arrange these in an order of related existents co-existently enduring, and thus not merely temporally serial phantoms (for they are concomitant with the resistance which, opposing the agent's own conscious effort, is, as such, with it involved in the conscious agency of the self), the varying *conatus* and counter-*conatus* of self and other is objectified as an order of co-existents over against the percipient self; and this order is more or less occupied space. Under the stimulus of resistance, or physical counter-*conatus*, physical *conatus* is objectified as relatively vacuous space, and physical counter-*conatus* as relatively rigid and immovable body qualified by the 'tactual objective contents.' It is thus that 'distance,' more or less freely directional, is derived, and thus that the circularity of Berkeley's account is avoided. The 'free motion' of the body that is for him the essence of space, and the 'resisted motion' of the body that is the occupation of space by body, are not locomotion and locomotory retardation respectively, but physical *conatus* variously resisted, and thus more or less concomitant with the serial and terminal 'objective contents.' Because there is no unresisted *conatus* there is no 'pure' space; because there is no irresistible *conatus* there is no fully occupied space; the vacuum and the plenum are but chimerical 'ideal limits' of space more or less occupied, itself but an *auxilium imaginationis*.

Objection may, perhaps, be raised against the use of the term 'objectification' for the relation of space (with its characteristic passivity and impotence) to active *conatus*. The defence of the usage is as follows: if, *per impossibile*, we suppose a completely isolated durational conator, such a being would not imagine itself as confronted with a space wholly empty. Thus what is objectified is not agency as such, but always under privation. By reason of this privation every *conatus* is opposed by counter-*conatus*, so that its space is more or less occupied, and as so occupied not wholly impotent. Thus it is the privation of *conatus* that is objectified as space so far occupied, and the privation of the counter-*conatus* that is objectified as space so far unoccupied. In other words, the relative

nor have a proper motion. Meeting resistance it would strive against it, and thus, if conscious, it would not regard itself as "completely free." (Though Spinoza's example is thus faulty, it serves the purpose to which it is put).

impotence of the other is objectified as space so far unoccupied, and the relative impotence of the self that is objectified as space so far occupied; and the contrariety of 'agent' and 'object' is thus reconciled. It is the relative impotence of self or other that is objectified as space more or less occupied; and the principle remains valid when we distinguish between the privations by which the eternal agencies of the microcosms are reduced to *conatus* from the original relative limitations of those agencies. For there is neither isolation nor opposition in the *communitas* of eternal agents.

So far we have restricted our attention to the relatively simple case of exploratory tactual perception. A brief inspection of the manner in which the principles educed have modified application to the more highly complex, discriminating and summary visual perception must be attempted by way of essential elaboration. For exploratory tactual perception, we have seen, the other serves as 'buffer' opposing the *conatus* of the self, while the percipient's own body operates as exploratory 'tool.' No other, of course, is merely the self's opponent, but it is only in so far as the other so acts that it is tactually perceptible. By a 'tool' is meant a body more adequately taken as not merely opposing but in its measure also co-operating with a self, but the notion may well be extended as descriptive, not of an other, but of the percipient's body itself as a whole and of its members. It is by reason of the mutual opposition of the parts of the body that the 'kinaesthetic objective contents' are perceived, and the self is aware of its exploratory movements in the perceptual space that objectifies the *conatus* that meets no insuperable *alien* opposition; but it is also by reason of the mutual co-operation of these parts that tactual exploration is possible. The body as a whole, too, opposes itself to its fulcrum in its co-operative effort. Thus the body as a whole, and also in its several members operates as an exploring 'tool,' as well as making use of others as extensions of the self. In so far as the other is wholly co-operant it operates less as a mere 'buffer' and more perfectly as a 'tool,' and in the limit as a 'medium' or 'field of freedom' – a limit only attainable under reference to God in the *communitas* of eternal *Natura*. Thus, a 'tool' may be regarded as a hybrid between the 'buffer' and the 'medium.'

In his account of vision in the first discourse of *La Dioptric*, Descartes compares visual with tactual perception by the use of the example of a blind man exploring his vicinity with a stick, which he uses as a sort of extended limb. The 'objective tactual contents' are thus located by him at the ferrule of his stick and not his hand. Distance is thus

measured by him by a new scale, and for his '*diaesthesia*' there is an interval of space between his hand and the 'buffer,' *viz.* the length of the stick (known to him by independent tactual exploration). Now, Descartes suggests that we have here an analogue of what occurs in vision, though now the stick is no body that can be independently explored: it is "*l'air*," or as we might say 'the ether of space' (or whatever takes its place in a more adequate or subtle theory). This is a 'tool' so co-operant as to approximate closely to a 'medium,' but at the same time so far removed from being a 'buffer' that its length cannot be directly measured. Just as the blind man 'feels' the kerbstone that lies beyond his convenient reach with his hand, so the observer sees a star far beyond the limits of his optical organ, or any possible movement of it. His eye "touches the Great Nebula, and rests upon Orion" through the optical quasi-medium.

Auditory perception provides an intermediate type in which the exploratory 'tool' is a column of air, which approximates more nearly to a co-operant 'medium' than the blind man's stick, though less than does the visual 'ether.' Pure or empty space, the perfect objective medium, is but an ideal limit and unattainable, for, as we have seen, there is no unopposed *conatus*, and the ideal 'medium' is, indeed, not 'pure' space (and thus, in all strictness, not a 'medium' in the objective sense at all) but the *communitas actionum* of eternal microcosms in the eternal macrocosm. All actual 'media' are thus in varying measure 'tools' for perceptual agency, and thus in the measure of their efficient co-operation, for '*diaesthesia*' permeable space. The diaesthetically perceived occupants of space, on the other hand, are in varying measure 'buffers.' And though we can hardly style the body itself *its own* 'tool,' yet in so far as it falls short of the transparency¹ in '*diaesthesia*' requisite for unclouded perception, it partakes of the same nature.

Of the complication of the perceptual space so far considered as 'directional distance' between two conators taken as simple and otherwise isolated, no more than a brief note need here be added. It is often claimed that perceptual space is not mere 'distance' but is tridimensional, and though this is a somewhat too precise description of its nature, at least it must be allowed that it is distance varying in direction more or less freely, and thus is vaguely voluminous. This would appear to be

¹ 'Transparency' is a term both objectivistic and analogical, applying originally to certain objects of vision. As here used its activistic counterpart is physical 'freedom,' just as that of 'objective content' is physical 'restraint.' 'Tool,' 'buffer' and 'medium,' too, are commonly objectivistic in use; their conative counterparts, essential to their objectivistic use, are 'co-operant,' 'opponent' and 'communicant.'

connected with the multiplex nature of the physical self, more or less concomitant with the multiplicity of physical others with which it is free in its degree, and alternatively, to enter into active relation – a freedom which is objectified as a certain relaxation of directional rigidity of relation.

(c) Perceptual Quality or 'Objective Content'

Perceptual time and space, then, are variant functions of the congress of the *conatus* and counter-*conatus* of self¹ and other – emanatory products of the *communitas* of eternal self and complement as that constitutive relation is eccentricized and clouded by the unilateral self-reference of the microcosmic self. We have now to inquire into the aetiology of the 'objective contents', qualifying the occupants of perceptual space-time. How is 'objective content', distributed as perceptual quality² of the occupants of space-time, an emanation of *conatus* and counter-*conatus*?

Here we must distinguish two inquiries: (1) Why are spatio-temporal contours qualified, and (2) what is the aetiology of the qualities actually perceived, *viz.* colours, sounds, tastes, *etc.* Attempts have sometimes, though rarely, been made to derive the perceived qualities of things from their spatio-temporal characteristics; rarely, because the all-pervading empiricism of the modern period has preferred to regard them as 'given' and thus beyond the reach of inquiry into origins. Though qualities and spatio-temporal characteristics are doubtless co-derivative, the task of deducing the former from the latter (as colour from superficial texture, or sound from vibrations) would seem to be bootless, so that hesitant empiricists speak of them as 'emergent,' and resolute materialists as 'epiphenomenal.' Certainly qualities or 'objective contents' though necessary for the discernment of spaces and times transcend space-time. Nor, though such 'contents' are necessarily spatio-temporal, can space-time be deduced from them. We must have recourse to the very sources of emanation: the self-referent projection of the eternal *communitas* of *Natura naturata*.

That quality is in some manner a derivative of *communitas* is suggested even in the 'external' view of perception, where an external thing is

¹ The reader is reminded that by 'self' here is meant, not mind, but the body itself taken as self-referent.

² What we have here in mind is what has commonly been distinguished as 'secondary qualities' – the 'primary qualities' being better regarded as spatio-temporal conformations or modalities, since they are perceptible only as themselves 'secondarily qualified.' Qualities such as 'impenetrability,' 'hardness and softness,' 'roughness and smoothness,' *etc.*, as well as 'life' in its various forms, are, perhaps, better regarded as forms of counter-*conatus*.

imagined as operating on a sense-organism, directly or through a medium, producing therein some modifications partaking of the natures of both sense-organism and external thing; which modifications are in some manner correlated with the perceiving of the external thing. In this 'external' view the correlation of psychical and physical is of the perception of the thing with a physical complex (or the neural end-effect of such a complex) confusedly combining the sense-organism and the external thing. Whence the inference would appear to be that the 'object perceived' is neither the external thing nor the sense-organism *simpliciter*, but their confused, abstract, resultant. Nor can this be avoided save by denying that there is correlation of perception and physical complex or end-effect, but only (by God's good pleasure as Descartes suggests) of perception and external thing. And this broad principle is even applicable to the true 'diaesthetic' view of perception, *mutatis mutandis*, where both the spatio-temporal form and the 'objective content' or quality are functions of the conative interaction of self and other – as Spinoza would say, of the *affectio* of self by other, based upon partial *communitas*. The 'object' of '*diaesthesia*' is an *affectio* confusing the *differentiae* of partially estranged self and other on the ground of their *communia*.

What, then, is this complication of self and other that results in 'objective content' or quality spatio-temporally distributed? Spinoza's general principle that *Imaginatio* is of *affectiones* has, indeed, commonly been interpreted as having reference chiefly to this factor of objectivity, and to time as *auxilium imaginationis*, but not to space (*Extensio* too often being identified with 'pure' or empty space). For him the imaginational object, metaphysically the emanation of the *communitas* of self and complement, is phenomenologically the product of the congress of the partially estranged self and other. But he makes no attempt in detail to derive quality from *communitas* eccentricized to *conatus* and counter-*conatus*, and the same is in large measure true with respect to time and space. For us, however, broadly speaking, space issues from the relative impotence of the other, as time from the relative impotence of the self. Now quality, it would seem, issues from their 'diaesthetic' co-operation, 'externally' imagined as 'resonance' of self to other – opposition, impotence, and co-operation being inseparable factors in the depletion of *communitas* under finite self-reference. But inasmuch as co-operation is, while opposition and impotence are not, positive transcripts of *communitas*, the relation of quality to *conatus* and counter-*conatus* is less remote than that of space or time. In this view the

quality of a perceptual object is its *communitas* with the self under reduction or partial occultation concomitant with spatio-temporal otherness by reason of self-reference. Just as space is emanated by the relatively impotent resistance of the other to the *conatus* of the self, *under the condition of their formal congress*; and time is emanated by the relatively impotent *conatus* of the self in its context of enduring others, *under the condition of their common dependence*; so quality is emanated, not from mere co-operation (for *communitas* is perfect co-operation without objectivity – a ‘union of hearts’), but from co-operation of self and other *under the conditions of their formal opposition and relative independence and impotence*. Thus, under unilateral self-reference the self is no longer constituted by its *communitas* with its complement, but is partially co-operative with its other, and thus so far *apt* for the capture of its essence, both *formaliter* and *objectivé*.

It is the manner in which this is accomplished, however, that is of chief importance; complete capture would entail constitutive *communitas* without ‘objective content’; total failure would entail complete occultation; thus the capture must be only *partial*, but not *sectional* or specifically *abstract*, but *communitas* of *communia* supplemented by a *nimbus* of qualitative *affectiones*, or confused *differentiae* as the privative manifestation of occulted *communitas*. For at all stages of the finite dialectic of creation¹ that which is occulted must declare itself by inversion, totally, defectively, or privatively. We have already seen the operation of this principle with the infinite Attributes² where the distinctive nature of each is the inverse complement of all that it excludes, and thence derives its genericity. With quality or ‘objective content’ the application is special, but the principle the same; what is occulted in the context of the self-referent self is not thereby wholly excluded, but makes inverse appearance as objective *nimbus*. It is thus that *its absence is positively ‘felt.’*³ It is thus that what appears as empirical *datum* is, indeed, intellectual *ablatum*, and philosophically no verificatory norm but essential problem.

To the second of the two inquiries respecting perceptual quality or ‘objective content,’ *viz.* the aetiology of those actually perceived, the reply must necessarily be laconic. Just as the nature of the Attributes

¹ See ch. V.

² See above, pp. 44–45, 47.

³ *I.e.* ‘imagined’ as intellectually occult. For to be aware of intellectual limit is to have passed beyond it, not intellectually but imaginatively. No ‘example’ of this can be cited, but as faint analogues there are the ‘felt silence’ after clamour, and the dim green corona around the scarlet patch.

transcending the human intellect cannot be deduced from the natures of Thought and Extension, though each is the inverse of the totality of all others, so also the qualities that emanate as inversions of the occulted agency of the self's complement alienated by its self-reference cannot be deduced from the nature of eternal *communitas*. Only their intellectual indeducibility can be deduced; for their manifestation is the work, not of intellect but of *Imaginatio* which is a confusion and privation – not a division or abstraction – of intellect. Imaginational objects, spatio-temporal and qualified, are eccentric, fragmentary, and confused projections of eternal agents, not figments or mental phantoms; hence the ineluctability of such objects, noted by Spinoza, in face of intellectual criticism and firm knowledge of their phenomenality¹.

(d) *The Conatus of Perceptual Things*

Finally, and summarily, the empiricistic account of our recognition of agency in the perceived world must, in principle, be rejected, *viz.* that we *impute conatus* to objects on the analogy of our own experience of active endeavour – recognizing that we are ourselves similar objects of perception (to other percipients, or fragmentarily to ourselves) and also directly aware of our agency, we conclude that other objects the objective behaviours of which are comparable with our own, are also agents. This must be rejected on the ground that it is based on a misinterpretation of the nature of perception. For '*diaesthesia*' the active self is no object of perception like the other, and the analogy must therefore fail. The question as to how we emancipate ourselves from the solipsism of our naive durational flux – what we experience when from the native percipience of spatio-temporal qualified objects we return, in Bergsonian phrase, "to our own presence" – cannot be elucidated by analogy. On the contrary, at every stage discernible in the development of that durational flux we are recognisably related to an *active* other. Nay, since in the eternal *communitas* of *Natura naturata* each microcosm is *constituted* by its *communitas* with its complement, this is already implicit in the solipsism of conative naivety, for which agency is limited. And the development to native objective percipience does but prescribe its limits in terms of the counter-*conatus* of an other objectively manifest as spatio-temporal qualified object. To be aware of agency that is no more than *conatus* is to be aware of counter-*conatus*.

¹ *Eth. II., xxxv. Sch.; IV., i. Sch.*

CHAPTER IV

'NATURA SOPHISTICATA'¹

In the foregoing chapter we have been concerned with the world presented to the human percipient in "*experientia vaga*" without ostensible rationalization, yet congruent with the 'aptness' of the percipient's body to be 'affected' by, or to 'affect,' what is other, already tacitly rationalized as spatio-temporal and qualified. This world is *perceptually* naive, but issues from durationally conative sources that are naive in a more radical sense: what I have styled "the 'Bergsonian' inchoation." We come now to the consideration of some general features of further ostensible rationalizations of the world of *experientia vaga*, undertaken as a result of well-founded intellectual dissatisfaction with this *prima facie* world: the worlds of 'scientific philosophy' and of phenomenology, resulting from critical analysis and intellectual reconstruction of the so-called 'given' world, and aimed at the discovery of the Real by rationalization *without metaphysical transcendence*. For obvious reasons, of competence no less that of space, the treatment must be general and selective: no truly exhaustive consideration even of all the characteristic worlds of science, based on various special sciences and special assumptions, can here be contemplated. The discussion will, therefore, be limited to certain broad principles commonly involved in such speculations, with a somewhat more direct consideration of one which, coming from a trained philosopher, is less likely to ignore fundamental philosophical difficulties than those which issue from eminent scientists in their reflective moods.

(i) THE WORLD OF SCIENCE

Since it is the avowed end of science to give an 'objective' account of the world of nature, and even, surpassing this, to reduce it to mathe-

¹ The distinction which I draw between the true rationalization of "vagrant experience" and its 'sophistication' corresponds broadly with the two accounts given by Spinoza in the *Ethics* and in the *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione* of the nature of *Ratio*, the 'second kind of knowledge.' (See my *Benedict de Spinoza, The Elements of His Philosophy*, pp. 73-5, 85). It is not suggested that, on its own ground, natural science is 'sophistical,' but only when taken as ultimate.

matical form, we shall here be concerned mainly with the ‘world of physics’ in which these aims are most notably advanced. “If philosophy,” says Broad, “is to take into account empirical facts – and it is extremely difficult to see what it will be able to tell us about the existent unless it does – it can hardly neglect the most fruitful and thorough investigation of certain large branches of empirical facts that has yet been made”;¹ and he goes on to say that “natural science starts with certain assumptions, and, as it goes on, it develops certain general conclusions *about the real world*. For instance, it starts with a position not far removed from naïf realism, and in its progress, it draws a distinction between the reality of primary and secondary qualities, and develops a causal theory of perception.”² By ‘reality’ here it is evident that Broad means a certain sort of spatio-temporal objectivity,³ the correlative psychophysical ‘observer’ being taken as the mere spectator of the ‘real.’ Under this assumption physics tends to construct a world from which all qualitative and conative factors are eliminated, while plainly, step by step, making use of them.

This characteristic of natural science, it will be recalled, is expounded by Bergson as definitive: “Science tears asunder” the two elements of the “mixed idea of a measurable time” “when it undertakes the close study of external things.” It “retains nothing of duration but simultaneity, and nothing of motion itself but the position of the moving body, *i.e.* immobility.” And he suggests that while this abstraction is legitimate in dealing with external things, it is wholly illegitimate in dealing with internal phenomena “in their developing” as they constitute the “free person,” and must be replaced by the opposite abstraction of “pure duration” from extensity. We must regard the free agent as “a wholly qualitative multiplicity, an absolute heterogeneity of elements that pass over into one another.”⁴ But Bergson’s admission of the legitimacy of eliminating duration from the external world of science betrays his mentalistic bias; for thus the reality of that world, such as it is, would be dependent upon the exponential agency of durational minds which alone would properly be ‘real.’

¹ *Perception, Physics, and Reality*, p.vii. The reference is, of course, to physics.

² *Loc. cit.* Italics mine.

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⁴ *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience*, p.176. What is this but an ‘objectivistic’ caricature of *conatus*?

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(a) The Elimination of Action and Quality

Scientific philosophy, however, attempts no such preliminary derivation of spatio-temporality from the qualitative duration of active mind, and cannot, therefore, escape by the Bergsonian way. Starting from the spatio-temporal qualified world of *experientia vaga*, it seeks to reduce all agency to process, and all quality to quantitative order, regarding the residue of agency and quality at each stage of rationalization as but a problematic remainder urging it to a further effort of reduction. In the end it is the aim of natural science to substitute for qualified active objects, mathematical equations or *formulae*, and so to reduce biology to chemistry, chemistry to physics, and physics to mathematics that is 'applied' only in the sense that its amplitude is limited by the analytic process by which it is reached in the passage from empirical 'facts.'

Here, let it be noted, we are not concerned with the techniques of the natural sciences as such, but with the philosophical speculations founded on their generalization. No 'special science' can wholly dispense with quality and agency; and philosophy is not 'general science,' nor its method scientific. It is true that Broad (who may be regarded in this reference as a 'scientific philosopher') shows some disposition to call a halt to this process of reduction by the suggestion that the spatio-temporality of the tactual quality, unlike that of vision, is a manifestation of real physical spatio-temporality – though only in the sense that real space-time is qualified by some real counterpart of the tactual *sensum*. Apart from some uneasiness about the notion of 'pure' space-time, it is difficult to supply a motive for Broad's willingness to suppose the reality of a *qualitas occulta* which in other connexions he rejects as unscientific¹; and it is, perhaps, the lingering objection to such a supposition that makes him unwilling to press the 'instrumental theory' of perception even to the case of touch.²

Scientific philosophy, then, seeks to give a quantitative spatio-temporal account of agency and quality, though, when very closely pressed, it may admit that real space-time is not necessarily *like* that of common perception. The equation $x^2 + y^2 = r^2$ is not perceptually circular, but is a pure form of circularity – the '*formula*' or 'little form' to which perceptually extended circles conform. But though it might be argued that it requires no quality for its discernment, by the same token it is difficult to regard it as a real existent. Mathematical objects are but *entia rationis*, and so far as scientific procedure leads to them it leads

¹ *Perception, Physics, and Reality*, p.325. Cf. pp.251-260.

² *Op. cit.*, p.260.

away from the Real to a *Natura sophisticateda*. The true way of philosophy is by metaphysical transcendence, not scientific rationalization, of *experientia vaga*.

So far the futility of the attempt to abstract space-time as quantitative *determinatum* from all qualitative content, and the 'unscientific' character of the attempted imputation of some *qualitas occulta* regarded as a real counterpart of perceptual quality to fulfil a formal office that cannot be eliminated without eliminating space-time itself as measurable quantity, has been emphasized. But the parallel attempt to elaborate a conception of 'cause' from which all activity has been exorcized is equally characteristic of scientific philosophy, and equally futile. While quality is rejected because, although observable, it is non-metric, agency is eliminated from 'cause' because it is not even observable. "Activity is everywhere a mere *qualitas occulta*, the mere turning of a causal law connecting observable or inferrible states of two substances at different times into a quality of one of them."¹ This conception of agency as a quality, empirical or occult, is but another example of the radical objectivism which ignores when it does not deny the reality of things by nature unobservable. Broad searching for agency among the qualities of things is reminiscent of Hume seeking the self among its perceptions. Causal agency is not a quality of the antecedent in a temporal sequence, or indeed anything merely objective or observable. And this is true even of durational *conatus* which is not to be conceived as an object of a 'sense of effort' (which is reducible to *kinaesthesia*); and this is the root of the inadequacy of transeunt causality, and explains why temporal succession, not defines, but is defined by, durational *conatus*.

(b) *Cause and Probability*

Agency is thus eliminated by scientific philosophy because it is conceived as a pretended objective factor that, unlike quality, is unobservable. In its view causality is some kind of spatio-temporal order: a causal law subsists between two events or systems of event when they are so related that the occurrence of the one renders probable the occurrence of the other in sequence. "Causal laws are laws about the strengthening of the probability of the occurrence of one event by the occurrence of another,"² not laws of "absolute certainty." The significance of this doctrine must not be confused with the principle that effects are concealed or modified

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 325. Cf. also pp. 79-90 where the limitations of science are uncritically transferred to philosophy.

² *Perception, Physics, and Reality*, p. 156.

by the operation of counteracting causes, so that causal laws are best expressed as laws of *tendency*. What is asserted is that the causality of an event, simple or complex, is nothing more than its probable relation to other events – not any *power* inherent in the ‘cause’ by which it tends to determine the ‘effect.’

In so far as this doctrine signifies the congruence of transeunt causality and probability it is in reasonable harmony with Spinoza’s depreciation of the former as ‘inadequate,’ and with his account of contingency as rooted in partial ignorance. But the *identification* of causality with probability is another matter. Doubtless, if we confine ourselves to the imaginal world of qualified spatio-temporal objects (with or without the attribution of *conatus*), objective contingency will be found to be prevalent, though not wholly intelligible; but this can be no ground for the inference that in the eternal macrocosm of microcosms any place can be assigned to ontological contingency. Nor does the denial of ontological contingency imply that contingency is a mere figment.

Again, the theory begins by denying that events are connected with, or have power over, one another, but proceeds to impute to them an order expressible as ‘causal laws,’ which however contingent, at least implies some measure of regularity. But the thinker who is engaged in *reducing* causality to probability of sequence will be hard put to it to explain how any sequence can be ‘probable’ when all events are otherwise independent of one another, and impotent. Hence the question is commonly burked under the plea that the order is ‘given’ (and thus beyond inquiry into origin). And indeed, the only alternative available would be reference to a *deus ex machina*. But if inquiry into the origin of the ‘given’ is to be eschewed, all inquiry into origins must cease (since all objects, as such, are ‘given’ or complications of ‘given’ factors) – a result acceptable, of course, to positivists, but stultifying to all who seek to understand the nature of things. Yet what is positivism but credulity sanctioned by ill-supported dogma masquerading as principle? That there are intellectual dangers in the inquiry into origins may be freely admitted, but the safety (such as it is) of refusal is too dearly bought at the expense of confinement to objects ‘given’ in perception, and thus truncated from what cannot be so ‘given,’ yet cannot be ignored, *viz.* the psycho-physical percipient in the diaesthetic act. Here at least an inquiry into origins is avoided, not at peril but fatally.

Now, it is easy to understand that if things are actively related by their own *conatus* and counter-*conatus*, *i.e.* as coordinate derivatives of a common active source, the production of any change may be *objectively*

contingent though imaginatively expressing (through the privation suffered under self-reference) an order eternally necessary. And this would harmonize with Spinoza's account of contingency as imaginal, with the entailed denial that *underived* (and therefore absolute) transeuncy is causal (*i.e.* active) at all. For the world of *Imaginatio* is not composed of objects *wholly* loose (in which there could be no contingency), but of objects which, as such, are inadequately connected (and thus so far contingent); but it is nevertheless a self-referent projection of a world intelligible, of microcosms in eternal *communitas*, and thus essentially necessary. Too often it has been supposed that Spinoza's doctrine of contingency implies that nothing in nature answers to the mind's imagination of the contingent, and that the world is a closed system of necessity; whereas in truth necessity belongs to eternal *Natura naturata* which transcends space-time, quality, and *conatus*. Contingency, on the other hand, belongs to the imaginal world characterized by these factors, and that world, as it is 'given,' is no mere figment, but a privative, eccentric, projection of the macrocosm on the reference-system of the self-referent microcosm.

(ii) 'ALEXANDRIAN' SPACE-TIME

The spatio-temporalization of naive conational duration that results first, from the elimination of agency, in the reduction of the world of perception to that of mechanics, and finally, from the elimination of quality, to pure mathematics, lies at the root of the tendency of philosophizing scientists to move towards an ultimate mentalism. It is because the method of science reduces, step by step, the essence of nature to mathematical form, or formula, that Jeans (*e.g.*) is inclined to make 'God' the perfect mathematician, and the world of nature his mathematics.¹ Inasmuch, however, as this mathematical description of nature is held to be superior to the perceptual view, the suggestion is that it is

¹ "As experimental research advances, the fundamental laws of nature become simplified more and more, and ... we find this simplicity residing neither in the physical facts, nor in their pictorial representations, but solely in the mathematical formulae which describe the pattern of events. These seem simple to our minds because they are expressible in the kind of mathematics to which we take naturally, and studied for the pure intellectual interest we found in it before we saw it would help us to understand nature – in brief, in pure and not in applied mathematics. Thus the pure mathematician finds it much easier to interpret gravitation in terms of his science than does the mechanic or engineer. But *the pure mathematician deals with the mental sphere*, the mechanic and engineer with the material. Thus the relativity theory of gravitation, because of its close association with pure mathematics, seems to carry us yet further along the road from materialism to mentalism, and the same may be said of most of the recent developments of physical science." (*Physics and Philosophy*, pp.200-201. Italics mine, to emphasize a too common error).

the former that has been 'reduced' in common experience to the latter, and not the latter that scientific philosophy 'reduces' to the former. Nevertheless, when spatio-temporal qualified objects are resolved into mathematical formulae and equations something positive seems to be lost, or at least to become latent, and it is recognition of this that led a philosophical realist like Samuel Alexander to pay greater respect to quality, and greater regard to its aetiology, than did men like Jeans and Eddington (who openly espoused a mentalistic reading of nature). It is thus worth our while to examine the nature and success of Alexander's attempt to interpret the essential nature of the world by sophistication of the empirical appearance without metaphysical transcendence.

(a) *Space, Time, and Space-Time*

Whether we think of its categorial or pervasive character, or of its variable 'empirical' things, according to Alexander, alike all parts of the experienced world and "all experience is ultimately expressible in terms of Space-Time."¹ In view of what has already been said about the dependence of space and time on agency and quality, it behoves us to examine with some attention the account which Alexander offers of the primordial Space-Time which is held to give birth to a world which seems to contain so much more.

Space and Time, we are told, are "presented in ordinary experience" as extension and duration, in the former of which "bodies occupy places," and in the latter "events occur at times or moments."² Bodies move in space which, though places are discernible in it, is continuous and infinite.³ Time is durational and involves succession of instants, yet is continuous and infinite.⁴ "Space and Time, then, are presented to us as infinite and continuous wholes of parts. I shall call these parts points and instants, availing myself of the conceptual description of them, and meaning by their connectedness or continuity at any rate that between any two points or instants another can be found."⁵

Further, Space and Time are not isolable but intimately connected, so that without their interrelation neither can be real: Time would be resolved into a 'succession' without continuity (and thus no succession

¹ *Space, Time, and Deity*, I., p.343.

² *Op. cit.*, I., p.37.

³ *Op. cit.*, I., p.39.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, I., pp.39-40.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, I., pp. 43-44. See above, p. 40, note 2.

even), and Space into a 'continuum' without discernible parts (and thus no continuum). Space saves Time from being a mere 'now'-at-no-time; Time saves Space from being a mere 'here'-at-no-place. Thus what is presented to us in experience as infinite and continuous is not Space *and* Time, but Space-Time.

Alexander's view may thus be conceived as a refinement upon the conception of space as localized, and time as continued, by qualitative occupation: it is not quality but the spatiality of quality that continues time, and not quality but its temporality that localizes space. Successiveness is the characteristic of time that distinguishes it in our experience from space which also is continuous; but successiveness alone, without continuity, is chimerical, just as is continuity alone without distinction of parts. By combining space and time both are realized; by their divorce both are destroyed. But by their combination must be understood, not that every point occupies an instant, and every instant is occupied by a point: every point must be *repeated* at many instants, and every instant *repeated* at many points. Thus neither points nor instants are unique, but only point-instants.

Must we say, then, that the continuity of time is spatial, and the punctuation of space temporal? Is duration the spatial extension of temporal instants, and are the points of space distinguished solely by their relative dates? Alexander expressly excludes this interpretation of his theory: the correlation of space and time is not 'one to one' but 'one-many'; each point is, as we have seen, repeated at many instants, and each instant at many points; and it is by reason of this that space ensures the continuity of time, and time the punctuation of space. It is because space endures that time is continuous, and because time extends over space that space is punctuated. Thus the two *continua*, of successive instants and of co-existent points, coalesce to form the integral continuum of unique point-instants that is Space-Time.

The questions that arise, therefore, are: (1) how does the duration of space and its points ensure the continuity of time and its instants; and (2) how does the extension of time and its instants over space and its points ensure the punctuation of space?

(1) By the 'duration of space' is meant that the *same* point is repeated at many successive instants. But the continuity of space is not a relation between the repetitions in time of the *same* point, but between *different* points at the same time; and how can the continuity of different points at the same time involve the durational continuity of the repetitions of the same point at different times? Repetition of the same point, it will

be said, means not mere repetition but the occurrence of a new point-instant with the same 'space co-efficient.' But in that case it is not *time* that is continued but *space-time* in so far as it is spatial.

Furthermore, how is a spatial point to be identified empirically throughout its 'repetitions' in time? Not in terms of space or space-time, for all distances and directions and motion are relative. This point here, or that point there, can only be identified by an act of indication or pointing, or by its occupation, and the unchanging duration of this act or quality gives no assurance that the point indicated or qualified remains identical. It is not the continuity of the spatial points that continues the instants of time as a duration, but the continuity of the duration of the act or occupancy that continues the points successively marked as indicated or occupied. And these points are empirically indistinguishable save as so identified.

(2) By the 'extension of time over space' is meant that the *same* instant is repeated at many adjacent points. Here we are on somewhat firmer ground empirically since we can identify the *present* instant (at least 'speciously') at, or in, which a region of space is presented as more or less occupied by 'objective contents' or qualities. More simply, we perceive many points at once. But we do so only if the points are discernible; and since they occur at the *same* time, their discernibility cannot be the result of the successiveness of time. Only points having *different* dates could be said to owe their discernibility to time's successiveness. Nor is it open to Alexander to say that points perceived at the same instant may well have different dates (being at different distances from the percipient), for though the knowledge of this may be 'empirical' in his broad use of the term, the discernibility of the points does not depend on this. Certainly it can be contended that only points of space that *endure* can be empirically discerned, but it does not seem to be by the successiveness of their duration that they are discerned, but by their 'objective contents' or qualities – unless indeed these occupants are functions of their duration. But if so, what function? Relative length or brevity seems to be the sole possible function of duration *per se*, and variations in this are patently not sufficient to constitute qualitative diversity. Repetition of the same instant, it will be said, means not mere repetition but the occurrence of another point-instant with the same 'time co-efficient.' But in that case it is not space that is punctuated but space-time in so far as it is divided into temporal instants. Thus, though discernible points may also differ in date, that we can discern points having the same date would seem sufficient to discredit the theory

that the punctuation of space is referrible to the successiveness of time with which space is integrated.

Such suggested inconsequences in the initial account of the structure of Space-Time, and of the mutual dependence of its factors, are not, however, fatal to Alexander's speculation, for as he does not fail to remind us he is not seeking to prove the existence and mutual dependence of space and time, but to analyse what is given empirically, *viz.* Space-Time. The reader may, perhaps, have noted with some surprise that we have spoken without cavil of discerning points of space and instants of time, and of perceiving space and time, as if these operations were possible even when the points, instants, and *continua* are unoccupied by 'objective content' or quality. Alexander defends this on the ground that even when space and time are "empty of qualitative events or things" they are none the less "full": "Space is full of Time, and Time is full of Space."¹ That is to say, Space-Time (and its point-instants) has its own empirical concrete nature. And it may well be admitted that the occupation of space and time in no way objectively modifies the extent or the duration – indeed, subjectively an unqualified space or an uneventful time are thereby rendered the more drearily extended or enduring. Nevertheless, the timefulness of unqualified space and the spacefulness of uneventful time can hardly be cited as a sufficient manner of positive empirical manifestation. Of what are we aware when we suffer an empty time or enjoy an empty space? Not, I think, of a time full of empty space, and again, of a space full of empty time; but rather of a time full of fruitless effort, and of a space devoid of obstruction to effort, respectively. And what continues the empty time is what continues the empty space, *viz.* the effort. Similarly, the punctuation of space is determined by the obstructions to effort, and the successiveness of time by the privative nature of *conatus*. A wholly empty space would not be punctuated (or even spatial), nor a wholly empty time successive (nor even temporal). All actual times and spaces are more or less occupied, and it is thus that their epochs and regions are perceptible as objects. But their aetiology is conative.

(b) *Space-Time and Quality*

In passing from the consideration of the nature of Space-Time to that of the nature of the world of empirical qualified things Alexander was faced by the serious problem of indicating how the qualities of things at once are involved in, and additional to, their spatio-temporal founda-

¹ *Op. cit.*, I., p.65.

tion or matrix. For experience requires that they should be conceived in both ways yet without paradox. For the clue to the solution of this problem Alexander looked to the relation which, in his view, holds between the body and the mind of man – a relation which he conceived to involve “a simpler problem in itself than the relation of lower qualities of existence to their inferior basis.”¹ Consciousness or mentality is the quality of a set of connected processes that we call ‘mind.’ This set of connected processes, however, must not be conceived as other than spatio-temporal, since we find, by experience and reflection, that it occupies the same places and times (with some correction for time) as the processes constituting a certain part of the body, with which, therefore, it must be identical. Thus mentality is a quality of this set of spatio-temporal processes. “That which is experienced from the inside or enjoyed as a conscious process, is as experienced from the outside or contemplated a neural one.”² This does not mean that mentality is the inner enjoyed nature of the outer contemplated qualities of the neural region as the physiologist perceives it; nor that mentality is a special form of the vital quality which we inwardly experience as belonging to other parts of the body. These various qualities are distinct as attributed to spatio-temporal process-systems of hierarchically distinct complexity, and thus themselves form a hierarchy. Only material things can be vital, and only living things mental.

The distinction of ‘enjoyment’ and ‘contemplation’ is, I think, a sound one provided that it is properly applied. In perception, *e.g.*, the percipient enjoys the perceiving and contemplates the *perceptum*; but ‘perceiving’ is not a spatio-temporal object like the *perceptum*, but an *action*. Nor, as we have seen, does the percipient perceive his own body in *diaesthesia*, or therefore enjoy the perceiving of it. It may be objected that though he does not enjoy the perceiving of his own body, he does enjoy the body itself inasmuch as he is aware of its presence. To this it may be replied that he does not enjoy it as a spatio-temporal object, though in a certain sense he ‘enjoys’ its vital agency;³ and indeed, it must be seriously questioned whether it is possible to *enjoy* what is spatio-temporal, or only its *agency*. Thus, though we may *impute* men-

¹ *Op. cit.*, II., p.3.

² *Op. cit.*, II., p.5.

³ ‘In a certain sense’ only, for ‘enjoys’ is here used analogously: it would be better to say that a man *lives* the vital agency of his body. He may contemplate the muscular and kinaesthetic qualities of his body, and enjoy the contemplation, but this is not to enjoy (or even to contemplate) the body’s vitality. Yet ‘living’ is a sort of enjoyment, since even in its strictest sense to *enjoy* agency is to *be* an agent, and we enjoy our conscious agency because we are conscious agents. Conscious enjoyment is conscious being, and vital enjoyment is vital being.

tality to the neural processes we do not *enjoy* them as mentally qualified; and further, the contemplation of the neural processes belongs, from the very nature of contemplation, to some other mind or mental action. Nor again can we identify the mental action that we enjoy with the spatio-temporal neural processes, for percipience is not a kind of spatio-temporal motion: this is the object, and not the essence, of perception.

Next, Alexander seeks to generalize the relations of body and mind as applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, throughout the whole hierarchical order of spatio-temporal complexity and qualitative diversity. Just as mentality or consciousness is a quality of neural process of the proper degree of spatio-temporal complexity, so the other qualities belong to spatio-temporal complexes of various degrees. The difficulty, however, about this transition is that, apart from mentality and vitality, the qualities of empirical things are objects of contemplation and not enjoyed agencies (or even contemplated muscular and kinaesthetic contents or qualities). The identity of mind and body was more or less intelligible in terms of two modes of apprehension, and that of 'life' and organism might be allowed to pass through the somewhat analogous distinction of organic 'vigilance' and behaviour, but the identity of colour (*e.g.*) with its spatio-temporal foundation or matrix cannot be analogously mediated, and the emphasis now falls on the 'emergence' of the quality from the spatio-temporal complex, and as an object of contemplation over and above the space-time complex – not alternatively with it under different modes of apprehension. This *laches* in the generalization is, of course, traceable to the ambiguity attaching to the notion of 'enjoyment' in the case of mind: for mind is not enjoyed as a spatio-temporal complex with the quality of mentality, but as mental agency. And I will add that no physiologist can be conceived as contemplating the mentality of a set of neural processes.

The paragraphs in which Alexander announces his use of the terms 'enjoyed' and 'contemplated'¹ are not open to cavil,² but when in the following paragraph he goes on to describe an 'act of mind' as an 'event' with a mental character, it is difficult not to suppose that he is thinking

¹ *Op. cit.*, I., pp.12-13.

² Save that an 'act of mind' is said to *be* an 'enjoyment,' whereas it would be truer to say that mental 'action' (*i.e. acting*) is *enjoyed* – for the 'act' of mind is the perception of an object (*i.e. what the action accomplishes*), and this is not an enjoyment but a contemplation. But the confusion of agency and act under the ambiguity of the term 'action' is too common to cause surprise, and too mischievous to be allowed to pass without comment. I will take this opportunity also to cavil at the almost universal habit among present-day writers of using the abstract term 'activity' where the concrete term 'action' is plainly required. Such solecisms unmistakably reveal the general failure of the modern mind to understand the nature of agency.

of an object with a quality, and not of a kind of agency. Similarly, when he speaks of mind and its object as being 'compresent' in the world, the same suggestion is inevitable in spite of the emphasis on the different modes in which they are experienced.

Alexander was, of course, well aware of the difficulties involved in these expressions, and he sought to meet them by suggesting that 'acts of mind' which for us are 'enjoyments' may well become objects of contemplation for superior beings (called 'angels') whose 'qualities' transcend mentality¹ upon which they are based: "consciousness is contemplated by an angel in the way in which life which is next lower to us is contemplated by us";² and "the quality of life is *apprehended* in ourselves by the organic and kinaesthetic sensations."³ 'Life' as *contemplated*, however, would commonly be said to be a certain kind of organic behaviour, and this is what is chiefly considered by Alexander himself in his paragraphs on the subject.⁴ Are we, then, to understand that it is *enjoyed* as "organic and kinaesthetic sensations," *i.e.* presumably as such *sensings* (varying with the qualities of their *sensa*)?⁵ And does the 'angel' contemplate 'acts of minds' after the analogy of vital behaviour or that of muscular and kinaesthetic *sensa*? The latter is most strongly suggested, for intelligent behaviour does not require an angelic percipient – we can contemplate this ourselves. But so also, it might be suggested, do we contemplate our own muscular and kinaesthetic *sensa*, though not their *sensings* – for we *enjoy* the *sensa* only in so far as they qualify the *sensings*, not as 'objective contents.' There is an obscurity here which Alexander does not appear to resolve; but in any case it must seriously be questioned whether we do, or can, *contemplate* 'life' at all as an object. Life must be *lived* as agency in order to be "apprehended"; and 'mind' must be *enjoyed* as agency to be apprehended even by an angel. And this is true of life and mind even in others – they are apprehended only in so far as self and other enter into active vital or mental relation.⁶

(iii) POINTER-READINGS – THE NEMESIS OF SOPHISTICATION

We have seen, at least in part, that the result of the application of scientific method to the analysis of the perceptual world is the progressive

¹ *Op. cit.*, I., p.19.

² *Op. cit.*, II., p.105.

³ *Op. cit.*, II., p.170. Italics mine.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, II., pp.61-67.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, II., p.128.

⁶ Such relation being the privative projection in the eccentric reference system of the self of the constitutive *communitas* of the eternal microcosm and its complement in the macrocosm.

elimination of its various *prima facie* constituents and characteristics, and the substitution of others more precisely metrical and thus apt for rational manipulation: secondary-qualified molar bodies progressively give place to primary-qualified atomic parts, and 'natural causation' takes the place of active endeavour. But the demands of the method are not thus satisfied, and as biologically qualified cells and organisms give place to chemically qualified molecules, and these to physically qualified atoms, so the 'billiard ball' atoms are resolved into electrons, protons, neutrons, and the like, and these to atomic electric charges or *quanta*, wave systems, and fields of force, *etc.*, while 'natural causation' is interpreted as mere probability of sequence statistically determined. Insatiably the method proceeds to devour its own offspring in the recognition that nothing in the natures of its final products is known save its quantity as indicated by the pointer on the graduated scale of some apparatus, while the probability of a sequence can be measured only by the application of the mathematical laws of chance. We thus arrive at the conclusion frankly set forth by Eddington, that science is the study of the linkages of pointer-readings with pointer-readings¹ – indeed, 'linkage' seems too strong a term for the concurrences which science studies. And so the perceptual world is at last reduced to a mathematically related system or congeries of pointer-readings on graduated scales. And if it is objected that at least the pointers and scales remain outside of this projected world the scientist will not hesitate to reply that these too are themselves but bundles of pointer-readings on scales. "Actuality has been lost in the exigencies of the chase,"² for only *pure* mathematics can thus dispense with pointer-readings (and all analogous empirical objects), and this, though exact and unimpeachable, provides us with no expression of the nature of existing things as actually existing, but only with relations of *entia rationis*.

It is to the credit of Eddington that he recognized all this as indicating the limitations of scientific knowledge, and thus of the defects of scientific method as applied to the problems of the nature of real existents with which the philosopher is concerned – though like many another scientist turned amateur philosopher his attempt to make good the deficiency by bringing in the *mind* of the observers as the existential 'stuff' of their pointer-readings is less creditable in a thinker of his acumen. The theory of 'mind 'stuff' as the 'building material' for the physical world, and of the 'brain matter' as a 'partial aspect' of a 'whole mental

¹ *The Nature of the Physical World*, ch.XII. *et passim*.

² *Op. cit.*, p.319.

state,¹ even with the *caveat* that by 'mind' is meant more than conscious mind, and by 'stuff' not 'substance' in the sense that we speak of 'material substances,' is no more than a resort from problem to paradox. For plainly the only 'stuff' of pointer-readings is numbers, for they are the *objects* and not the qualities or modes or expressions or determinations of mind. The problems of the relations of pointer-readings to real existents must be met on the very ground of the pointer-readings themselves which have significance only in so far as they are recognized as registered by some instrument or apparatus framed for some specific purpose. Pointer-readings on the galvanometer are measures of electrical potentials to which the instrument is framed to be resonant; on clocks they mark time-intervals, on barometers atmospheric pressures, and so on; and only with these measurables in view can the world reasonably be conceived as in any way related to pointer-readings.

Presumably no one has failed to notice this very obvious consideration, but many seem not to understand its significance, just as many philosophers have failed to allow for the mediation of the percipient's body by way of resonant screen in the perception of its other, and like Eddington with the pointer-readings have attributed the work of the body to the mind, and thus suffered shipwreck in some form of mentalism.

What, then, is the function of the scientist's measuring apparatus, and how does it stand related to the measurable and its measures? It operates as a selectively resonant system to which the supposedly independent measurable is referred, and against which, as thus referred, it is compared – the comparison being registered by a pointer along a scale. Essentially this is the 'blind man's stick' over again, though in his case it is not measurement but perceptual presence that is achieved. His stick is a telescoped sense-organ or exploring 'tool'; and the apparatus of the scientist is also his 'tool' made as little a 'buffer' and as much a 'medium' as may be necessary. It is a tool or extension of the percipient's body by means of which resonance with the inferior ranges of the privatively hierarchical nature of the other, eluding direct perception, is established, and vicarious perception with its inevitable limits and privations secured. From the nature of the apparatus only relative quantities are registered on the scale by the pointer, and the nature of the *perceptum* remains perceptually occult. And thus however well the apparatus may be operating as 'medium' in respect to quantity, it remains a 'buffer' with respect to nature, and is therefore only a 'tool.' If it were pure 'buffer' it would be useless from lack of resonance; if it were pure 'medium'

¹ *Op. cit.*, p.276 *et seqq.*

it would be otiose since then the percipient's body would equally well serve its purpose. Scientific apparatus is thus essentially an *auxilium perceptionis*, means by which the imperceptible constituents of the other are brought within the range of metric science, and without which these inferior ranges of being can at best make durational appearance by summary obversion as secondary quality.

Thus, just as the percipient's body, though diaesthetically occult, must not be taken as outside of nature, but as selectively co-operating with and obstructing the agency of the other, so that the *perceptum* confusedly combines factors culled from the physical natures of both self and other, and the nature of the other *per se* can only be apprehended by metaphysical transcendence of its otherness – so also the apparatus of the scientist does not lie outside of the field of investigation as a mere 'transparency' or perceptual 'medium' (save, perhaps, ideally in respect of quantity and metric relation), but selectively co-operates with and obstructs the agents of its field so that its pointer registers on its scale the measure, not of what is wholly its other, but at best of that to which it is resonant, and in the degree of its resonance. But in so doing it manifests to the observer, not the nature of the resonant factors, but only their relative strength and metrical relations – for that which is imperceptible to him in the field must also be imperceptible in the apparatus. Thus however perfect the apparatus may be made, it remains but a 'tool,' and no pure 'medium'; that is to say, its nature is involved with that of its field as the 'stuff' (in the Eddingtonian terminology) of its pointer-readings. It measures the strength of its field against its own strength, and even the metric relations of the factors involved, but not otherwise manifests the nature of that field or its factors, either with or in abstraction from its own. And furthermore, even if the apparatus is so perfect as to introduce no factors alien to its field, so that its measures are direct and incorrigible (*i.e.* metrically 'transparent'), it would still be but the observer's 'tool' or apparatus – an extension of his body – so that its pointer-reading is the measure of a 'stuff' occult for his perception save in respect of measure and metric relation. In *pure* mathematics alone, for which measure and metric relation are all-embracing, and there is no 'stuff' but numbers and other *entia rationis*, can this abstraction be tolerable. But the objects of pure mathematics are not 'pointer-readings,' and it is thus that it is at once the least obscure of the sciences and ontologically the most empty; and as we proceed down the scale of being towards this limit of non-being, though the bodily resonance may be increasingly amplified and metrically

perfected by the utilization of scientific apparatus, yet the nature of the measurable resonant factors becomes increasingly abstract as ever lower ranges of existent come under investigation. And by no means is the eccentricity of projection, and the confusion of self and other, in the measurable thus overcome or corrected, though the mischief of ignoring them may be mitigated by the relative simplicity of the factors involved, and the manner of their manifest involvement.

Pointer-readings are thus but imaginal entities conceived solely in respect of quantity, and not otherwise essentially different from the durational existents of native perception. That which by them is measured, or of which they are the measures, like that which is presented in perception, can exist only in virtue of the *conatus* and counter-*conatus* of self and other emanating under self-reference from the constitutive *communitas* of *Natura creata*. Nor let it be thought that by the mere 'generalization' of such pointer-readings and objects so that they are rendered 'common to all observers' their self-referent relativity is corrected. For to be common to all observers is not to be 'absolute'¹ but merely to be 'public.' Scientific method applied to the world of perception, even when corrected by the generalization of all systems of references, can issue in nothing better than a *Natura sophisticata* which differs from pure mathematics only in its restricted amplitude arising from its empirical derivation. It can do nothing to correct the *metaphysical* relativity which infects all durational experience by reason of the essential finite predicament. The 'observer' is no mere extrinsic spectator, but an active part, of nature, as physically embodied infecting all observations. Metaphysical relativity can be met only by metaphysical transcendence.

¹ "Erg-seconds or action belongs to Minkowski's world which is common to all observers, and so it is absolute" (Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 180). *my italics*.

THE DIALECTIC OF FINITE CREATION

Creation is the eternal actualization of absolutely primordial potency; it must thus be abruptly distinguished from every form of durational production. Nor can the existence of durational beings be unambiguously attributed to an eternal agent as such. But this exclusion of *durational* beings from the creative action must not be interpreted as meaning that there are no *finite creata*: the infinite potency actualized as the macrocosm is in the very act self-actualized as infinite microcosms in perfect *communitas* hierarchically constituting that macrocosm, and by it constituted under the limitations of their finiteness, *i.e.* as embedded in a complement by *communitas* with which they are constituted, and by the transcendence of which they are finite. Thus the created finite is eternal, but no mere section of the infinite. Its finiteness is framed on the analogy of the infinite, and it is thus that it has been described as a 'finite-infinite.'¹ Creation is infinite and eternal in a manner such as not to exclude the reality of the finite *creatum* in a form in which it is both a *constituent* of the macrocosm and its *analogue*.

But though no durational being is a *creatum*, its durational existence is possible only by reason of creation, and in this chapter we have to consider the relations of creative action and durational process. That the finite *creatum*, as such, is no struggling, temporal, and transient being, but an eternal constituent of *Natura creata* is a crucial implication of Spinoza's doctrine of creation not sufficiently often recognized by students of his philosophy – whence the common accusation of a hiatus between the 'infinite and eternal modes' and the 'finite modes' conceived as identical with empirical things which come into being, endure for a time, and then pass away. Thus the place of the imaginational

¹ In spite of the argument of *I, ii* of the *Short Treatise* (*cf.* Wolf's translation, p.28) it is in this sense, too, that Spinoza describes the finite individual ambiguously as a 'part' of God, though more precisely as "*Deus quatenus finitus est*," with the alternatives God "as manifested in," or "forming the essence of," the finite. (*Cf Eth. II, xi, Cor.*). The finiteness of the finite-infinite lies in the otherness of its complement, its infinity in its constitutive community as agent with that complement. For *agents* at one, unlike objects, are thereby distinct, not identical.

individual of 'this present life' in, or under, the scheme of creation is a matter for urgent reconsideration.

So far our attention has been focused in the main upon the macrocosm as created and as emanated in the form of perceptual or scientific object, *i.e.* 'as referred to God' and as referred to the finite self. We have now to consider the creation and emanation of this finite self by reference to which the macrocosm is emanated: the sources of its emanation, and the resulting nature of its emanational life. Plainly, the finite self which is the 'origin' of the emanation of the world cannot owe its own emanation to finite self-reference, either its own (for this is proper to it) or that of another (for it lives its own emanational life) – at least, not in the same manner or degree. Yet the emanation of the world and the emanation of the finite self evidently reciprocate, and indeed the former is the integration of all cases of the latter.

For the solution of the problem thus raised we must have recourse to the relations of the microcosm and the macrocosm already discussed in Chapter II, with special reference to the different manners in which these must be interpreted from the standpoint of the macrocosm as an infinite whole of microcosms, and from the standpoint of the microcosm as an individual part of the macrocosm. I say 'an *individual* part,' for as we have seen the microcosm as an agent is no mere *section* of a *totum*, but, as it were, a 'filament' of the indivisible 'web' of macrocosmic agency. Thus the microcosm is both an individual agent and also a part of the agency of the macrocosm, and hence arises the paradoxical double standpoint of the finite self: as a *creatum* co-derivative in *communitas* with all finite selves from a uniquely active source, and as a distinct individual agent of some intrinsic potency to which all other finite selves are complementary, so that in so far as these are involved in the action of the self they are referrible to its 'origin' and 'axes.' Nor is either standpoint reducible to the other (for this would equate the microcosm with the macrocosm), and the contradiction involved gives rise to what I have called 'the dialectic of finite creation' by which such reconciliation of standpoints is ceaselessly sought, and variously achieved in part or thwarted in a durational life of effort well or ill directed – a life marking an epoch of the indefinitely prolonged duration of a world of finite agents similarly engaged, with each thus beginning, enduring, and passing away under the patience, the cooperation, and the obstruction of its world of others. For only if time is falsely conceived as an ineluctable prior form for all existence does the history of the birth, life, and death of finite selves which are eternal

creata present an insoluble problem. The relative dates are determined by the related durations, and not the durations by the ordered dates; and the co-existences and sequences of the durations are determined by the patience, the co-operation, and the obstruction of the emanated finite agents.

It follows that the co-existences and sequences of the durational lives of finite selves in no way imply that creation and *creata* also are distributed in time, or indeed in any analogous logical order; time is but an 'aid to imagination' by which the durational emanations of the 'infinite, one, and indivisible' *Natura creata*, and its interwoven constituents, are ordered under the 'categories of our impotence.' The modes of integration of the emanated durations of finite beings under finite self-reference (which otherwise are indefinite – for *conatus* is not self-limited) are determined, not by any comparable order among eternal agents, but rather by the need to maintain the integrity of *Natura* under every conceivable privation that it may suffer by reason of the self-reference of its finite interwoven parts. For this *nisus* to integrity remains however the eternal integrity of *Natura creata* may be pulverized by emanation.

In order to expound the 'dialectic of finite creation' we next distinguish rational stages or 'moments' within the eternal action by which the finite self is created. This is not to suppose either a division or a process in an eternal action – and thus to have recourse to a myth to resolve a paradox. On the contrary, it is to trace the imaginational life of the finite self in a durational world (which is a sort of realized myth) to a paradox in the relations of finite and infinite agency or individuality, *viz.* the concurrent wholeness and partiality of the finite individual, the indivisible yet individuated nature of infinite agent, in a word, the finite-infinite nature of the microcosm.

We distinguish, then, the stages or 'moments' of inchoation, of birth, of development in a dialectic of emanation and emendation, and finally of salvation or perfect *communitas* in eternal *Natura creata*. Though in 'this present life' birth and development are temporally related, conception precedes birth, and moral excellence follows struggle, the stages of finite creation must not be so conceived, for creation is eternally complete. This present life is but the imperfect myth that illustrates the eternal action. The stages are 'moments' of finite creation, and time but an 'aid to the imagination' of the third stage which alone is durational as emanated. In the creative action itself the stages are neither simultaneous nor temporally successive; for eternity is neither the

indefinite extension nor the instantaneous contraction of time, but that supervenient existence from which duration emanates. And though the temporal birth of the finite self has its date relative to the duration of the other, the self does not originate in time; on the contrary, it would be truer to say that time is originated by the finite self which is emanated as durational, and by its self-reference determines the emanation of its other as durational. Nor does the self attain to its full creation in time, or indeed necessarily attain to excellence in time; on the contrary, in time it passes away, and such excellences as may be achieved are not temporally postponed but superveniently enjoyed in their achievement. With these suggestions and warnings let us turn to the stages or 'moments' of the dialectic of finite creation.

(i) 'IN UTERO NATURAE'

The infinite primordial potency actualized in creation is, as potency, wholly indeterminate. Determination belongs exclusively to its actuality which is exhaustively determinate. Thus though the actualization of the potency and the differentiation of the macrocosm are distinct operations, plainly they are but 'moments' in the creation of the finite self, not separable stages. Again, though the macrocosm is the indivisible hierarchical whole of infinite microcosms in perfect constitutive *communitas*, creation must be conceived not as of the microcosms as macrocosmically integrated, but as of the macrocosm microcosmically differentiated. For the whole is prior to its parts, and the infinite to the finite. As matrical and exemplary, the macrocosm is aetiologically prior to its microcosms. Exhaustive differentiation is thus involved in the creative action, which nevertheless must be defined as the actualization of infinite potency, which actualization, as exhaustive, involves the infinite differentiation of the actuality.

In considering the nature and status of the Attributes of Substance¹ we saw that though in Substance they are identical, yet from the standpoint of modal intellect they are generically distinct: as *potency-in-act* they are identical – they are reflectively diverse as *potency-in-act*. Analogously, in the creation of the finite agent, the creative *potency-in-act*, which is undifferentiated and its 'eminent' cause, as *potency-in-act* is congruently differentiated as its 'formal' cause – differentiated, not divided, for the *creatum* is a microcosmic finite-infinite in reciprocity with its macrocosmic complement. And this '*Deus quatenus finitus*

¹ See Chapter I.

est' is the finite self *in embryo, in utero Naturae* – a gemmative focalization of the infinite potency-in-act; but no completed actuality distinct from source, from matrix, and from complement. For this is but a 'moment' of creative action, and no *creatum* – a 'moment' that owes its distinction to that which is brought to birth.¹

(ii) THE BIRTH OF THE FINITE SELF

By the 'birth' of the finite self is signified, not its creation as a microcosmic actualization of the indivisible primordial potency expressing the indivisibility of its source by constitutive *communitas* with its hierarchical complement of microcosmic actualizations, not its perfect actuality as a finite differentiation of the infinite macrocosm which indivisibly and exhaustively expresses the infinite and eternal potency, but the 'moment' of entrance upon selfhood as an individual agent. This 'birth' is not *in* time, though as will be seen it involves a birth *into* durational being subject to temporal measures; it occurs not at a date prior-determined, absolutely or relatively, but, as related to the birth into durational existence of other finite individual agents with it constituting the eternal macrocosm, it determines a date in the sempiternal duration of the macrocosmic agency taken as the partial identity and concatenation of the durations thus dated.

Thus the metaphysical 'birth' of the finite self and its 'natural' birth are distinguished, not as distinct events (so that this or that finite self metaphysically 'born' has to await the patience of nature to provide the occasion for its 'natural' birth), but as an 'eternal moment' in finite creation is distinguished from its imaginational respect, *i.e.* relative to the imaginational projection of its macrocosmic complement as a sempiternal order of simultaneous and sequent existences. Thus what is but an eternal 'moment' of finite creation becomes an imaginational 'event' of initiation into a durational order – not that eternity thus impinges upon a prior time, but that in this manner eternity emanates time.

¹ The infinite potency-in-act is what Spinoza calls the 'immediate infinite and eternal mode' of Substance, while its exhaustively differentiated actuality is the 'mediate infinite and eternal mode.' These, therefore, are not two distinct actualities, but a 'moment' of creation and its full actuality. The pseudo-actuality of the 'immediate infinite and eternal mode' stems from its relation to its resulting actuality. The divine potency as it actualizes itself in determinate form is reflectively determinate: as creating the '*facies totius universi*' it is '*motus et quies*' or physical potency-in-act; as creating the '*infinita idea Dei*' it is '*intellectus infinitus*' or epistemic potency-in-act. In like manner, as creating the finite psycho-physical self it is determinate potency-in-act both as psycho-physical and as finite or microcosmic. Nor must these distinctions be blurred by the recognition that all real potency is potency-in-act, for potency is *aetiologically* prior to actuality, and as such indeterminate.

Though this eternal 'moment' of 'birth' is no completed actuality, it is not thereby to be regarded as a *speculative myth* timelessly expressing the actuality of temporal birth, but contrariwise, temporal birth in the history of the sempiternal universe is but an *empirical myth* temporally expressing the 'moment' of finite creation by which finite self-distinction is attained. Just as in metaphysics the empirical is interpreted on the intelligibly defective analogy of the perfectly intelligible,¹ so also it is from the intelligible aetiology of the eternal that we must construct the pictorial durational myth that we call the 'world of common experience'; for this is involved in the human predicament as finite agent embedded in an infinite agency.

The 'birth' of the finite self, then, is not its attainment of full actuality in the *communitas* of *Natura creata*, but its emergence as individual agent. But so closely is the finite agent interwoven with its complement of finite agents in the hierarchy of creation, that relation with what transcends the finite self is essential both to its initiation as self and to its nature as thus initiated. This follows from its origination from, and dependence on, the indivisible primordial potency which, though reflectively differentiated relative to the finite self as potency-in-act initiating and informing it, is yet in potency transcendent, and thus actualized in a hierarchy of finite selves, differentiated but not divisible in the infinite macrocosm. The finite self is thus both born and lives by its relation with a complement – a relation which, as 'referred to God' is eternal *communitas*, which in the 'moment' of the 'birth' of the finite self can involve no more than focal patience in the macrocosm, and which, as referred to the emergent finite self, in no way qualifies the incipient deiformity of its selfhood. In the 'moment' of parturition, therefore, the finite self for itself is all, and there is no distinction of 'self and God, and things,' still less of their relations and order of dependence. Doubtless, the inchoate microcosm, by reason of its derivation, carries the *nisus* to these distinctions and relations, but as born to selfhood its native bias as incipient agent primarily concentrates it upon its focal selfhood, so that it is as if it were itself the *Deus* which it is partially and microcosmically to express. For it emerges as a focus of *Natura*, with respect to which *Natura* as complement is patient, and as source formally potent, so that the eminence of *Natura* is 'momently' in abeyance. It passes, therefore, immediately to the next 'moment' of finite creation which so qualifies its naive self-possession as to yield its proper actuality by subordination to its source and relation to its

¹ See above, *Prolegomena I*.

hierarchical complement, *i.e.* by creative synthesis of the 'moment' of focal identity *in utero Naturae* and the 'moment' of inchoate self-possession in the solipsism of nativity.

The nature of this synthesis *sub specie aeternitatis* has already been sufficiently expounded: the finite self as individual agent is at once a distinct actuality finitely expressing the creative potency, distinct as agent and finite as embedded in a complement, and also a part of the macrocosm that exhaustively expresses the creative potency, a part indivisible from its complement by reason of its constitutional *communitas* therewith. It is at once distinct agent and a part of the indivisible whole, as agent maintaining its distinctness through its mergence in the whole. Nor is this a paradox as it has often seemed to be for those who conceive the self as a 'thing' or 'objective content' the 'immersion' of which in a context involves its obliteration. The finite *agent lives by communitas* with its *alter ego*, and such 'mergence' in its 'other' is the very essence of its distinctness.¹

But this eternal synthesis expounds itself far otherwise from the standpoint of the parturient finite self itself by reason of its incipient deformity. Centred in itself it confuses 'self and God and things,' self-sufficient in its determinate potency, and 'momently' enjoying the patience of its complement. By this self-reference the eternal relation of self and complement is reduced to that of 'self' and the projection of the complement upon the reference-system of the self, pulverulent by reason of the self's limited resonance, by which reduction the self itself in turn is concomitantly impoverished. Thus the eternal synthesis of finite creation expounds itself for the self in a durational process of emanation and emendation. The self sets forth upon its 'pilgrimage.'

(iii) ITS PILGRIMAGE

Critics of Spinoza have uniformly objected to the transition that he is supposed to have posited from the infinite and eternal causality of God to the finite and durational nature of his singular effects, not understanding that the supposed laches is mediated by the dialectic in which the finite *creandum* is involved by reason of its simultaneous finiteness and wholeness as individual agent. As individual agent he is deiform; as finite his deiform self-reference pulverizes the complement

¹ The problem of 'finite individuality' that occupied so much attention among philosophers a generation or two ago arose from failure to realize that 'agents' are not 'things' which by integration suffer loss of individuality. Agents *gain* individuality by integration.

by *communitas* with which alone his finite deiformity can be sustained. Forced by this conflict of principles that is an ineluctable issue in finite creation, the self descends into the expository struggle of durational emanation, but in proportion to its elevation in the hierarchy of *Natura* ever haunted by the *nisus* to emendation that alone can assuage the creativity of its source.¹

The error that above all others has made confusion of theories of creation is the uncritical assumption that the durationally existing is the created real. On the contrary, everything created by an eternal potency is eternally created, and no being that is engaged in genuine struggle can, as such, be a finished *creatum*. Nor can time see the completion of its creation. Yet if durational struggle and its meed is to be other than mockery, birth into time² must have its authentic place under creation. Though it is not created or creative, neither is it pure illusion.

In the durational synthesis of finite creation the self-referent finite agent, by reason of its eccentricity and limited, and consequently distorted, resonance to its complement, is so far alienated from 'itself and God and things,' and thus embarks upon a ceaseless struggle in relation with an other under the privatively divine urge to preserve and improve itself: the 'otherness' issuing from the self-reference of the finite, whereby its complement is partially occulted, and thus alienated; and the urge to self-preservation and self-improvement issuing from relation to an indivisible source which it cannot but reproduce in the measure

¹ The reader of theological bent may be interested to interpret this account in terms of 'fall,' 'original sin,' and 'redemption.' The eternal *creandum* 'falls' into durational existence as the result of the 'original sin' of insistence upon the thesis of finite deiformity; and 'salvation' is the superveniency of the antithesis of equal insistence upon *communitas* with a complement as the mode of deiformity proper to the finite *creatum*. *Deus quatenus finitus est* can be no solipsist; but neither can it be a mere *section* of *Natura* externally related to the other sections. Full creation of the finite agent demands both the wholeness of the *microcosm*, and the partiality of the *microcosm*. The Genesis-myth first represents Adam as fully created, placed in the 'garden of Eden' – the world of imagination as the rainbow-*nimbus* of eternity – as then disobeying the divine command not to eat of the 'tree of knowledge' (*i.e.* not to regard imaginal objects as proper sustenance), and finally as cast out of the garden and cut off from the 'tree of life' 'in the midst of the garden' (*viz.* from the creative stream whence he is derived). Henceforth he must labour for his livelihood with no hope of re-entry to the garden as the reward of his labours. Salvation is represented by St Paul as the work of a 'new Adam' in virtue of the identification in him of deiformity with love towards all (*i.e.* finite deiformity means self-realization by *communitas* with self's complement).

² The phrase 'birth into time' makes the false suggestion that time is prior to the birth of temporal things, and the unwary reader may thus picture the eternal finite agent as *awaiting* its turn for descent into the time series – like Elia's 'dream children' who "must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before (they) have existence, and a name." More careful consideration of what has already been said will show the understanding reader that this reverses the true order of emergence, for duration is an emanation of eternity, and time but the measure of duration. It is in the duration of another that the self enters a prior time; in his own duration time is posterior.

of its remaining vitality. Mere self-preservation is the lower limit of durational authenticity; self-improvement under moral obligation is the characteristic expression of the *nisus* of the eternal in the durational. Morality is thus no illusion, but the stress of the eternal vitalizing the durational in proportion to the eminence of the agent in the hierarchy of *Natura*. Nor is the common world of nature illusory, but a projection of the macrocosm – the eternal real seen *per speculum in aenigmate*. And the way of morality is also the way of truth, or the ‘emendation of the intellect,’ the passage from eccentricity to centricity, from reference to self to reference to God, from transeuncy and purposive production to immanency and creation.

It is thus of the essence of durational existence to be at once a fall from the perfection of eternity and an urge to regain it; and it is only so that durational being is rightly related to creation. If attention is concentrated upon the defect that it suffers, its temporality and relative impotence, then durational existence must be regarded as a mere succession of futile images; but if upon the native urge to make good the defect, then it must be regarded as emanatory, as a ‘moment’ in the dialectic of finite creation itself. Durational existence, then, at whatever level it may be considered – whether as characterized by the mere *conatus in suo esse perseverare*, or by ‘respect for the moral law’ – is a truncated dialectical exposition of the perfection of the eternal created finite self under the defective conditions of self-reference. I say ‘defective,’ and not ‘destructive,’ for self-reference is mischievous only in the degree of the finiteness of the microcosm. For *Natura* itself self-reference is centric, and no defect; for the *res simplicissima*, on the contrary, the defect is all but total, and its durational being a mere instant in the flux of nature; for man, on the other hand, an individual of the *n*-th degree,¹ self-reference means but partial defect: his complement is not wholly alienated – its action is obstruction tempered by co-operation, so that his other is the ‘field’ of the self’s endeavour. And congruently, his source is realized not merely as the *nisus* to self-preservation, nor to self-strengthening, but as an obligation that wins his respect as the law of his true being, which he can thus neither fulfil as his unopposed native action, nor set aside as fatuous embarrassment.

It has commonly been realized that the duration of the finite *singulare* reciprocates with its *conatus* as it stands related to that of its other, but it has not equally been understood that ‘this present life’ is essentially characterized not by its temporality qualified by durational *nisus* but

¹ Cf. *Eth. II., Lem. vii. Sch.*

by defect issuing from native perfection and thus carrying with it the *nisus* to correction, *i.e.* that it is a privative and durational projection of the synthetic 'moment' of finite creation. The defect, as has been said, is itself limited by the eminence of the agent's status in the hierarchy of *Natura*; and in so far as under self-reference its durational extancy is in accord with its eternal actuality, self and other co-operative and its source effective as the urge to self-preservation, the *nisus* to self-improvement, the endeavour after perfection, its defect is made good by the superveniency of its eternal creatureliness within the transiency of 'this present life': its temporality is qualified, and morality recognized as momentous.¹ For *the issue at stake is creation itself*, than which no issue can be of comparable importance from the standpoint of durational extancy. Morality in some form, according to the status of the agent, is of the essence of durational life which *is* a 'moment' of finite creation expounded under 'the categories of our impotence.' In other words, it is the *agency* and not the mere eventuation of durational being that is its essence, and as this is maintained, made effective, and perfected, extancy is approximated to actuality, and duration to eternity.

The existence of the durational agent, then, does not begin in time, its time begins with it; it is not emanated into time, but its duration is its emanation. Doubtless, its birth occurs at a date in the duration of *another*, and the birth of that other at a date in the duration of yet another; and so on. But the 'objective' time framed on this set of relations is a sophistication posterior to durational emanation, and the historical order but an eccentric and privative projection under the form of objective events of the eternal *communitas* of microcosmic agents.

But in so saying adequate stress must be placed on the terms 'eccentric' and 'privative,' and on the distinction of 'objective events' and 'agents,' for only so can serious misconception and pseudo-problem be avoided. For time is not "a moving image of eternity"² in the sense in which the Platonic figure is most apt to be understood, *viz.* that it 'telescopes out' simultaneities to successions; and I cannot but think that some such misinterpretation of my argument lies at the root of the question posed by Broad in his most generous, though adversely critical, review of *Aeternitas*,³ concerning the non-temporal relations among the

¹ "I saw that I was situated in the greatest danger, and summoned all my energies to find a remedy, however uncertain, just as a sick man suffering from a mortal disease, who foresees certain death unless a remedy be applied is forced to seek it with all his strength, uncertain as it may be, for therein lies all his hope." (*De Intell. Emend.*, § 7).

² *Timaeus*, 37-38.

³ 'Prof. Hallett's *Aeternitas*' (*Mind*, XLII. N.S., 1933, pp. 150-169, 299-318).

eternal parts of *Natura naturata* from which the temporal relations of those parts were said to be derived. "Consider" he says, "those three primary parts of *Natura naturata extensa* which are the bodies of my grandfather, of my father, and of myself. When clearly perceived, these would be seen to be, as they in fact are, eternal. Viewed *sub specie temporis*, the first appears to begin before the second, and the second to begin before the third. Now the three eternal primary parts must stand in *some* important non-temporal relation to each other, corresponding to this temporal relation in which they seem to stand to each other when they are misperceived as bodies of finite duration. What is this non-temporal relation? No theory of time and eternity which cannot give a plausible answer, at least in outline, to such questions is worth serious consideration. I have failed to discover in Prof. Hallett's book any intelligible answer to such questions, or any clear recognition of their fundamental importance."¹ While I was, and still am, ready to allow that there is a sort of rough justice in these strictures in the absence of any overt warning to readers most apt to accept the false clarity of commonsense impressions, I cannot but judge Broad's final estimate of the value of the theory of time and eternity sketched out in *Aeternitas* to be intemperate as coming from a philosopher of his skill and moderation. For simple and straightforward as his questions seem to be, this appearance stems from the mistaken assumption that there must be a sort of parallelism between temporal and eternal relations – the time-order reproducing some form of timeless order – as if the only defect introduced by *Imaginatio* were the distribution in a prior empty time of eternal simultaneous factors, with their congruent fragmentation and partial obfuscation. The transformation of eternal agents into durational conators making objective appearance, and of eternal *communitas* into durational strife and alliance, is thus apt to be overlooked, and a false appearance of simplicity presented.

This is an all too common presupposition regarding the relations of the temporal and the eternal, and it is of first importance that it should be corrected if the nature of man's durational 'pilgrimage' is to be understood. This 'pilgrimage,' I have said, is a 'moment' in the dialectic of finite creation, and this, too, must not be taken to imply that the eternal dialectic is durationally 'telescoped out' as history, so that eternal life is a *post mortem* state of perfected durational emendation. Eternity does not 'serve time,' is not an 'event'; the relations of time

¹ *Loc. cit.*, p. 316. It may be questioned whether we have adequate grounds for regarding man as a *primary* part of *Natura*, though his *moral* nature may suggest this.

and eternity are not temporal, but lie, as it were, along another 'dimension.' The duration of the finite *creandum* is his eternity as *creatum* under the cloud of non-being induced by unilateral self-reference according to creaturely status: it is not the gift of death, nor is death its gift.¹ If time is 'a moving image of eternity' it is not in virtue of its successiveness, but of the imperfection of its expression of eternity in its 'now,' by which this is transeunt and durational. Thus the successiveness of time is its defect, and not its perfection as an 'image of eternity.' The 'pilgrimage' of the finite *creandum* is, therefore, not (as the term is apt to suggest) by way of time towards eternity, but the eternalization of time's 'now'; it is to be achieved, not at the end of duration, but in the ever-renewed durational 'now' of unsatisfied, and unsatisfiable, endeavour.²

Let us return, then, for a little to Broad's questions. We must not think of Broad, his father, and his grandfather *sub specie aeternitatis* as three simultaneous or timeless objects of incorrigible perception, forming sections of an objective *Natura naturata extensa*, and standing in timeless relations in some manner corresponding with their temporal relations as misperceived objects of the *Imaginatio* of an external percipient. They are derivative *entia in se* (*i.e. creata in Deo*), not *entia ab extra* or objects of contemplation. They are agents subsisting by *communitas* with each other and with their congruent complements in *Natura*. As durational, on the contrary, they are endeavouring beings³ the agency of which is no object of contemplation, but can only be 'enjoyed' by self and other in co-operation or opposition. Thus, when we assert that Broad (*i.e.* the objective body observable crossing Trinity quadrangle) is a defectively cognized eternal agent, we at the same time assert that the temporal Broad and the eternal Broad are the same individual defectively and perfectly cognized, and also that they differ in nature, the one being an endeavouring spatio-temporal *object*, and the other an eternal physical *agent*. The problem, then, is not to find the set of logical relations of truly perceived eternal spatial things corresponding to the temporal relations of the same things as misperceived, but to find how

¹ "Now is eternity; now is the immortal life" (R. Jefferies, *The Story of My Heart*, iii.). But this 'now' is not the unreal mathematical dividing point of past and future, nor even the 'specious' 'now' of *conatus*; it is the 'now' of unfrustrated agency, of potency-in-act. As the durational 'now' is defined by *conatus*, so the eternal 'now' is defined by perfect agency. "By eternity I understand existence itself in so far as it is conceived necessarily to follow from the definition alone of the eternal being" (*Eth. I., Def. viii.*)

² See below, pp. 217–223.

³ If we seek to regard things as *temporal*, we shall find that they are agents in no sense, but fictions of sophisticatory *Imaginatio*. For to be 'real' in any degree is to be active, and not merely to be 'given' or to 'appear' or to 'eventuate.'

eternal agents in constitutive *communitas* come to be defectively presented as temporally related spatial objects.¹

Further, the commonsense tendency to portray the durational relations of imaginal objects as distribution in a prior 'objective' time tends also to give to Broad's questions a fictitious simplicity. We have seen, however, that this is a sophistication of the complex relations of intrinsically durational beings. Duration emanates from the fontal 'present' of each individual, so that each occupies his own duration, not a portion of a duration independent of his agency. Time is a product of the sophistication of the multiplex durational situation that results – not an independent stream into which Broad was precipitated after his father, and from which his father was withdrawn before him. The eternal agent Broad is defected to the durational conator by *his* unilateral self-reference, and the eternal agent Broad's father by *his*; but each has *his own* durational existence, which existences are subject to integration, not as parts overlapping of a prior time, but in virtue of the social relation which, by reason of their *distributive* self-reference as parts of *Natura naturata*, defectively expresses their eternal *communitas*.²

Broad's questions thus assume a wholly different complexion, and his main difficulty takes the form: why are the epochs of Broad, his father, and his grandfather, successive? The point of his example, I take it, is that their relation is such that their births at least are *necessarily* successive. A complete account of this is beyond our competence, since it involves a knowledge of durational nature more complete than can be durationally enjoyed; but happily, all that was desiderated by Broad in order to make the theory "worth consideration" was "a plausible answer, at least in outline". If this is to be given, attention must be paid to the inisolability of finite agents in the 'infinite, unique, and indivisible' *Natura* – a character that makes defective appearance in

¹ To the *ad hoc* considerations of these paragraphs, I will venture to add the overall suggestion that Broad's assertion that there *must* be "some important non-temporal relation" corresponding with the temporal relations of himself, his father, and his grandfather, is over-confident. For these transeunt relations may pertain solely to the emanationally truncated individuals of "this present life." Complete human *communitas* may well require the integration for each individual of many forms of social relation. Thus, in some durational life wholly other than this, the mode that appeared as Broad's grandfather might appear as his son, or his wife, or in some more remote relation – other features of their eternal *communitas* being durationally paramount. Like those who "when they shall rise from the dead" "neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (eternal love being free and universal), Broad and his father and grandfather, *sub specie aeternitatis*, being "as the angels which are in heaven" (*Mark xii. 25*), would stand *exclusively* in no corresponding non-temporal relation.

² The principle by which individual durations are thus integrated is identical with that governing the dictates of mutual (as distinct from exemplary) ethics. See below, pp. 176 f., 202 f.

the imaginational world of each, and in the 'common order of nature' based upon their mutuality, as interdependence, selective according to status. Thus the minimum requisite for the appearance of this or that finite being in the duration of another is the 'patience' of the order of nature in the perspective of that other. It is in such foci of 'patience' that the 'common order of nature' approximates to the *communitas* of *Natura* as far as may be under the conditions of its emanation; and the ingression of a new individual to the nature of which such a focus is 'patient' must lie within the duration of the other. The concourse of Broad's parents was such a focus, so that his birth after theirs was no paradox. And Broad, not being born within his own duration, did not have to wait for his cue to be born. His birth was an event in the duration of his father, but not in his own duration; and so for his father and grandfather: the succession of births lies within an integrated common duration, not within a prior objective time.

So far I have chiefly considered only the durationally necessary successiveness of the births of Broad, his father, and his grandfather. But just as the time-order of their births is a function of the 'patience' of nature, so the time-order of their deaths is a function of its 'impatience.' For "the power by which a man perseveres in existence is limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes."¹ Nevertheless, the principle remains that no man dies in his own duration, but only in that of another. The sempiternal duration of the world is a generalization of coincident individual durations, not the prior whole of which these are parts. The true integration of individual durations, on the contrary, must lie in the resolution of the distributive unilateral self-reference of finite beings, *i.e.* in the eternity of *Natura*. Duration belongs to the finite individual alone, and in it there is neither birth nor death of the self. The 'patience' and 'impatience' of nature alike have relevance only to the birth and death of others within the duration of the self.

Little has been said in this section concerning the special conditions governing the 'pilgrimage' of the finite *creandum*, for these will be more fully considered in Part II. to which this whole chapter is intended to be introductory. I pass, therefore, to the final 'moment' of the dialectic of finite creation.

¹ *Eth. IV., iii.*

(iv) 'IN CIVITATE DEI'

The nature and relations of the finite agent in the indivisible unicity of *Natura creata* have already been considered in formal outline, and the eternal synthesis of the thesis of individual selfhood with the antithesis of finite *partialitas* in the dialectic of finite creation thus broadly expounded.¹ While the imaginational synthesis involves a durational process by reason of its natural insufficiency in virtue of which achievement is always truncated, creation as such is not a process but an action wholly non-temporal, *i.e.* definitively eternal – a 'transformation (from potency to actuality) without succession.'

Perhaps the commonest of the traditional objections raised against the doctrine of Spinoza is that, *sub specie aeternitatis*, it resolves all finite individuals into the undifferentiated amplitude of *Natura*. Spinoza's own statement that "*determinatio est negatio*"² has been held, in this matter, to judge him "out of his own mouth," since in *Deus sive Natura* there can be no negation. Spinoza himself used the phrase incidentally in discussing the notion that 'figure' is a negation, and not something positive (though it was afterwards erected as a universal principle of Spinoza's thought by Hegel³ in the more orotund form: *Omnis determinatio est negatio*); and the sort of analogy that lies at the root of this objection is doubtless that of the relation of geometrical figures to the space of which they are limitations. Thus finite individuals are conceived as objective sectors of an objective *Natura* cut off by their limiting contours from the whole, and the integration of such individuals in *Natura* conceived as a sort of 'mosaic' assemblage which (since they are taken as mere limiting contours) involves their disappearance – the lines of demarcation are simply rubbed out. But even geometrical figures are more than mere outlines: they have 'a will of their own' to which the geometer must subject his thought; and finite individuals are not mere sectors of *Natura*, but *agents* involved in the all-embracing agency of *Natura*. Thus their synthesis by no means eradicates their finite individuality; on the contrary, as we have said, even *sub specie durationis* their individuality is founded on, and sustained by, their mutual co-operation; and *sub specie aeternitatis* it is *constituted* by their *communitas* in the measure

¹ See Chap. II.

² *Ep. 1.*

³ *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences, I., vii., 91.* The general use of Hegel's more magniloquent enunciation by expositors and critics of Spinoza indicates whence, directly or indirectly, they have derived their conception of the generality and importance for Spinoza of his incidentally expressed and particularly applied *dictum*.

of their finiteness. It is only as involved in the *communitas* of *Natura* that the finite agent is fully individual; in the *civitas Dei* alone is he truly “as God made him” – *sub specie durationis* he is always worse, and often (as Sancho Panza says) “a good deal worse.”

It has already been emphasized that the ‘moments’ of the dialectic of finite creation must not be conceived as ‘stages’ which are ‘telescoped out’ as successive in the durational or historical order of *Natura emanata*. The finite durational individual does not pass from the ‘uterus *Naturae*’ into the ‘pilgrimage’ of this present life,’ and thence to the completed creation of the ‘*civitas Dei*’; for the achievements of durational struggle are by nature truncated, and at best but asymptotic to eternity by reason of the overwhelmingly superior power of the self’s alienated complement. Nor are they postponed, but supervenient. For durational life is not a prior preparation for an *additional* eternal life, but privatively exponential of that life – ever falling short of eternal self-realization, and thus also passing to new effort under the stress of the self’s own unsatisfied *nisus* to finite perfection, and in face of the magnipotence of the other that mutual self-reference has emanated.

The end of the finite self’s durational ‘pilgrimage’ is thus neither in time nor of time: it is an illumination athwart the stream of time by which temporal things are so pierced as to take their rightful place as but the oblique projections of eternal agents – the iridescent *nimbus* in which the eternal finite *creatum* is enisled by reason of its finiteness, and as the symbol of the immanent infinity of its source. For death, and not salvation, is the *temporal* end of durational life, and it is in our ‘eternal moments’ that we approach most nearly, *sub specie durationis*, to life eternal.

The *civitas Dei*, then, lies *perdue* in the ‘common order of nature,’ to be brought to light only by that ‘emendation of the intellect’ that is the essence of moral achievement, and from which no finite agent can be wholly debarred. Nor is it ever wholly *perdue*, since durational individuals are born and live by corporate endeavour, so that wholly deprived of it, as in a hobbesian ‘state of nature,’ they could not be. The civic State itself, though no overt expression or abstraction of the *civitas Dei*, is possible only because in the *actual* ‘state of nature’ mutual hostility is *exaggerated* by the contingency of its incidence, and can thus be reduced to its *rational* minimum by obedience or subjection to a common law by the loyal and the dissentient respectively.¹ And given this civic

¹ See below, Chapter IX; where my denial that the civic State (and *a fortiori* the ‘state of nature’) foreshadows the *civitas Dei* in no way conflict with the statement above that “the

order, every co-operative endeavour of the durational agent with its durational other is founded on, and crowned by, the reality of the *communitas* that it reveals under the limitations of emanation.¹

In the *civitas Dei*, in short, each microcosmic agent is realized to the limit of its degree of finite perfection by constitutive *communitas* with its macrocosmic complement. And this limit is its finiteness, and it is aware of this finiteness, *i.e.*, in some manner, transcends it. For its occult objectivity (*e.g.* as psycho-physical) signalizes by inversion that which eludes its generic *communitas*, and (*e.g.* as this or that man) that which transcends its *singularitas*. It is thus that it is finite-infinite. What for the finite self is *eternally* other in the complement thus marks the transcendence of its divine cause, and symbolizes its own derivativity. It is microcosmic finiteness that “stains the white radiance of eternity”.²

civitas Dei lies *perdue* in the ‘common order of nature.’” That which is only *latent* cannot be said to be ‘foreshadowed.’

¹ See *Eth. V.*, xxxix. *Sch.*

² We shall return to these topics in section *iv.* of *Chapter X.* See below, pp. 217–223.

PART II

MORALITY

And these pale panting multitudes
Seen surging here, their moils, their moods,
All shall "fulfil their joy" in Thee,
In Thee abide eternally!

T. HARDY, *The Dynasts*

CHAPTER VI

MAN, NATURE, AND MORALITY¹

We now pass from the consideration of the nature of infinite and eternal creation, and of the conditions governing the creation of finite agents by which these are involved in a dialectic of emanation and emendation, to an examination of the nature, and the conditions governing, the resulting durational exposition of this dialectic, directing our attention primarily, though by no means exclusively, to durational *human* nature and life as exemplifying for us, as men, the 'finite agent' most notably, most profoundly, and with greatest distinctness. In so doing, it is necessary to have regard to the duality of human nature, as both mental and physical – a distinction so far relatively negligible in the general exposition of creative action which, by reason of the identity of all Attributes in Substance, is identical under whichever Attribute it may, by intellect, be considered. Not, of course, that it has been possible wholly to ignore the distinction of mental and physical in the discussions of Part I., the emphasis being almost wholly on the physical in Chapters III. and IV. and chiefly on the mental in Chapter V.; but in view of the widespread belief, or tacit assumption, that the moral life of man consists very largely, if not wholly, in the control of bodily action by the mind, in the interest of purposes essentially mental, the relations of mind and body must first be clarified if the nature of morality is rightly to be conceived.

(i) THE UNION OF MIND AND BODY

Spinoza's own most distinct reference to the mode of union of the mind and body is in the *Scholium* to *Proposition xiii.* of *Part II.* of the *Ethics.*

¹ The distinction of Nature and Morality signaled by the titles of Parts I and II of this essay must not be understood as implying that Morality transcends, or is a passage to a realm transcending, Nature. On the contrary, eternal Nature transcends Morality which is but a 'moment' in the dialectic of microcosmic creation. It is thus that though 'ought' cannot be *reduced* to 'is,' eternal 'value' to durational 'fact,' yet what is obligatory for an agent is so because he is what he is, not merely subject to its *authority*, but also its *author*, original or delegate. Thus 'ought' is a *privation* of 'is,' which must thus also never be *reduced* to 'ought.' "By reality and perfection I understand the same" (*Eth. II, Def. vi.*).

The proposition states that "The object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body, or a certain mode of extension actually existing, and nothing else"; and to this is added the *Corollary*: "Hence it follows that man is composed of mind and body, and that the human body exists as we perceive it." "Hence," runs the *Scholium*, "we see not only that the human mind is united to the body, but also what is to be understood by the union of mind and body. But no one can understand this adequately, or distinctly, unless first he knows the nature of our body adequately." For though all individual bodies are in some degree 'minded,' the nature of the union of body and mind must depend on the degree of perfection enjoyed by the body and mind under consideration.¹

Pollock's criticism of this proposition itself is well-known, and has been widely endorsed: it is that it shows that Spinoza did not distinguish between the *correlation* of the mental and physical states of a percipient, and the *cognitive relation* of his mind and the perceived object; in short that he confused the *object* of an idea with its physiological *correlate*. Certainly, 'principle-riding' philosophers are capable of childish errors, but their commonsense critics, neglecting the principles, are even more apt to turn plain truths into childish errors. And here we have a veritable touchstone by which to test the critic's capacity for his self-imposed task. I have already referred to the distinction between the 'external' or 'objective' view of perception as involving the compresence of two objects, one of which, at least, is a sense-organism with which a mind is correlated, and which being causally affected by the other is 'centrally' modified so that its correlated mind perceives the other object; and the true, 'internal' or 'active' view of it as it really occurs, and in which there is but one object, *viz.* the *perceptum*. In '*diaesthesia*' the percipient's own body, in so far as it is operant in his perception, is not perceived, save by another percipient, or by means of another act of perception by the percipient himself – and then as *object* rather than as *operant*. But it is the body *as imagined by another* that is excluded from '*diaesthesia*'; and the object that is perceived is not the thing in itself but as it 'affects' the body of the percipient. In other words, the object of the mind's perception is the percipient's own body as it is 'affected' by the other. And indeed, since the human body in *Natura naturata* exists only by *communitas* with its complement, it is no wonder that the mind *imagines* it only as 'affected' by its other. "The human mind does not know the human body itself, nor does it know that the body exists, save through

¹ See above, p.16, note 1.

the ideas of affections by which the body is affected."¹ Thus it is solely through knowledge of its own body that the mind can know that which transcends it; and its knowledge of that which transcends the body is rather knowledge of its own body's constitution than of that which transcends it.² Furthermore, adequate knowledge of the body must include that of its generating cause in so far as the body is the actuality of that potency, so that even the mind's knowledge of God under the Attribute of Extension is involved in its knowledge of the body.

Nor must it be thought that the exclusion of the body as imagined by another from '*diaesthesia*' is a mere accident which might be avoided if it were differently constructed: it is essential to the percipient predicament. This is the very reason why the analysis of perception in terms which imply that a percipient might be conceived as perceiving his own body as it is engaged in perception, must be utterly fallacious. A true account of perception must concern itself with perception *in act*, and not as, *per impossibile*, it might be observed by another percipient. '*Per impossibile*' because the perception is precisely what can neither be observed nor intuited by another. The question how a change in the brain gives rise to an idea in the mind, therefore, does not arise, and if it is put, can have no answer.

Thus, the grounds of Pollock's criticism are in fact the very premisses of Spinoza's doctrine, and the confusion is in the mind of the critic, and not in the doctrine criticized.³

For Spinoza, then, the union of mind and body follows from the nature of the mind as the 'idea' of the body, and of the body as the 'object' of the mind, *i.e.* their union is epistemic. Such a view, of course, has seemed, and will always seem, incredible to those who take imaginal cognition as the norm of knowledge, for the body as imagined, *i.e.* as perceived by another, is not the object of its mind, but rather seems to be the mind's cartesian 'seat,' and miraculous correlate. And critics who argue from this basis do but foist on Spinoza the Cartesian figure which he expressly rejected in the *Preface to Part V.* of the *Ethics*. For him, and for all who recognize that man is immersed in nature, and no mere onlooker, imaginal cognition is but a defective derivative of true cognition, and is thus corrigible not by mere generalization but by fundamental emendation of the intellect. The percipient's imaginal world is but the partially ordered congeries of the '*affectiones*'

¹ *Eth. II., xix.*

² *Eth. II., xvi. Corr. i. et ii.*

³ These topics are more fully considered in my article 'On a Reputed Equivoque in the Philosophy of Spinoza' (*Review of Metaphysics, III., No. 10, December 1949, pp. 189-202.*).

of his body, suffered by reason of its aptness to act and to be acted on by its other, or emanated complement; and the less it suffers, and the more it acts co-operatively with its other, finding its very life in it, the more perfect is the mind's understanding of its true body in the *communitas of Natura*.

The union of mind and body is thus not a union of two compresent objects, one psychical and the other physical, but of two agents, *omnino diversa* and *omnino conveniens*. In other words, it is a modal expression of the substantial identity of the Attributes of Thought and Extension. It is no mere correspondence of independent things. For intellect Thought and Extension are potencies-in-act wholly diverse, but as Substance (*i.e. Natura naturans*) these potencies are not differentiated. So also with mind and body, though for thought they are wholly diverse (*i.e. not independent but epistemically distinct*), yet their agency is integral (*i.e. not corresponding but epistemically 'conveniens'*).¹ The 'independence' concerns only the self-containedness of the epistemically diverse causal series, and the 'correspondence' only the 'order and concatenation' of causes in these series. The diversity and 'convenience' is epistemic.

As potencies, therefore, mind and body are identical; as actualities they are distinct. But neither mere potency nor mere actuality are possible existents; what exists is potency-in-act, and thus mind and body are at once identical in potent source and disparate in actual presence. So that their union is truly epistemic, for (*pace Alexander*) cognition is not a mere form of objective compresence, nor (*pace Berkeley*) is it mere subjective presence; it is the mind's perspective of its union with the body, its incarnation. Similarly, the perspective of this union from the standpoint of the body is its 'animation.' In act the unity does not suppress the duality but corroborates it – nay, constitutes and is constituted by it.

That the imaginational mind and body cannot be unconditionally fitted into this set of relations marks only their partial deficiency – the product of unilateral self-reference. As emanated the human mind often appears, not as epistemically united with the body, but as the hesitant pilot of a ship, steering it, well or ill, in accordance with purposes transcending those actually embodied therein. Yet, as Spinoza pointed out,² when a man's rational powers are in abeyance the body often

¹ 'Corresponding' and 'independent' are the interpretations put by Barker on the terms '*conveniens*' and '*diversa*.' ('Notes on the Second Part of Spinoza's *Ethics*' (*Mind*, XLVII. N.S., p.290)).

² *Eth. III., ii. Sch.* The so-called 'homing instinct' of certain animals would appear to require no psychical 'pilot.'

shows itself capable of performing actions even more adroit than the thinking man could accomplish. Indeed, as craftsmen and sportsmen are well aware, the efficiency of the body is often dependent on the 'liquidation' of thought. Nor do the magic words 'instinct' and 'habit' provide more than a convenient verbal reference to such actions.

The union of mind and body, then, is in act analogous to that of the Attributes of Substance, though only remotely and partially since their 'convenience' is modal and not substantial. But this union in act also suffers partial divorce under the conditions of imaginational experience taken as formally incorrigible, for then the body as emanated, *i.e.* as perceived by another (or by the self in alternative perception), as object or *perceptum*, is imagined as correlative to the mind as percipient (not as *perceptum*), and thus united with it, not essentially as constituting with it an indivisible mode of *unica Substantia*, finite not merely in potency within its range of actuality, but also in that range as merely psychophysical; but mysteriously bound up with it as unintelligibly interacting or factually corresponding. But even naive *Imaginatio* can do better than this, for the durational agent *experiences* the union of mind and body in his own intended physical actions, finding no *hiatus* in the transition from psychical intention to physical movement. It is the double standpoint of a credulous empiricism that masks the essential union of mind and body. But that union in no way conflicts with the common belief that the mind can govern the behaviour of the body as *perceptum*.

It may not be inopportune here to note one of the few concurrences (if only tangential) of contemporary 'linguistic' theory with the views expounded in this section. In his work, *The Concept of Mind*, noteworthy and important as embodying a rare positive incursion into the realm of metaphysics by one of his school of thought, G. Ryle sets out to discredit a theory of the human mind, and its relation to the human body, which, somewhat uncritically, he imputes to Descartes,¹ and

¹ I say 'uncritically' because a thinker's characteristic views are not fairly to be judged by regarding all the works of a lifetime, whatever their purpose, as of equal significance and relevance. It need not be denied that Descartes made use of the view in question of the relations of mind and body in discussing psycho-physical questions from what we should call a 'scientific' standpoint – more particularly in those earlier writings that he did not see fit to publish (*e.g.* the *Traité de l'Homme*). But when he writes as a metaphysician we find that his characteristic, mature, carefully defined, theory is one that cannot justly be thus lampooned. For him the mind is no ghostly 'thing' haunting the pineal gland, but a thinking agent (*res cogitans*), and its 'ideas' not objective images but the *operations* that as thinking agent it performs (*cf. Resp. ad Sec. Obj., Def. i.*) – though he certainly did not regard the mental agency as in any sense corporeal, or even analogous with corporeal agency. Doubtless, his psycho-physical speculations 'caught on' more readily than his more abstract philosophical

which he describes as "the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine," the falsity of which he traces to a 'category-mistake' (the current equivalent of the 'misapplication of categories' often cited by neo-Hegelians as a fruitful source of philosophical error). This criticism, and so far as it goes the correction offered, seem to me quite sound, and of value also as helping to discredit the assumption of uncritical commonsense that to have real existence is to be an observable objective 'thing.' What it fails to correct, however, is the equally fallacious assumption that the disposition, abilities, *etc.* which are 'mental,' and seem to be imputed by Ryle to the body, being essentially modalities of *agency*, can properly be imputed to an observable objective 'thing' like the body at all. Though Ryle has much to say about dispositions, abilities, *etc.*, he has little to say about agency, and seems not to realize that the body *qua* observable objective 'thing' cannot be said to have dispositions, *etc.*, but only *qua agent*.¹ But in that case, why cannot these dispositions, *etc.* which are 'mental' belong to a *mental agent*, and not to the body either *qua agent* or *qua* observable objective 'thing'? Indeed, *must* they not do so?

I suggest, therefore, that Ryle's theory is still so far infected with the commonsense error as to assume that real existence must at least be anchored to observable objectivity: the mind is not an unobservable 'thing,' or 'ghost'; it must therefore be real only as some 'function' of what *is* an observable 'thing,' *viz.* the body. So the argument runs; but the *agency* of the body, of which its dispositions, abilities, *etc.* are modalities, is also unobservable as object, so that no advantage has been gained. The fact is that the 'concept of body' stands as much in need of critical scrutiny as the concept of mind; for observable objectivity alone is not sufficient to determine body as having real existence: to this must be added *physical agency* in some modality or other if imaginations are to be distinguished from perceptions. It is the authentic agency of an observable object that convinces us of, nay, I should say, constitutes, its reality. And Ryle's insistence on bodily dispositions, abilities, *etc.* (though for him in part 'mental') only serves to reinforce the principle.

Mind, then, it would seem, is for Ryle one part only of bodily agency and its modalities, the remainder being physical in the narrower sense.

subtleties, so that the animistic suggestions soon came to be imputed to him as philosophical doctrine, and to infect the empiricistic movement at its source. But it is high time that Descartes should be saved from his friends, if only to give him a fair field with his critics.

¹ In other words, we have here a notable 'category-mistake.' I suggest that durational agency is the "continuous state" desiderated by a recent writer as an essential category overlooked by Ryle (see W. J. Rees, "Continuous States." *Proc. Arist. Soc.* 1957-8, pp. 223-44).

The difficulty which I find in this account lies in its apparent slurring of the abrupt distinction between *merely* physical agency (*e.g.* kicking a stone) and specifically mental agency (*e.g.* heeding the resulting pain). Though these are doubtless in some manner united or associated in human nature and experience, they are wholly distinct forms of agency, and their distinction cannot be resolved by any mere process of simplification or complication. 'Minding' is not, as such, a special way of behaving physically, any more than pushing and pulling are special, even defective, ways of 'minding.' Thus it seems incredible that both are forms of bodily agency, or its modalities, in a merely *extended* sense of the term 'bodily.' Nor can I see any *reason* why such a view should be adopted; I cannot but suspect, therefore, that the commonsense assumption that to be real is somehow to be essentially connected with observable objective 'things' is still at work in Ryle's mind, leading him to suppose that though mind in abstraction from body is no object, observable or unobservable, and though it is not an observable *quality* of the body, its reality may be saved by conceiving it as bodily disposition, ability, *etc.*, which are, so to speak, *secondarily* observable.¹

From all this it is plain enough that the problems of the natures of agency and objectivity, and their relations, urgently require attention, and for Ryle's theory, taken literally, are crucial. It is, indeed, an open scandal, persisting throughout a great part of philosophical and scientific thought in the entire modern era, that agency, having been cast out of the window, has constantly been allowed, without acknowledgment or protest, to return by the backdoor, and to do its essential work after some fashion, well or ill, without public recognition. For the fact is that the conception of agency cannot be dispensed with; and the scandal will continue until it has either been adequately defined, or resolutely confined to a defined use, however inadequate.

¹ I have supposed that for Ryle the entity which exhibits the dispositions, abilities *etc.*, some of which are mental, and the remainder merely physical, is the body as observable objective 'thing,' but in so doing I may have been unjust to the author. His statement that "the solemn phrase 'the physical world' is philosophically pointless" is not alone in suggesting that the entity that exhibits these diverse dispositions, *etc.* – these abruptly distinct modalities of agency – is not the physical body but an active X which, primarily observable as the physical body exhibits dispositions, *etc.* only secondarily observable as associated with this appearance, some of which are 'physical' and 'realize' the objective appearance as 'body,' and some are 'mental' and render this body 'conscious.' I find no sufficient evidence in Ryle's book that he does in fact entertain any such pseudo-spinozistic view of the natures and relation of mind and body to mitigate the difficulties inherent in the more literal reading of his theory.

(ii) 'AUTOMATUM SPIRITUALE'

The objection is commonly raised that the doctrine of Spinoza leaves no place for the self-control and self-emendation without which the moral life can be no more than a figment. Even the account which I have given of the government of the body *qua object perceived* by the mind *qua agent*, it may be said, in no way mitigates the severity of this objection, since in psycho-physical act the duality of governor and governed is resolved, and mind and body operate as one. Now, the objection runs, for Spinoza *Natura* is a closed *totum* of intrinsic causal determinacy, and the finite psycho-physical individual is a 'part' of this *totum*, in nature determined by the operation of causes intrinsic and extrinsic – as body solely by physical, and as mind solely by psychical, causes. *Real* self-control and self-emendation, therefore, are impossible – though determination by intrinsic causes may *pass under the name* of 'self-determination' or 'self-control.' Such purely *nominal* 'self-control' amounts to no more than determinateness of nature, involving no real power in any 'part' (or in the whole) to determine its nature. Even the flying stone, once projected, in this sense 'controls' its own flight. On the other hand, *real* self-control requires the power to determine in some degree the nature of the self; and this, it is said, is not possible according to Spinoza's principles – not with *Natura* even since it is perfect, and can neither improve nor corrupt itself; nor can the finite individual, by the exercise of purely intrinsic causes, rise above or fall below the plane of being to which he is called, though by interaction with extrinsic causes his nature may be developed or corrupted. In a word *Natura* is an *automatum*, and the finite individual cannot be more. Indeed, as a microcosmic part of *Natura* he must be less; and taken as a mere sector (after the manner of traditional Spinoza-criticism) he is nothing – having no distinct existence in the integrity of *Natura*.

Some part of the objections thus raised has already been sufficiently treated, but it will be well to deal directly with the conception of *Natura* and man as *automata*, and the manner in which morality is related to, or negated by, such theories.

"The mere description of man as an *automaton spirituale*," says A. E. Taylor, "will never satisfy any thinker who, like Kant, takes the moral law seriously."¹ The writer does not explain in what sense he understands the term '*automaton*,' but the general tenor of his discussion implies that the 'perpetual motion machine' is its ideal type. Nor does

¹ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism' (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., p.291).

he expressly attribute to Spinoza the view that the human mind always operates as a spiritual *automatum*, though this is inevitably insinuated. In point of fact the term '*automatum spirituale*' is introduced by Spinoza in the course of his discussion of the nature of the *true* idea, and then only with a qualifying "*quasi aliquod*": "True science proceeds from cause to effect... the mind acts according to certain laws as if it were some spiritual *automatum*."¹ In imaginational cognition man is very far from acting as a spiritual *automatum*, since he is partly determined by causes extrinsic to his nature, though their transeunt influence is a privation under self-reference of the immanent causality of a being from which both he and they are derived. It is only as thinking true ideas that the mind acts "*quasi aliquod automatum spirituale*." But further, nothing was further from the mind of Spinoza in this assertion than the notion that true knowledge can be explained by the use of the analogy of the 'perpetual motion machine' – as a congeries of transeunt psychical causes, or even as an inferential linkage of psychical judgements. The true idea is the self-certifying idea, *i.e.* the 'ad-equate' idea which is 'equal' to the doing of what it claims to do. Thus, he says, the idea of the sphere as the figure 'described' by the rotating semicircle is true because the sphere is thus traced out; but the idea that the semicircle rotates, taken in isolation is not true but inadequate since rotation does not pertain to the semicircle as such, and no cause of rotation is included in the idea. The true idea or 'definition' of things other than the *causa sui* must include their 'proximate cause.' Thus it is to *Deus sive Natura* alone that the term '*automatum spirituale*' has unconditional application, *i.e.* to the self-generating individual. And it is the eternal finite *creatum* in constitutive *communitas* with its eternal complement in the measure of its finiteness that acts "as if it were some spiritual *automatum*." Under unilateral self-reference the finite agent is partially alienated from its complement, and thus no longer acts as a spiritual *automatum*; and the moral life is the continuing endeavour under a depleted *nisus* to retrieve the occulted *communitas*. Not that the 'automatism' of eternal agency is wholly occulted in the imaginational life, though it is confused and obstructed by the alienation of self and other. Even in the durational stream of transeuncy there remain the traces by which *Imaginatio* is the field within which the mind seeks by emendation or sophistication to sustain and corroborate its agency, and the 'common order of nature' is the field within which the body finds sustenance and strength.

¹ *De Intell. Emend.*, § 85.

And the durational *nisus* to such sustenance and corroboration stems from the eternal *communitas* of the created finite self and complement.

(a) *The Automatic Machine*

I have said that Taylor's objection to the conception of the human mind as an *automatum* seems to be founded on his interpretation of this on the analogy of the perpetual motion machine, *i.e.* a mechanism operating under transeunt causality and reciprocity. And he finds 'merit' in the cartesian conception of the physical universe as an *automatum corporale* created by God to subserve an end or ends transcending itself, in that it avoids two grievous errors which are really fatal to spinozism, *viz.* (1) it insists on the transcendence of God as the source of all things, "never dreaming of treating (him) as a subject of which they are predicates"; and (2) consequently he could be strictly consequent in his theory of nature as a mechanism with an intelligence behind it "not its own, to construct and operate it," "with a view to definite work to be got out of it." For 'mechanism' demands the reality of 'final causality,' though we may not know "just what the purposes of its inventor and operator must be." "Descartes's great machine is not, like Spinoza's, one which constructs and operates itself, and all to grind nothing."¹

I need not here deal with Taylor's insinuation that Spinoza regarded the finite modes as predicates of Substance as subject, nor stop at this stage of the inquiry to emphasize once more his insistence on the transcendence of God;² but I will say at once that it seems to me one 'great merit' in Spinoza that he did not regard the physical universe as an instrument created once for all, or being gradually prepared, by God "with a view to definite work to be got out of it"; and I venture to doubt whether Descartes himself would have been prepared to accept Taylor's gloss, or to defend it. No 'work' can be 'got out of' an automatic machine which could at best barely, maintain itself even if it included the whole physical universe.³ But not to be unduly strict in the interpretation of a phrase, let it be supposed that by 'work to be got out of it' Taylor was thinking not, so to say, of work *in pari materia* but of the sort of work that a clock is said to do, *e.g.*, when it 'tells the time,' or a telescope when it reveals remote stars, or a slide-rule when it 'makes a

¹ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism' (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., pp.157-8). On the value to be assigned to these articles, see below p.159, note 3.

² On this *cf.* *Eth. I., xvii. Sch. et passim.*

³ For I suppose that even Taylor did not include the mind-inhabited pineal gland myth as belonging to the "strictly consequent theory of nature as a mechanism." (But see above, p.121, note 1).

calculation.' Here the 'work' consists in the facilitation of mental actions – for it is as minds that we tell the time by the clock, see the stars through the telescope, calculate with the slide-rule, *etc.* Did God, then, create the great physical *automatum* in order to get this sort of 'work' out of it? Of course it is the primary object of the human mind, but what mental action can the automatism of the machine of nature serve to facilitate, save perhaps to make clear the power, original and sustaining, the consistency, the wonderful ingenuity, of its creator? It seems a huge labour for so little result, especially when the result could have been attained without the labour by the sole creation of minds.

So much for the 'merits' of the cartesian theory of the mechanical automatism of physical nature. We need not spend much time in considering the notion of a mind, finite or infinite, as an automatic machine composed of parts related by causal transeuncy and reciprocity, for it supposes that a mind is a ghostly 'thing' composed of parts on the analogy of a physical machine, whereas even a finite durational mind is an *agent*, the desires, resolutions, feelings, perceptions, *etc.*, of which are modes of agency which, though durational, and thus transeunt in operation, operate not as natural causes *a tergo*, producing the deeds of the agent as mechanical resultants, but as modes of the agent's potency, seeking actualization, and thus purposively.¹ Spinoza never contemplated the suggestion that the human mind, *qua* mind, could be a mere system of parts mechanically interrelated, or that *qua* finite its 'actions' could be the mere 'resultant' of the 'forces' involved – least of all in its possession of true ideas when, as he says, it "acts according to certain laws as if it were some spiritual *automatum*." On the contrary, his essential contention is that in true cognition the mind is wholly free from extrinsic compulsion, from transeunt causes, and operates from its intrinsic, though derived, potency as *creatum*, a potency which is not to be conceived as the resultant of various durational urges *a tergo*, seeing that these are but privations of the eternal agency of the finite mind, and not its conflicting or mutually reinforcing factors.

(b) *Automatum and Pseudatomatum*

But if Spinoza did not conceive the mind (or the body) as an automatic

¹ For Spinoza nowhere denies that the durational mind acts from purposes – nay, since the final causality erroneously ascribed to God is a 'human figment' it must have been derived by the false imputation of an authentic human characteristic. *Cf. Eth. I., App.*: "Man does everything for an end, *viz.* for that which is profitable to him, which is what he seeks." But the authenticity of an imaginational characteristic is, of course, no safe ground for the assertion of its incorrigibility.

machine, how did he understand its automatism in true cognition, and, we may add, its pseudomatism in *Imaginatio*? The answer has already been broadly given: 'True science' proceeds from cause to effect – not from mere temporal antecedent event without potency to temporal sequent as mere event without intelligible 'actuality,' but from potent cause to the effect which actualizes the potency of the cause. It proceeds from the *efficient*, *i.e.* the generating, cause to the *generated* effect. In a word, spinozistic automatism means self-generation or the actualization of intrinsic potency, original or derived.

Joachim, basing his notion of 'deduction' upon the process exemplified in euclidean geometry, has again and again criticized Spinoza's theory in this matter on the ground that deductions are always *within* a whole assumed or postulated, whereas Spinoza attempts to deduce *from* a whole: "All things *in a sense* follow from the nature of God, just as all geometrical properties follow from the nature of space, or, inaccurately, all the properties of a triangle follow from the nature of the triangle. But they follow from the concrete nature of God, space, triangle, and not from the selected abstract nature which is expressed in the definition – *at least not in the same sense*. ... Space itself – so far as it is treated as the ultimate subject-matter of a science – is a whole within which all spatial connexions are, and in whose unity spatial relations disappear."¹ "No spatial property can be 'deduced' from space as a whole. For all such 'deduction' rests upon the controlling conception of the whole, and is valid only within it. And the whole itself cannot appear as one term in the series of conditions and conditioned."²

There is, in fact, nothing in this contention fundamentally inconsistent with Spinoza's own view of the inadequacy of the definition of a species taken in abstraction for the deduction of properties. But his conclusion is that such definitions are purely nominal, and that real definition is not of abstract universals but of *singularia* or of 'common properties,' and that provided that the definition expresses the efficient cause of what is defined, no difficulty need be met in the deduction of its properties, for the actuality expresses the potency. "In order that I may know from which idea of a thing out of many all the properties of the thing may be deduced, I observe one thing only, that the idea or definition of the thing should express its efficient cause. In order to investigate the properties of the circle, *e.g.*, I ask whether from this

¹ *A Study of the Ethics of Spinoza*, p.117.

² *Loc. cit.*

idea, say that it contains infinite equal rectangles,¹ I can deduce all its properties – I inquire, I say, whether this idea involves the efficient cause of the circle. Since this is not so, I seek another, *viz.* the circle is the space described by a line of which one end is fixed and the other movable. Since this definition expresses the efficient cause, I know that I can deduce from it all the properties of the circle.”² In other words, in so far as the definition is nominal, and gives no clue to the mode of generation of the thing defined, Joachim’s objection is valid; but in so far as it is real or genetic, expressing the efficient cause, the objection fails. Now a definition of an abstract species cannot be other than purely nominal, since that which does not exist can have no cause; but the definition of a *singulare* or *commune* may or may not include the adequate efficient cause, and according as it does not the properties deducible from it are limited – according as it does they are not. Though euclidean ‘definitions’ are verbally of abstract species, these in actual *use* are so far ‘concreted’ by the axioms and postulates, so that properties can be deduced from them under the conditions set by the ‘whole’ (as Joachim would say).

Here, then, we have the essence of the automatism of the mind in true knowledge – far indeed both from the mechanistic automatism imputed by Taylor, and from the formal determinations of abstract implication within a ‘whole’ as advanced by Joachim. And for Spinoza the automatism of mental generation and the automatism of physical generation of the *singulare* and *commune* ‘*conveniunt*,’ as in *Natura* the unique creative *automatum* all forms of generation, of potency-in-act, unite.

When, however, we pass from true knowledge to *Imaginatio*, and from the *facies totius universi* to the ‘common order of nature,’ the pure automatism of eternal agents gives place to the ‘pseudautomatism’ of durational conators. Even here, in so far as the *emanatum acts* (*e.g.* when a man has a true idea) the action is automatic; but in so far as he can only *endeavour*, the automatism is fragmented and confused, but not wholly eliminated. Action is defected to transeuncy, to extrinsic determination moderated by intrinsic *conatus* towards some end, well or ill defined. Such a being is paradoxically determined by causes both natural *a tergo* and final *a fronte*, and is free, so far as he can be free, only by reason of the effectiveness of the purpose involved in the latter.

The issues of this paradoxical pseudautomatism of the durational

¹ See above, p. 31, note 3.

² *Ep. lx.*

emanatum will be more conveniently expounded at a later stage of our argument¹, but something more than the terse statement of its prevalence must, even here, be attempted. Causation as such is, we have seen, action or the actualization of potency; it is neither determination *a tergo*, nor determination *a fronte*. It is eternal. God, therefore, is neither subject to fate nor is he activated by purposes. Similarly, the finite eternal mode, though as *creatum* a derivative of divine potency, is neither subject to external compulsion nor purposively active. But this rejection of final causes from the eternal macrocosm and microcosm must be qualified in relation to the durational transeuncy of the self-referent *emanatum*, the continuant existence of which only *privatively* expresses the eternal causality of the finite *creatum* – qualified but not negated, any more than the rejection of ‘natural’ causation from creator and created can be transferred without qualification to the *emanatum*. Yet the notion of purpose, equally with that of coercion, is infected with the assumption of the priority of time. But it is not time that dates *conatus*, but *conatus* as related to reciprocal counter-*conatus* that temporalizes durational existence: for ‘now’ is the time determined by our action or endeavour, not that at which we happen to act or endeavour. And in so far as, *qua emanata*, we endeavour rather than act, *i.e.* transeuntly actualize a variantly available potency, this ‘now’ of operant *conatus* drips off *stillatim* into a dated past of partial accomplishment, and, under sophistication, presses on to an indeterminate future of further possible success. I say ‘under sophistication,’ for the future thus imagined is temporal only *sub specie praeteriti*, *i.e.* as a sort of as yet undated past to be occupied, moment by moment, by new attainments of the continuant *conatus*. But for the ends that inform *conatus* the future would be chimerical – a dateless, and therefore timeless, time.

It thus follows that in so far as the conator is truly active what has just been accomplished affords a stance for further achievement, and thus constitutes its ‘natural’ condition; and the end that remains for accomplishment, without reference to which there can be no endeavour, is but the purposive complement of this ‘natural’ condition in the privative causality of durational *conatus*. ‘Natural’ and ‘final’ ‘causation’ are thus alike in isolation ineffective; only as integrated to the form of durational endeavour can they be regarded as genuinely (though only privatively) causal, *i.e.* as factors of the durational actualization of available potency. Once it has been clearly realized that action as such is eternal, and *conatus* as such durational, so that no form of agency can

¹ See Chapter VII.

be temporal in nature, *i.e.* determined merely *a praeterito* or merely *a futuro*, by a *vis impressa* or a *vis attrahendi*, but only by a potency-in-act, eternal or durational, then the ancient and persistent problem of the freedom or compulsion of human or divine action loses its point. For there is no *agency* which is not in its own manner and degree free, as the self-actualization of potency, and no privative agency, or *conatus*, that is not in some degree and manner subject to coercion tempered by continuant purpose. But the manner in which it is thus limited must depend on the manner in which durational *conatus* is derived from eternal action at this or that level of microcosmic perfection. At one level free necessity in the *creatum* will give place to more or less free choice in the *emanatum*, in another to more or less free self-maintenance; but at no level will it give place to mere compulsion *a tergo*. For in any degree to act is in that degree to be free, and whatsoever does not in some degree act is in no degree an existing thing. Again, in any degree to act is in that degree to actualize potency, eternally or durationally, so that in so far as we act, the actuality follows by necessity from our intrinsic potency, and in so far as we only endeavour, the actuality is subject to the counter-endeavour of an other, and is thus, as referred to us, contingent in that degree. But human freedom, eternal or durational, lies within the limits of human potency. Since, therefore, that potency is derived, human freedom, both eternal and durational, is a derivative of the free necessity of the divine nature, but not for that reason other than genuine freedom. Man, however, being finite, his eternal freedom is limited in scope, as is his agency; and under self-reference it is limited in modality as more or less free choice rather than free necessity. But limitation in scope is possible only because true freedom is not free (*i.e.* indifferent) decision, but free necessity,¹ that is in act as expressing intrinsic potency. Again, limitation in modality is not merely a further limitation in scope by the partial replacement of freedom by coercion, but the substitution of optative decision for derivative free necessity – *i.e.* not its negation but its privation. And for this what is requisite is not indetermination but durational *conatus* emanent from eternal agency with its consequent congruently privative *nisus* to completion.

(iii) MORALITY, INDETERMINISM, AND CHOICE

“Any account of moral freedom which is to be acceptable to anyone who is at once clearheaded and in earnest about morality,” says A. E.

¹ See *Ep. lviii.*: “I do not place freedom in free decision, but in free necessity.”

Taylor,¹ "must somehow involve the recognition of *indetermination*." "Somehow" doubtless, but then one does not need to be egregiously "clearheaded" or "earnest about morality" to recognize that the moral agent must be responsible for his deeds, and that any account of moral responsibility, *etc., etc.*, must somehow involve the recognition of *determination* of his deeds by the agent, and that only the free agent can be thus responsible. Evidently, therefore, the moral agent must in one sense of the word be determined, and in another sense not. If 'determination' means coercion *a tergo* in a prior time Taylor's statement is a mere truism; but it is a plain error if determination is essentially the actualization of potency which may be only partially intrinsic to the agent, and thus only so far the ground of his responsibility. In this interpretation of the word 'determination' we can say that in so far as a man's deeds are determined by alien potency-in-act his responsibility for them is limited, and in so far as by his own potency it is authentic. But, of course, a man's deed cannot be divided into two parts, for one of which he is wholly responsible, for the other not at all; for the potencies of self and other, in act, do not operate as separable 'forces' determining a 'resultant' (as when the speed of an oarsman is increased or decreased by that of the current, his speed relative to the current being assigned to his exertions, and the remainder, or difference, being attributed to the water). For the joint result of the potencies of self and other in act, by way of obstruction or co-operation, is rarely, if ever, a deed analysable as the sum or difference of two deeds. The initiative comes from the self, and the resistance or aid of the other is evoked as response to, though not determined by, it. The responsibility of the agent for the deed may thus be greater or less, but it cannot be divided with the other.

Nor can these difficulties be met by assigning responsibility to the agent only in respect of his *intended* deed, and none at all in respect of the actual deed under the obstruction or aid of the other. That way lies not morality but fanaticism; for an intention so far as it is not actively pursued with proper energy *in* the circumstances is to that extent no genuine 'intention,' but a mere dream, and so far as it takes no account of the circumstances to that extent it is morally *irresponsible*.

All this follows from the principle that determination by joint *conatus* of self and other, even under opposition, emanates from *communitas*, and is its privation – not its negation. For only beings with something in common can either aid or oppose one another. Thus the effort of the

¹ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism' (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., pp.291-2).

self is always, in interaction, more or less adapted to the nature of the opposing or co-operating other, their opposition being the measure of their ill-adaptation, their co-operation of their concinnity. And this limitation of the concinnity of *emanata* is no mere ineluctable 'fact' or *datum*: it is the privation of *communitas* resulting from the degree of unemended unilateral self-reference in the self, or in the other, or in both; and it is not merely subject to full emendation in eternal *Natura naturata*, but in virtue of the emanent *nisus* thence derived, the deed actually determined is no mere occurrence in the history of the agent and his field, but a stage in a movement aimed, well or ill from stage to stage, towards self-maintenance in its field, *i.e.* towards the avoidance of self-degradation by ill-adaptation of self and other, and beyond this towards self-improvement by the better adaptation of the self to the other, or of the other to the self, or by mutual adaptation. *Communitas* of self and complement in *Natura naturata* is thus emanated as durational *conatus* and counter-*conatus* involving the *nisus* to self-improvement by more complete adaptation. It is thus that, under temporalization, durational *conatus* is purposive. Nor is this *nisus* something that must be superadded to a *conatus* conceived as coercive 'force' *a tergo*. It is intrinsic to *conatus*; and the manner in which it operates, whether by exploitation or subjugation of the other, by self-emendation, or partly by both, and its efficiency, are questions that raise the fundamental issues of the distinction of 'good' and 'bad,' their relative status, and of the incidence of 'choice', and the nature of the freedom that choice must involve.

With these issues we must deal in due course; meanwhile it is clear enough that it does not follow that because the agent's deeds are but the actualization of his extant potency under the aid or obstruction of that of his 'field,' by those deeds he cannot improve or degrade his durational nature (as distinct from *being* improved or degraded), for this is to mistake the nature of *conatus* as coercive 'force,' and to neglect its intrinsic *nisus* to completion, which may be well or ill directed (or as we say sophistically, may be purposive to good or bad ends). There is no endeavour that does not improve or degrade the agent, and none that is not *for* self-corroboration.

Nor is this all, for as we have seen, according to its status in the hierarchy of *Natura creata* self-reference involves the finite agent in durational privation only to a greater or less extent, but never wholly. And indeed, no existence can be exclusively transeunt, nor conceived as such save under the false assumption of the priority of time. It is the contrast with the remnant of eternal existence retained by the self-referent agent that

makes possible the transeuncy of its durational existence. What lies at the root of man's durational apprehension is that, as mind, he "feels and knows by experience that he is eternal."¹ And in so far as this eternal life is his, the durational agent is, in his degree, self-emending and self-liberating; *i.e.* as mind, lies under self-judgement and the liberating power of enlightenment. It is in virtue of this that he is not merely *self-determining* in his measure but also according to his emanent status *self-legislating*.²

Thus neither the ends of *conatus* nor the exemplary liberating power of partially operative eternal agency demand indetermination in the durational process. For though both are limited in scope and efficiency congruently with the privative potency of the *emanatum* at any 'now' that may be taken (for not all ends are within the range of the conational potency-in-act, nor is the 'eternal part' durationally invariable) yet because neither is a 'force' *a tergo* in a prior time, but both liberating factors of *conatus* (or, with durational ends, it may be, enslaving), the freedom (or the bondage) which they secure, though limited in the 'now' according to their scope and efficiency, demands no breach of determination. In duration the *emanatum* has no complete freedom, but yet can become more and more free, or more and more enslaved, as 'now' by 'now' he liberates or enslaves himself by the exercise of truly or falsely self-corroborating efforts in his field of otherness, or in his degree transcends durational effort in the exercise of eternal agency (*e.g.* in true cognition or exemplary morality). Because as eternally active or durationally conative all existing beings are determined by potencies wholly intrinsic or but partially extrinsic, self-improvement and self-degradation require no breach in a supposed iron ring of determination or coercion. But, on the other hand, because in any 'now' the available potency of the *emanatum* is limited, so also is its power of self-improvement or self-degradation at that stage. But by its exercise the ensuing 'now' is more or less potent for self-improvement or self-degradation. It is thus that in the moral life we more and more, or less and less, or, more often, more or less, in Whichcote's phrase, "naturalize ourselves to the employments of eternity."

But now, perhaps, the objection will be raised that though durationally operative *conatus* and partial eternal potency-in-act are by nature self-improving (or degrading), yet in the moral life these potencies are, for the most part, disunited and mutually obstructive; they are thus

¹ *Eth. V., xxiii. Sch.*

² See Chapter VIII.

alternative, and the agent must, therefore, for adequate moral freedom and responsibility, *choose* between them which shall be actualized in deed, and that this is possible only if indetermination is "somehow involved." If the agent cannot 'freely choose' one alternative he cannot be said to be either morally free or morally responsible. This, I think, is true enough, but it is an objection to the theory only if 'freely choose' is taken to mean 'indifferently decide'; but with this gloss it is patently false. For he to whom alternatives are altogether indifferent cannot be said to 'choose' between them, nor, therefore, to choose freely. For desires, aversions, and obligations are not extrinsic 'forces' of attraction, repulsion, and impulsion with which the agent has to deal, and between which to choose, but modalities of the agent's own potency-in-act as it is more or less pulverized by self-reference, and aided or obstructed by his complement as congruently alienated, or self-reconstituting under the *nisus* of partially undefected *communitas*. More or less free choice, therefore, is not an additional action with respect to desires, aversions, and obligations, but the emanent form of their incidence – the form taken under self-reference, more or less emended, by the creaturely free necessity of the agent's eternal nature. And it is free in the measure, not of the agent's indifferent aloofness from presented alternatives, but of his real concern, *i.e.* in the degree in which the issue of his choice, his actual deed in the 'now' of durational *conatus*, adequately actualizes or obfuscates his eternal potency. Free choice is the self-actualization of a partially disjointed durational *conatus*, the actuality of which is essentially preferential. It is a privative, emanent, form of derived free necessity under the dialectic of finite creation.

There is thus nothing in spinozistic determinism to render durational choice impossible, or to deprive it of that measure and mode of freedom without which it would not be 'choice' but pure contingency. And when de Burgh confesses that he "cannot see how the timeless order of determination can be expressed temporally within the *communis ordo*, save as an endless series of determinations *a praeterito*,"¹ he does but confess that the nature of spinozistic determination, the expression of it *sub specie durationis*, and the posteriority of its temporalization, have altogether eluded him. For the real difficulty would be to see how eternal determination *could* be expressed as an endless temporal series of events coercive *a praeterito*.

It follows, then, that all choice, as such, is necessarily in its measure and mode free whatever may be its issue – even the choice of the worse

¹ *Towards a Religious Philosophy*, p.75, note 1.

before the better – though the bad choice is less truly free than the good, *i.e.* approximates less to eternal free necessity, or unobstructed self-actualization. And not only is the bad choice in itself less truly free than the good, but it further lessens the durational freedom of the agent, while the good choice is not only in itself more truly free than the bad, but it further increases his durational freedom. Nor does this imply that moral improvement must necessarily be gradual and slow, though that is common experience, for the root of moral conflict, the ‘original sin,’ is unilateral self-reference, and the correction of this may well be more abrupt (though hardly, without preparation, “between the stirrup and the ground”) as ‘killing Truth’ invalidates all futile effort, and ‘vitalizing Truth’ corroborates that which is truly profitable, bringing the fragmentary endeavours of durational existence to the focus of eternal agency. “But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill.”

CHAPTER VII

GOOD, EVIL, AND PERFECTION

The mainstays of the moralistic polemic against the ethical philosophy of Spinoza have always been the doctrine in *Ethices III.*, of mental *conatus* or desire, and its relation to its object, misinterpreted as coercive 'force' *a tergo*, and the extended correspondence with van Blyenbergh¹ concerning what is usually called 'the problem of evil,' *viz.* its nature and incidence in a world created by a perfect Being. I shall contend that with a correct interpretation of determination by desire, and of the emanational 'privation' with which evil is identified, neither text conflicts with an ethical doctrine of the strictest kind, but that on the contrary both disclose essential grounds for the elaboration of any satisfactory ethical theory.

(i) DESIRE AND GOOD

Spinoza's assertion that "we neither strive for, will, seek, nor desire anything because we judge it to be good, but, on the contrary, we judge a thing to be good because we strive for, will, seek, or desire it"² has often been found to be a 'hard saying' among thinkers for whom there is a 'great gulf' fixed between 'nature' and 'morality.'³ "On such an assumption," says A. E. Taylor,⁴ "neither a moral code nor a philosophy of morals is possible. Both are possible only on the presupposition that it is possible to pronounce on the *worth* of different human passions and desires by reference to a standard independent of the passions and desires to which it is applied."⁵ Though what we desire is admitted by Taylor to be the 'apparent good,' this is not to say that "'this is good' means that this is being actually pursued" – an implication that he

¹ *Epp.* xviii-xxiv, xxvii. The early date of these letters, 1664-5, should not be overlooked.

² *Eth.* III., ix. *Sch.*

³ On this topic see above, p. 117, note 1. The ethical doctrine of Spinoza avoids both 'naturalism' and 'moralism'. Equally it is opposed to 'humanism.'

⁴ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism' (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., p.282).

⁵ Spinoza, of course, would not have denied this (as the opening paragraphs of the *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione* evince); if the question is put whether in view of his general theory he *ought* not to have done so, the reply is plainly, No.

attributes to Spinoza, connecting it with "the much admired proposal to treat moral actions exactly as though they were geometrical figures," a proposal that he describes as "really ridiculous" because "it is to ignore their specific character as *moral*."¹

The terms 'good' and 'bad' have several uses as applied to agents, to their purposes, their deeds, the things with which they have to do, and so on. That these varied uses have all something in common may be allowed, but this common element or factor is certainly not invariant in incidence. "Man has given the name *good*," says Spinoza, "to everything which leads to well-being and reverence towards God":² if some such general statement is correct we should still have to say that the manner of this 'leading' differs with an agent, a purpose, a deed, a thing, *etc.* Now, Spinoza's statement to which Taylor objects concerns the application of the term 'good' to the *things* with which an agent has to do, and from its place in *Part III.* of the *Ethics* expresses psychological and not moral analysis. It makes clear (1) that 'good' as applied to such things is relative to the agent *for* whom they are said to be good, since what is good for one man may be bad for another, and indifferent for a third. In this respect it is like 'distant' which means 'distant *from*' some determinate place; and in both cases the referent is often unnamed as being obvious enough, or because speaker and hearer are taken as common referent. But (2) 'good for' differs from 'distant from' in that it is no formal objective relation but one that is realized only through an action of assimilation: it means *profiting* in possession, and thus *profitable* for pursuit. Its ascription to a thing, therefore, can be *authenticated* in the end only by action, and it is *possible* only in so far as the agent actually strives to possess it. To refer it to the opinion of other men only postpones the problem, for they rely on actual experience, having found the thing profitable or not after achievement. Yet what was profitable or good for them may still be unprofitable or bad for him. In the end, then, man is left, not with a sure *ground* of judgement but with *his own latent judgement implicit* in the striving, willing, seeking, or desiring which he discovers in himself, and which is by its very nature an endeavour after self-corroboration – an endeavour, it is true, often self-defeating, and never fully self-perfecting, but all that is available to him by way of judgement of goodness or badness in imaginational things. For such things are good, bad, or indifferent only in relation to the agent that seeks, avoids, or ignores them, not independently. And Spinoza does

¹ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism' (*Mind XLVI. N.S.*, p.282).

² *Eth. I., Append.*

not say that we *rightly* judge a thing to be good because we strive for, will, seek, or desire it, but that we attribute goodness to a thing in the very endeavour to get it. The manner in which we are able to correct our latent conational judgements is a wholly distinct question.

Further, (3) Spinoza's statement is quite general and has application to all forms of *conatus*, whether of mere craving or appetite, conscious desire or deliberate will, for a thing, *i.e.* whether the judgement of goodness involved in the *conatus* is merely latent or tacit, or again explicit in its degree; the judgement that the thing is good with respect to the agent must *for the agent* be implicit in his own appetite, desire, or will. It is not enough for him to hear from another that it is 'good,' *i.e.* 'good for that other.' This opinion of another must turn his desire, *etc.* towards it if, *in his view*, it is to be called 'good.' True, he may be willing to postpone the question whether that which he finds 'good' is *really* good – whether the opinion of another is not nearer the mark – but this again raises the entirely distinct question of the correctness of his own latent judgement – it cannot, in itself, change that judgement, though experience may do so by changing the direction of his *conatus*.

Spinoza's dictum, then, does not imply that a thing is *truly* good for an agent merely because he strives for it, desires it, is resolved to possess it, or in any manner seeks it, but only that the term 'good' as applied to the things with which men have to do issues from their active relation to them. It is in this sense that Spinoza's dictum differs from the deliverance of "the great Greek tradition" to which Taylor refers, and not in denying that the goods of desire, *etc.* may be only 'apparent,' or stand in need of correction. But such correction is only achieved by the emendation of *conatus* so that the things judged to be good are rightly so judged. The mere acceptance of the judgement of another will not serve to emend *conatus*; only the agent's own judgement implicit in his own *conatus* or agency can have moral efficacy.

(ii) NATURAL GOOD AND MORAL GOOD

I have said that a man's own experience may bring about a change in the direction of his *conatus* as he suffers the futility or the hurtfulness of things so far sought after, and thus also in his attribution of 'goodness' to things. But *experientia vaga* though a potent, is not a very safe guide to the emendation of *conatus*, and it may well lead, not to emendation but to further degradation or moral pococuranteism in the 'crooked ways of Time.' It savours too much of 'trial and error' to commend

itself as specifically 'moral.' Anyone who has not taken the trouble to read the *Ethics* with attention for himself, but relies on critics, well-intentioned or otherwise, like Taylor, de Burgh, or Guzzo for a grasp of his moral theory, might well remain unaware that the matters so far discussed belong to the psychological analysis of *Part III.* of the *Ethics*, and that moral analysis belongs to *Parts IV. and V.* Nor is there any excuse for the conveyance of this impression, seeing that Spinoza draws attention to this transition from psychology to morals with sufficient emphasis in the *Preface to Part IV.*; "One and the same thing may at the same time be both good and evil or indifferent... (Yet) we must retain these words. For since we desire to form for ourselves an idea of man upon which we may look as an *exemplar* of human nature, it will be of service to us to retain these expressions in the sense mentioned" (*i.e.* as indicating nothing positive in things considered in themselves, but as notions formed from the comparison of one thing with another). "By *good*, therefore, I understand *in the following pages* everything which we are certain is a means by which we may approach nearer and nearer to the *exemplar* of human nature we set before us. By *evil*, on the contrary, I understand everything which we are certain hinders us from reaching that *exemplar*."

In *Parts IV. and V.*, then, 'good' and 'evil' are notions formed by the comparison of extant durational human nature with its eternal *exemplar*. It is often forgotten that the *Ethics* itself belongs to the second kind of knowledge, *Ratio*, for the most part at least, and is thus concerned with the 'common properties' of things rather than with *singularia* as such. Thus, Spinoza is thinking not so much of this or that man's individual *exemplar*, *i.e.* himself as *creatum*, as of the *exemplar* of 'human nature,' *i.e.* 'man' conceived as living in accordance with the dictates of reason. An effort of speculative development is thus required in order to identify this or that man's proper *exemplar* with his own singular essence as *creatum*, and thus the eternal source of durational emendation, and the self-legislating criterion of moral obligation. Such speculative development is taboo among 'minute' scholars like Joachim, and zealous iconoclasts like Taylor, but even these can hardly afford to ignore Spinoza's doctrine of the rational *exemplar* of human nature which is no mere abstract universal ideal but a concrete *commune* in which all men, *qua* men, '*conveniunt*.'

A man, then, is said to be 'good', *i.e.* morally good, in so far as his extant durational nature or *conatus* is so emended as to approximate to his eternal nature as *creatum* 'referred to God.' By this approximation

he does not cease to be a 'man,' or to be 'himself,' but he perfects his durational nature, realizes his humanity and himself. "I shall call men more or less *perfect* or *imperfect* in so far as they approach more or less nearly to this same *exemplar*. For it is to be carefully observed that when I say that someone passes from a less to a greater perfection, and *vice versa*, I do not understand that from one essence or nature he is changed into another (for a horse, *e.g.*, would be as much destroyed if it were changed into a man as if it were changed into an insect), but rather that his potency to act, in so far as it is understood by his nature, is increased or diminished."¹ The man and his *exemplar* are thus one and the same individual as more or less emended *emanatum* and as eternal *creatum*. But, as we have seen, the finite individual according to his status in the hierarchy of *Natura* retains under self-reference his due measure of eternal potency, and is thus never entirely cut off from his *exemplar*, or therefore from all power of self-emendation.

Now, critics have often denied that under Spinoza's theory this power of self-emendation is credible: a man's choice is determined by the motives actually operant at the moment of choice – not necessarily in favour of the *strongest* among them (though some would assert this), but certainly in some manner by these and these alone. "Moral experience," says de Burgh,² "is inexplicable on the basis of Spinoza's metaphysic. He could neither account for the fact of vice, nor, granting the fact, for the victim's liberation from enslavement. If deliverance be possible – and... Spinoza never dreamt of questioning it – it can only be by driving a breach through the nexus of determinism." The attentive reader will already know the source of de Burgh's puzzlement, but so universal is the proneness to the error from which it issues that exposure *ad nauseam* may still prove insufficient. The error is, indeed, dual: (1) it supposes that a man's motives operate as 'forces' *a tergo* (whether their efficiency is or is not measured by their strength); and (2) it supposes that human nature is atomistic in structure. The 'chain of determinism' from which a man is said, on Spinoza's theory, to be incapable of escaping, stems from the first supposition; the denial that human 'choice' (socalled) is morally effective, from the second. For certainly an 'aggregate self' can be no *moral* self.

It is true that under self-reference human action is inadequated so that as imaginal his deeds confusedly actualize a potency attributable to self and other conjointly, but this can involve him in no

¹ *Eth. IV., App.*

² *Towards a Religious Philosophy*, p.74.

mechanistic chain of determination. It is true that under self-reference man's nature is partly pulverized, but never wholly disintegrated. So far as a man is degraded towards such a condition he must cease to be a man and an agent. This the *summum periculum*¹ of the moral life: the wasting away towards amorality. As "blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself,"² so moral death is not the 'wages of sin' but vice itself. The characteristic 'moral agent' is in no such case: he is no twin-series of disconnected 'urges' and human 'perceptions' any more than his body is an assemblage and succession of atoms. He *endeavours*, and as so doing the potency which is actualized in his deeds is in part intrinsic; he is still an 'agent' in his measure, and no mere 'particle' on which external forces play. What stands in the way of improvement is not an independently operative temporal series of determined and determining 'causes' but the unilateral self-reference by which his derived autonomy as *creatum* is more or less debased to imaginational partial heteronomy as his complement in *Natura*, with which he stands in constitutive *communitas*, is partially alienated.

Thus it is the false assumption, wholly alien to Spinoza's thought, that there is an independent 'natural' order of temporal, or transeunt, causes that stands in the way of morality, and negates human freedom, that is the sole ground of the supposedly insoluble riddle elaborated by de Burgh³ as to "how man can ever rise... from a lower plane," how he can sever "the deterministic chain," and initiate the "saving process of liberation"; so that the "far-reaching incoherence in Spinoza's philosophy" turns out to be no more than a deep-seated incoherence in the mind of the critic himself. And when he agrees with Guzzo⁴ that there is a crucial contradiction in Spinoza's statement that "Hatred is increased by reciprocated hatred but *can be* destroyed by love,"⁵ he forgets that in so far as there is partial integration in the nature of the agent (as there must be if he is to be an 'agent') *esse* is *posse* – just as in eternal *communitas esse* is *frui*, and for God *esse* is *creare*. *Esse* can never

¹ *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*, §. 7.

² *Eth. V.*, xlii.

³ *Towards a Religious Philosophy*, p.75.

⁴ A. Guzzo, *Il pensiero di B. Spinoza*, pp.290-1. The minute acuity by which this writer traces the exact point in the *Ethics* at which Spinoza "severed the deterministic chain" by introducing the "seemingly innocent *potest.*" seems not to have been sufficient to reveal to him that the breach in the chain was no breach in the theory, but an expression of its central contention.

⁵ *Eth. III.*, xliiii. The intention of this statement might just as well have been formulated: Hatred *can be* increased by reciprocated hatred, but *is* destroyed by love; or again: Hatred is (or can be) either increased by reciprocated hatred or destroyed by love. The statement (belonging to *Ratio*) applies to, but does not directly refer to, the predicament of *this or that* man.

be *non posse*, for to *be* is to *act*: for the thinker, *cogito ergo sum*; for the conator, *conor ergo sum*, *conatur ergo est*; and in general, *agit ergo est*.

In the moral life of durational endeavour undoubtedly there is always a limit set to what the agent can, then and there, do; but that he is unable, then and there, to do anything towards self-emendation (or, indeed, to 'do' anything at all) because his 'deeds' are determined *a praeterito*, is a gloss derived from a false, and anachronistic, theory of nature, and introduced by the critic himself. Further, undoubtedly there is always a limit set to the degree in which, on this or that occasion, the agent's choice is free; but that choice, free in its measure, is an illusion because his 'choice' is determined by the 'motives' then and there operating (even though not necessarily by their urgency), is a gloss derived from a false theory of motivation introduced by the critic himself. For more or less free choice is the agent's emanational mode of partial integrity, as derivative free necessity is his proper integrity as *creatum*. Choice, as we have seen, can only be truly elective in so far as it is neither the indifferent casting of a die, nor submission to extrinsic power, by urgency or some other mode of efficiency superior to others, suffered by the agent on this or that occasion. The contending motives, dialectically integrated as choice, *are* the man as 'pilgrim'; and the man is what he is, has what motives he has, and chooses as he does, on this or that occasion, largely by reason of prior acts of choice which have been effective as increasing or diminishing his durational elective freedom as it remains to him under unilateral self-reference. In so far as this is so he may truly be said to work his own emendation or degradation; and only so is his present choice dependent on his past – not by way of extrinsic coercion. The way of salvation may be steep and difficult, but it is never closed; and there are other ways, as we shall see, by which its difficulty may be mitigated – though not without self-help.

(iii) DIVINE CREATION AND EVIL

'Good' and 'bad,' 'merit' and 'demerit,' 'praise' and 'blame,' are terms that have significance within the finite durational sphere alone; for they involve a contrast of extant durational nature with eternal finite nature, of *emanatum* with *creatum* – and the distinction of these is impossible *sub specie aeternitatis*. But 'good' and 'bad' are terms that express also the relation of self and other as in partial *communitas*: "Nothing can be to us either good or bad unless it possesses something

in common with ourselves";¹ yet in so far as it is in *communitas* with us it cannot be called 'bad,' for badness implies contrariety.² What, then, is the ground of contrariety? Not total diversity, for this is the ground of indifference. Must we say, then, that contrariety is *partial agreement*? By no means if by this is understood agreement over a certain range with diversity over a coordinate complementary range: this is not *contrariety*. 'Bad' is not limited 'good' but the contrary of 'good,' just as error is not limited 'truth,' or partial ignorance, but the contrary of truth. Nor, again, does the contrariety of 'good' and 'bad' lie in their mutual negation, for the 'indifferent' is neither good nor bad, and thus negates both. And though badness is a defect, it is not the mere deficiency of the bad that makes it bad, for since to be good is not necessarily to be perfect, even that which is good may be defective. What makes a thing, a deed, an agent, bad is not defect but *privation*: an object of pursuit is bad because, being unprofitable, it is nevertheless pursued and thus taken as good; a deed is bad because, being harmful, it is performed as beneficial; and an agent is bad because he takes the action that enslaves him to be the very gate of freedom.³ Evil, whether it be 'natural' or 'moral,' evil *in alio* (i.e. evil *for*) or evil *in se*, is not a defect of good, not the negation but the privation of good. And 'good' meaning 'sought after,' it follows that 'good' and 'bad' are contraries only in pursuit.

This distinction between negation (or deficiency) and privation is utterly crucial for the understanding of Spinoza's theory of both evil and error, and a great part of the difficulty found in, and the criticism directed against, it stems from the loose manner in which the term 'privation' is commonly used. Alternative meanings assigned to it by the dictionaries include: the act of taking away, the condition of being deprived, the loss, or the mere absence, of a quality, the lack of a necessity, and so forth. The last of these perhaps comes nearest to the special use of the term by Spinoza, *viz.* the absence of something taken to be

¹ *Eth. IV., xxix.*

² *Eth. IV., xxx.* Minute scholars must gather the aetiology of evil from this and the following proposition in the light of propositions *xxxii.* and *xxxv.* which expound the grounds of contrariety.

³ Similarly we might say that what makes a thing, a deed, an agent, good is not perfection but transcendence: an object of pursuit, or a deed, is good because, though it is but the object, or again the actuality, of the agent's durational endeavour, it nevertheless subserves his durational self-transcendence; and an agent is good because by the mere actualization of his durational endeavour by more or less free choice, he transcends its durational limitation, and so far achieves a truer liberty. To do more than this would not be to be 'good' but to be finitely perfect, and thus beyond good and evil. Similarly, an *entirely* bad man would be, like the Devil, *non-ens* (See *Short Treatise II, xxv*).

properly present. He explains this use of the term in *Epistola xxi.* to van Blyenbergh who, in the previous letter had supposed that Spinoza meant that in sin and error a man deprives himself of the perfection that is his as created by God, so that error and evil are but self-produced human imperfections – a proposition that he rejects on the ground that “what is perfect cannot be deprived of a more perfect state by an equally perfect action, but only by the fact that we turn to something imperfect because we do not make the best use of the powers given to us,” and, this being so, for Spinoza evil is but a lesser good, error but a partial truth, and he who acts badly, or errs, does so, not by self-deprivation, but because God at that time limited his essence or potency.

Two things must be kept steadily in view in dealing with the van Blyenbergh correspondence: (1) that it is relatively early in Spinoza’s philosophical career – December 1664 to June 1665 – when his characteristic doctrines and modes of expression were in process of being developed, and were thus more subject to misinterpretation than in the long-pondered *Ethics*; and (2) that the central topic throughout (to which Spinoza pertinaciously adhered, and sought to make his correspondent adhere) was: what must be the nature of evil and error as *undeniably present* in a world that owes its being to an absolutely perfect agent or God? For if this is overlooked the meaning of many of Spinoza’s statements is liable not merely to be misconstrued but even inverted. This is true of the statement about privation to which I have alluded: “I say... that privation is not an act of depriving, but only a simple and mere not-having, which in itself is nothing; for it is only an *ens rationis* or way of thinking which we form when we compare things with one another. We say, *e.g.* that a blind man is deprived of sight because we easily imagine him as seeing – an imagination which arises because we compare him, either with others who see, or his present state with one that is past when he did see. And when we consider him in this way... we affirm that sight pertains to his nature, and therefore say that he is deprived of it.”¹ But in fact *when he is blind* sight does not belong to him, and therefore he is not deprived of it any more than is a stone – he is simply *lacking* sight, which is a mere negation. Spinoza should hardly have been surprised that the ‘metaphysical tiro,’ van Blyenbergh, understood him to say that evil and error, as such, are nothing, and need no divine cause. But what he was implying was that evil and error are not *as referred to God* ‘privations’ at all, but negations, and that in eternity there can be no error and no evil; but

¹ *Ep. xxi.*

not that they are negations *as referred to man*, either as observer or as agent. "The term (privation) is used only in relation to our understanding, not in relation to God's understanding," for "we express by one and the same definition all singulars of the same kind, *e.g.* all who have the external shape of a man, and therefore consider that they are all equally capable of the highest perfection that we can deduce from such a definition. And when we find one whose deeds are incompatible with that perfection, then we consider that he is deprived thereof, and deviates from his nature. ... But since God neither conceives things abstractly, nor makes such general definitions, and no more essence belongs to things than the divine understanding and power imparts to them, it follows clearly that we can only speak of this privation in relation to our understanding, but not in relation to God."¹ That is to say, the privation that is error or evil is *imaginational*, or significant only with respect to the emanational life of the agent. And the reader will recall that in the *Ethics* error is referred exclusively to 'knowledge of the first kind.'² Nor does this condemn the notion of 'privation' as pure illusion, for "the mind is not in error because it imagines, but only in so far as it is considered as lacking an idea which excludes the existence of those things which it imagines as present."³ Thus error and evil occur when *Imaginatio* is not offset by *Ratio* or *Scientia Intuitiva*, but suffer, not mere defect, but privation, from the ineffective presence of some measure of certainty, or again, of perfection. For it must not be concluded from Spinoza's accounts of privation in *Epistolae xix. et xxi.* in terms of a comparison of this or that man with the definition of 'man' that, as such, it is wholly illusory in the durational life, or even in the moment of endeavour, for though the definition of a *commune* is abstract and in a sense general (as he says), it is not conceived by Spinoza as a chimerical 'abstract universal,' and thus wholly impotent; it is the 'common property' of all individual men, and as embodied in the individual human *creatum* is for his imaginational life ever in some measure potent as moral *exemplar*. The privation that is evil and error in durational life lies in the repudiation of the *exemplar* in the choice that represents the emanational freedom of the moral agent.

In the durational life, therefore, privation is authentic, and no mere negation or deficiency. For God, by reason of the eternity of his under-

¹ *Ep. xix.*

² *Eth. II., xli.*

³ *Eth. II., xvii. Sch.* I have elsewhere commented upon the remarkable statement at the end of this *Scholium* about *free Imaginatio*. It is a mistake to suppose that in Spinoza's view the eternal life of the finite *creatum* is wholly without a *nimbus* of *Imaginatio*. See above, p. 113.

standing and potency, it is negation. In the durational 'moment' of the dialectic of finite creation a man may prefer passive defect before the 'exertion' of self-emendation, in so far as he is more susceptible to the one and more indifferent to the other; and when he does so his action is a privation of his emanational agency (which is never wholly imaginal), just as when a man closes his eyes, or refuses to make use of available instruments to improve his impaired vision, his 'not-seeing' or 'not seeing clearly' is a privation; but when he is blind it is no privation but a negation. The privation lies not in the absence of vision but in the failure to exercise available power of vision, or to exercise it properly. Nor is such privation necessarily the result of a temporal act of depriving – even with vision it may be brought about by simple failure in the visual action (as when one looks at a camouflaged insect, but does not see *it*, or when one cannot 'see the wood for the trees'). So it is with error and evil; they result not from 'choice' conceived as an act separated from independently presented alternatives, and certainly not from alternatives to which the agent is indifferent, but conceived as the very bifurcated essence or durational potency of the *emanatum*, and free in its measure just because it is the mode in which that potency is actualized. For the actuality of any indeterminate potency must be determinate: with creator and *creatum* the 'choice' (if we may so falsely name it) is 'this or nothing' (falsely, because for *Natura creatrix* 'nothing' is not a possible alternative); with the *emanatum* it is 'this or that.'

Throughout *Imaginatio*, and in the imaginal being of the *emanatum*, there is, we have seen, such a recession of agency from its eternal finite perfection, by reason of unilateral self-reference, as that for derived free necessity there is substituted more or less free durational choice: the nature of the *emanatum* is a privation of his eternal nature, and no mere partial negation, *i.e.* for itself, as self-referent, it is a privation, though as 'referred to God' it *is* no more than partial negation. This privation results not from any temporal act of self-deprivation in the history of the individual or of the race, being but a 'moment' in the dialectic of finite creation. 'Original sin' is not an historical act but an 'act' from which history itself issues. By it man's life becomes a durational striving by contrast with his remnant of eternal agency congruent with his hierarchical status in *Natura*. Such a life is not merely, for itself, defective, but a privation of the finite perfection from which self-reference cannot wholly exclude him.

But further, in this durational life of more or less successful effort there is distinguished not merely effort that succeeds and effort that

fails, but also, since all effort is for self-corroboration, effort that *justifies* itself, or seems to do so, and effort that does not, *i.e.* after what seems good *for* the agent, and effort that has proved, or seemed to prove, bad *for* him (*viz.* 'natural' good and bad). It follows that the badness of an object of pursuit is not its mere non-goodness or deficiency of goodness, but its *false appearance* of goodness – an appearance, be it noted, that stems, not from the thing itself, but from the self-reference of the agent.

Analogous principles govern the distinction of *moral* good and evil, *i.e.* of good and bad *in se* as applied to an agent and his deeds *qua* his. An agent is morally good in so far as his nature, though durational and elective, approximates to the *exemplar* provided by his surviving 'eternal part' (or, as we shall see, by the 'commandments' promulgated by a moral authority accepted as such with more or less veneration by the agent himself). He is morally evil in so far as these grounds of obligation are rejected in durational choice – not as they are deficient, or rejected by reason of their deficiency, as obligations, but by reason of the agent's relative indifference to them, and preference for the unemended efforts of durational 'nature.' And a man's moral badness, therefore, is no mere defect of that nature but its privation, registered by his elective preference for 'passion' before 'exertion,' of unemended 'nature' before *exemplar* (or moral authority). Such preferred efforts or desires are morally evil, not because they are deficiencies of eternal agency, not because they are 'natural,' but because, being but 'natural' and defective, the agent not merely acts in accordance with them, but *prefers* them before the dictates of his own eternal nature (or the commandments of admitted authorities) – thus making of them his *proper* motives by the self-privation of his nature as self-emending *emanatum*. Moral badness is such self-privation, not durational deficiency. It is the durational reinforcement of, or recession to, unilateral self-reference or 'original sin.' "For example, Nero's matricide, in so far as it contained something positive, was not a crime: for Orestes too did the same outward deed, and had the same intention of killing his mother, and yet he is not blamed, at least not in the same degree as Nero. What, then, was Nero's crime? Nothing else than that by this deed he showed that he was ungrateful, unmerciful, and disobedient. And it is certain that none of these things expresses any essence; and therefore God was not the cause of them, though he was the cause of the act and of the intention of Nero."¹ To God, or 'as referred to God,' the deed was defective; to Nero, or as referred to Nero, it was a privation, and as such evil. And it was to Nero, and not to

¹ *Ep.* xxiii.

God, that the immorality of the action was momentous, for morality is durational man's affair.

(iv) THE LATENT KEY TO SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE

What, then, is the key to Spinoza's moral doctrine? It is clear enough that in his contributions to the van Blyenbergh correspondence he failed to present this in a form that could not but carry full conviction to his metaphysically naive, but not unintelligent, friend; and even among later thinkers, who have the more mature exposition of the *Ethics* to guide them, the same failure has been practically universal. That this is so, it may be suggested, is basically owing to Spinoza's tacit acceptance in the letters, and failure openly to reject in the *Ethics*, the view that *durational* man is God's *creatum* – creation and preservation through time being regarded as the same in principle – so that he does not sufficiently expound the authenticity of durational agency and understanding, and the manner in which it is related to eternal agency and intellect, *i.e.* how durational morality is momentous to the durational conator, and *Imaginatio* not mere illusion, yet evil and error no divine creation. True, we may validly conceive *temporal* man, *i.e.* man taken as extant *at each moment* of his duration, as *creatum* so far as his essence is positive; but if we do so, and falsely conceive duration as composed of the series of such moments (as we are then apt to do) we shall inevitably be involved either in the attribution of evil and error (which *in the durational perspective* is a privation, and no mere defect) to God; or, because it issues from defect in the finite *creatum*, in the inference that they are but limitations of goodness and truth even as referred to man. This, indeed, is the dilemma on the horns of which it seemed to van Blyenbergh that Spinoza was firmly impaled (a view maintained by most later critics); and Spinoza's dry insistence on the omnicreativity of God, his account of evil as a durationally authentic determinant of human destiny in 'this present life,' yet as nothing to God, did little to rebut it. Yet that he believed that the dilemma could be 'taken by the horns' is clear enough from his indignant denial that his theory reduced man to the level of "elements and plants and stones," on the ground that the true nature of 'dependence on God' is more perfectly expressed in man than in "logs and plants." But even this denial was little likely to be convincing to one who regarded man as gifted with the "knowledge and love of God" as simply a more perfect being whose dependence on God, though more ample and intricate, was still conceived in terms of *produc-*

tion and not divine *immanence*. “If you had grasped with pure understanding what dependence on God is, you would certainly not think that so far as they depend on God things are dead, corporeal, and imperfect (who ever dared to speak in so paltry a fashion of the most perfect being?).”¹ For in the “knowledge and love of God” man, as ‘*Deus quatenus finitus est*,’ participates in Deity; and morality is the durational privational expression of this participation. Nor can we say that the wicked man, lacking the knowledge and love of God, is thereby a-moral – that he is on the level of “elements and plants and stones,” a wolf (say) having the outward form of a man, so that his ‘wickedness’ is but the chimerical estimate of human *Imaginatio* due to an illegitimate comparison (for a *wolf’s* wolfishness is not ‘wicked,’ save in a mere manner of speaking).

Yet it must be admitted that there is not a little in the van Blyenbergh correspondence that might well seem to the “metaphysical tiro”² to tend towards such mistaken conclusions, mainly by reason of the absence of a distinct account of the manner in which durational essence or *conatus* is related to eternal action. We may even suspect that this may have been a growing point in the mind of the Spinoza of 1664-5 – though it seems hard to believe that Spinoza’s *siccitas* is attributable to such a cause, at least as consciously operating.

Whatever opinion we may entertain on these matters, however, it is clear enough that Spinoza had not the slightest disposition to doubt the durational authenticity of morality, and that it is momentous for man, or again that an action that is wicked must have issued from a choice that is, in its measure, free, just as an action that is good must have issued from a choice in *its* measure free (though he is insistent that what men commonly take to be freedom is no such thing). And this is evinced by his vigorous rejection of van Blyenbergh’s suggestion that if wickedness is nothing to God there is no reason why it should be eschewed: “What reasons are there, then, why I should not eagerly commit all villainies ...? Why not enrich myself by detestable means? Why not do whatever pleases us indiscriminately, and whatever the flesh prompts us to?”³ – and so on through the catalogue of deeds permissible to the *consistent* spinozist – to which Spinoza replies: “So far as I am concerned, I avoid, or endeavour to avoid, crimes because

¹ *Ep. xxi.*

² “*In Metaphysica ..., quam ego inchoo, ...*” (*Ep. xxii*). I cannot agree with Wolf’s description of van Blyenbergh as “a bore ... (who) simply could not get away from his limited circle of ideas.” (*Correspondence of Spinoza*, p.54). He was no fool.

³ *Ep. xx.*

they expressly conflict with my individual nature.”¹ Here, if anywhere, was van Blyenbergh’s opportunity to force Spinoza to bring the latent key of his doctrine to light. How, he might have asked, *can* a man possibly *do* what is in conflict with his individual nature, *i.e.* do it more or less freely (for, of course, he may be coerced by another)? Had that question been put, no answer could have been given save in terms of the emanational bifurcation of durational potency – for a man’s deed at any time can, for Spinoza, only be the actualization of his potency at that time. And this is the nature of ‘choice.’ But instead of following up Spinoza’s statement, van Blyenbergh proceeded to misinterpret it by assuming that what *conflicts* with our nature is that which our nature finds *disgusting*: “You avoid the things that I call wicked because they *conflict* with your individual nature, but not because they involve vice. You refrain from doing them just as we refrain from eating food which *disgusts* us. Surely he who avoids evil things merely because they disgust him cannot boast of his virtue.”¹ And he goes on to ask whether there is any ground for virtue in the case of a man to whose individual nature the pursuit of pleasures and villainies is not in conflict but in accord; to which Spinoza could only reply that the question supposes a contradiction: it is “just as if someone asked me: if it accorded better with the nature of some man that he should hang himself, would there be any reasons why he should not hang himself? However, suppose such a nature is possible: then I say ... that if he sees that he can live better on the gallows than at his own table he would act very foolishly if he did not hang himself. And he who saw clearly that he would enjoy a more perfect and better life by committing crimes than by pursuing virtue would also be a fool if he did not commit them. For in relation to such perverted human nature crimes would be virtue.”²

The point at issue is, of course, the distinction between mere ‘taste’ and ‘grounded judgement,’ and need not be laboured. The food that we ‘fancy’ may yet be unsuitable to, or indigestible by, us. Van Blyen-

¹ *Ep. xxii.*

² *Ep. xxiii.* The terms of the original Latin are: *pugnans* (conflict with), *abhorret* (shrinks from), and *conveniret* (accord with). Taylor, queerly enough, gives a reasonable expression to Spinoza’s contention: Spinoza does not act like Nero, he says, because Nero’s actions do not agree with Spinoza’s nature “exactly as I abstain from certain dishes because they do not agree with my digestion” (‘Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism’ (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., p. 284)), but, perhaps thinking of the anticipated disgust of indigestion rather than of physiology, goes on to agree with van Blyenbergh’s conclusion – at least to commend his judgement of the value of Spinoza’s ‘virtue.’ Is virtue, then, only truly virtuous when it is disliked or punished? Van Blyenbergh was at least able to score a debating point, by way of moralistic reprisal, through the ambiguity of his own confused mechanistic assumptions concerning human actions. Taylor ‘improves’ on him by attributing both the ‘food’ analogy and the mechanism to Spinoza himself, and misses the debating point.

bergh was, of course, as Taylor says, “simply right” in saying that morality is no matter of mere taste; but he was not right in supposing that this denial is in opposition to the ethical theory of Spinoza.

The distinction between the good man and the wicked man, then, is not that their ‘tastes’ differ, but that the good man acts in accordance with his nature in a sense in which the wicked man does not, and the wicked man in accordance with his in a sense in which the good man does not. Yet, of course, the wicked man’s deeds, like those of the good man, are expressions, not of a mere part of his extant nature when he acts, but of the ‘whole’ (such as it is). Both the wickedness and the goodness, however, lie primarily and essentially in the extant durational essence or potency of the agent, and not in his ‘deeds,’ taken (*per impossibile*) in abstraction from this (for the same deed may be either good or bad according to the agent’s status and capacity). This durational essence is in conflict with itself, is divided against itself by reason of unilateral self-reference, and according as it is electively actualized in a self-corroborative or a self-destructive deed or intention, we call the agent ‘good’ or ‘wicked’:¹ the wicked “since they know not God ... are as a tool in the hand of the workman, which serves unconsciously and perishes in the service; the good on the contrary, serve consciously, and by serving become more perfect.”² But what is the aetiology of this internal conflict of man’s durational essence or potency? For if man is so *created*, his wickedness and goodness must equally be derived from his creator, and imputed to him; yet according to Spinoza God is absolutely perfect, and in his nature there is no conflict, no defect, and thus no privation.

The key to the riddle so far as the van Blyenbergh correspondence is concerned lies in the distinction which Spinoza draws between the good man’s “participation in Deity” and the wicked man’s lack of the “knowledge and love of God” – and no such distinction could be maintained if durational man were *creatum* as such. *Creata* are certainly of different degrees of perfection, but each “participates in Deity” according to its grade; all are defective expressions of God, but they cannot

¹ This does not exclude the altruistic aspect of all virtue, for durational endeavour has essential reference to a ‘field’ of otherness, just as eternal finite agency is constitutive *communitas* with a complement. The durational self cannot be isolated from its durational other, and the attempt to do so can result only in self-enfeeblement.

² *Ep. xix.* But even the wicked, as *creata* under a cloud, cannot wholly perish; nor can the good, as *emanata* self-emending, attain to perfection. Vice and virtue are but punishment and reward, respectively. The reward is approximation to perfection – not release from duration but durational potency; and the punishment approximation to non-being – not death but durational impotency.

be selfconflicting moral agents suffering self-privation and seeking self-fulfilment. How, then, does it come about that, without loss of identity, this or that man varies from time to time in the degree in which he “participates in Deity” or has “knowledge and love of God”? And how is it possible for him to exercise control over this degree of durational perfection?

As to the former question: Wickedness is evidently neither finiteness nor the direct result of finiteness, for the good man, too, is finite – only ‘participates,’ *i.e.* shares, in Deity, and has limited knowledge and love of God (though it may be adequate so far as it goes). Wickedness is not defect but privation. Nero’s matricide was wicked, not as a positive deed (which actualized potency derived from God), but because his deed “showed that he was ungrateful, unmerciful, and disobedient.”¹ But if gratitude, mercy, and obedience had been either wholly beyond his power, or an ineluctable characteristic of his nature, evidently he could not have been wicked. A man’s wickedness (and indeed his goodness also) thus stems from the *bifurcation without dissociation*² of his nature and potency as durational agent. But agency is the actualization of potency, and while durational potency-in-act may suffer such bifurcation, its actuality must be determinate. Both to kill and not to kill his mother were within the *mere potency* of Nero, but his *deed* could not have included both: thus his potency-in-act necessarily took the form of *choice*; and it is according to the actual choice made by him that Nero is subject to moral estimation – his deed is a *wicked matricide*. His choice was the actuality of his extant potency-in-act, it expressed the nature or essence that he then was. For in choice, in so far as it is ‘choice,’ and neither chance nor coercion, the determination expresses the agent’s own valuation, implicit or overt, of his conflicting active powers – it is not the result of the relative strength or efficiency of ‘motives’ *impelling or drawing* him, but registers his extant *preference*,³ and thus only is it, in its measure, free.⁴

So far, so good, but what was lacking in the van Blyenbergh correspondence was a distinct account of the manner in which this or that man, say Nero, comes by this bifurcated potency-in-act in which the

¹ *Ep. xxiii.*

² I say “without dissociation” because all that is positive in durational *conatus* emanates from eternal agency, not from some alien source. The bifurcation is imaginal, and thus emendable.

³ ‘Preference,’ of course, not as mere ‘inclination,’ but for obligation before inclination, or inclination before obligation.

⁴ It is free *in its measure* because ‘preference’ implies that the agent is not wholly indifferent to either alternative; and it is *free* in its measure because it expresses *his* preference.

actuality or deed, as wicked or good, issues from a more or less free choice. Was Nero created with it, or preserved to it? If so, his wickedness ought to be imputed to God rather than to him. This inference Spinoza rejects. If, then, Nero was not so created, either his wickedness is illusory because he did not really 'choose' his deed, but indifferently fell into it, or if it is authentic and expresses his choice, as moral agent Nero would seem to lie beyond the reach of the all-determining divine potency. And this, too, Spinoza rejects. From this complex *impasse* there is but one way of escape, *viz.* that which, though not openly expounded in the van Blyenbergh correspondence (hence its inconclusiveness) is more clearly manifest in the *Ethics: sub specie durationis* the eternal dialectic of finite creation is incomplete,¹ and susceptible only to asymptotic approach to perfect synthesis. Yet creation as such is eternal, and thus not subject to degrees of approach. Durational life must therefore be assigned not to some historical epoch in a creative process, but to a 'moment' in its eternal dialectic as it relates to what is finite. The wicked Nero and the good Socrates are imaginal, but not illusory – for the root of *Imaginatio*, and of its imaginal objects, is the unilateral self-reference of the microcosm, well-founded in so far as it is 'cosmic,' ill-founded in so far as it is '*micros.*' In this antithetical 'moment' of the finite creative dialectic the *creandum* is emanated as durational, conative, elective, subject to the more or less rival claims of more or less corrected 'natural' desires and more or less undefected 'rational' wishes which stem from his 'eternal part' – the 'part' which, according to his status in the hierarchy of *Natura*, unilateral self-reference cannot wholly degrade, and which, as subject to opposition from his 'defected part,' operates as moral obligation or 'conscience.'

But this 'original sin' of unilateral self-reference, as has been said, can be imputed to no *historical* act of rebellion against his own nature as *creatum*, or against his creator, for there can be neither ground of rebellion, nor groundless conflict, in either *creatum* or creator. Finite creation is a *resolved contradiction*, or dialectic, which from the standpoint of the *creandum* involved in it, expounds itself as durational, conative, and elective, under the more or less rival claims of a nature bifurcated without radical division, and thus for ever seeking, by means well or ill-directed, the complete synthesis which it lacks and which is the final 'moment' of its creation. This can only be effectively sought by the emendation of his unilateral self-reference, and not by more urgent,

¹ Cf. de Burgh, *Towards a Religious Philosophy*, p. 111, note 1: "As willed timelessly by the divine Reason, (creation) includes the whole scheme of the world's redemption."

more subtly discriminating, or less punctilious, pursuit of the imaginal objects of 'natural' inclination. For these can be truly profitable only 'as referred to God'; and even their imaginal profitableness depends on their *right* pursuit, *i.e.* upon their use, not as mere alien things to be exploited, but as complementary agents in self-corroboration. And this itself involves in its degree the emendation of unilateral self-reference. The craftsman, the artist, and the lover, must submit himself to the requirements of his tools and material.

In the *Ethics* these principles receive more overt exposition – though still limited for the most part by the treatment of the ethical problem under *Ratio*, the 'second kind of knowledge.' In relation to *error*, we now find the fundamental distinction between ideas "as referred to God" (which are necessarily true or adequate) and as inadequate, and thus liable to, but not necessarily involved in, error, as in the unemended perspective of the common order of imaginal cognizance. In relation to *evil*, we now have the assertion of the *Preface to Part IV*. already noticed that the distinction of 'good' and 'bad' as applied to the moral agent implies comparison with an *exemplar* which is not some other man, or the same man at another time, but that by approximation to which the "power of action" of the man himself "*in so far as it is understood by his own nature*, is increased." These are expository movements of great significance, as I have sought show, providing as they do the clue to Spinoza's essential moral theory; for, taken together with the philosopher's insistence on the authenticity of *Imaginatio*, and the momentous import of ethical distinctions for "this present life," they point inescapably to the doctrine of what I have called 'emanation' as a 'moment' in the dialectic of finite creation.

Our second question was: how is it possible for this or that man to exercise control over his degree of durational perfection? How can he control the degree in which he approximates to his exemplary 'participation in Deity,' or in which he has exemplary 'knowledge and love of God'? His deed at any time, it will be said, expresses his choice in accordance with his degree of approximation at that time, and is thus inevitably 'good' or 'wicked' as he then is. This may well be true, and even morally important, and yet but sophistical as an objection to self-control. For it suggests that his deed is not his *choice* but the result of the prevalence of one or other 'motive' that he discovers in himself, or even that operates without his discovery. And so regarded, plainly he has no control. So long as the nature of the choice which constitutes the mode of durational actualization of his bifurcated potency-in-act

is misinterpreted as submission to the more coercive 'motive,' no other answer is possible.

We need not further labour the crucial point that an agent's deeds are not coercively determined by 'motives' operating upon his 'will,' and by their relative strength (or other mode of efficiency) deciding his 'choice' either *a tergo* or *a fronte*. For choice, as such, is not determined: it is a mode of determining. In so far as they are *his*, a man's deeds actualize his potency-in-act; and in so far as this potency-in-act, by reason of his self-reference, is bifurcated without division, his action involves choice, more or less free, and his deed is 'good' or 'bad' according as, by his choice, the less exemplary factor is subordinated to the more exemplary, or *vice versa*. True, the 'good deed' or the 'bad deed' actualizes the extant potency-in-act, but the determination is intrinsic to the action, and not extrinsic by way of coercive 'resultant' alien 'force.' The potency-in-act *constitutes* the agent as acting.

But, it may be objected, this being so, the man is what he is, and acts as he does act, and can no other, and thus at no time has power either of self-emendation or of self-degradation. But this is to hark back to the error that has already been exposed, for the privation that the agent suffers is *his* affair, since as *creatum* he suffers none; and though it results from no *temporal* act (though it may be increased or diminished by such acts) it pertains to him as a responsibility that he cannot evade. Nor as *emanatum* does he ever seek to do so, save in words, for his whole durational life, whether virtuous or vicious, is an endeavour after self-preservation and improvement by ways effective or ineffective. As well might we say, with the sophist,¹ that a man cannot learn because he either already knows that which he is said to learn, or does not know it when he is said to learn it, as that the power of self-emendation must be denied because his deed actualizes his extant potency-in-act and is good or bad according to the balance of its factors. And when de Burgh poses his question: "how man can rise, conformably to Spinoza's system, from a lower plane of knowledge to a higher,"² the answer must surely be: by *learning*, *i.e.* not "acquiring knowledge of some matter of which you previously have no knowledge,"³ not the accumulation and sophistication of imaginational 'facts,' but "in the sense of reviewing this matter" and critically appraising it in the light of its aetiology or of some other method of discovering its relation to the bifurcated agent.⁴

¹ See Plato, *Euthydemus*, 275-278.

² *Towards a Religious Philosophy*, p.73.

³ *Euthydemus*, 278A (Jowett's translation).

⁴ *E.g.* 'the Law and the Prophets.'

Durational agency is thus no proper medium for the application of the 'Yea and Nay of Elea,' since emanational potency stems from an exemplary creative source, and its bifurcation, therefore, is not carried to the point of division (though by an agent's own persistently wicked choice it may become asymptotic thereto). Doubtless, the power of self-emendation or self-degradation possessed by a supposedly *isolated* man, or of a man in a 'state of nature,' would be very limited, and we have yet to consider in the following chapters some of the pre-conditions and aids towards a more effective moral life,¹ but it can be denied to Spinoza's 'man' only by imputing a mechanistic causal theory to the philosopher, and wholly ignoring the essential derivativity of both transeuncy and finality from eternal action under unilateral self-reference.

Now de Burgh did at least understand that creation "as willed timelessly by the divine Reason, includes the whole scheme of the world's redemption;"² and that being so, he needed but rightly to relate the time-process to the 'timeless' act of creation to gain relief from his doubts concerning the self-emendation of the moral agent. For creation as so conceived ensures that finite *creata* as emanated under self-reference are not merely 'fallen' from their finite perfection, but also in due measure must possess the power of self-redemption (for the deeds of another cannot be redemptive save by response from the being to be redeemed). This power is the *primordial* pre-condition of the moral life, and though it may be increased or whittled away by the agent's own exercise or neglect it is nevertheless normal to his nature as *emanatum* by reason of his status in the hierarchy of *Natura*. As to its effectiveness, it would be as unreasonable to suppose that this emanated power is absolute under all conditions and at any and every time as that it is wholly absent. The field of otherness in relation to which the moral life is pursued contains other self-referent agents whose aid and hindrance is thus beyond the agent's own control. Moral progress may, indeed, be difficult, and under adverse circumstances such as these (as in a 'state of nature') *wellnigh* impossible – hence the value of the family, the tribe, and especially the civic State. But the principle remains clear: throughout durational life the dialectic of finite creation expounds itself, not merely with greater or less success, but from its very nature even by contrariety as self-defeating in so far as the power that stems from creation, and is bifurcated by self-reference, under choice more or less free, may find actualization in deeds which, though as deeds positive,

¹ Cf. also *Eth. V., ii.-x.*; and especially *x. Sch.*

² *Towards a Religious Philosophy*, p.111, note 1.

as wicked deeds are privative, and thus *parasitical* on goodness. The power by which Nero murdered his mother was derived from God, but his use of that power was wicked because it conflicted with his own *exemplary* nature as *creatum*. The positively wicked deed was at once derived from and in conflict with *Deus quatenus Nero est* – it was parasitical. And it is thus that

in hate or lust or guile or unbelief,
Out of some core of truth the excrescence comes.¹

¹ R. Browning, *The Ring and the Book*, x, 355-6.

CHAPTER VIII

OBLIGATION AND EMENDATION

According to A. E. Taylor,¹ Spinoza is “precluded from having any moral doctrine at all” by his “exclusion of the notion of moral value,” which is “explicitly accomplished in the famous *Preface to Part III.*” of the *Ethics*; and he notes with scarcely suppressed indignation that “the very word *duty* or *obligation* hardly occurs anywhere in the *Ethics.*” “Though Spinoza had fine things to say about the virtue of benevolence, he is curiously silent about the great virtue in which the concept of a *debitum* is most markedly prominent, the virtue of *justice.*” “I should say that there must clearly be something wrong,” he continues, “with the very foundations of a moral theory which can be worked out without reference to justice and obligation.”² I venture to think that this facile iconoclasm has polemical rather than serious critical value.³ Doubtless, in some sense and form, action from moral obligation, as distinct from ‘action’ from mere passive inclination, is essential to the conception of morality, but though the simple moralist may rest content with the distinction, the philosopher is bound to inquire into its sources and ontological signification – very difficult metaphysical problems, the solution of which is not likely to leave the original moralistic distinction wholly unmodified. Even Kant, who above all philosophers emphasized the distinction of duty and inclination, failed so to expound his theoretical philosophy as to clarify its relation to the principle of practice; nor have succeeding generations of commentators succeeded in elucidating this relation on recognizably kantian lines. Plato, again, who had much to say about justice, had little to say about duty or obligation, and certainly did not oppose justice to the pursuit of happiness – indeed, identified them, justice being the health of the soul, and the only source of true pleasure. Yet I do not think that Taylor would have ventured

¹ ‘Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism’ (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., pp.281 *et seqq.*)

² *Loc. cit.*, p.286.

³ These articles are selfconfessedly iconoclastic, registering Taylor’s irritation at the occasional exhibition of idolatry among Spinoza’s less critical admirers. Though this so far disqualifies them for philosophical attention, they are introduced in this essay as a convenient recent source of antispinozistic polemics almost universal among theological and other critics from Spinoza’s own day to the present time.

to suggest that Plato was "precluded from having any moral doctrine at all." What is important in a moral theory is the recognition of the distinction of moral good and evil, of virtue and vice, and the need for, and the possibility of, correction whereby a man may attain the one and eschew the other, and not the manner in which the distinction and the emendation are expressed in commonsense or metaphysical terms. Had Kant fairly attacked the problem of the relation of his ethical doctrine to his positivistically biased theoretical philosophy, he might well have seen reason to modify the *expressions* of both, though not to withdraw either. No one who has fairly examined *Parts IV.* and *V.* of the *Ethics*, the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, and even the correspondence with van Blyenbergh, can deny that Spinoza has "a genuinely moral doctrine," though he expressly refuses to bewail, deride, mock or express detestation of the vicious propensities of human nature – his attention being fully occupied in "considering the nature and strength of the *affectus*," both of the 'passions' and of the 'exertions' (or active *affectus*), and the power of the latter over the former, by examination of the human predicament.

The main reason why the conception of moral obligation does not stand out in hard contrast to natural inclination in the Spinozistic exposition of morality is that he does not conceive morality as a 'supernatural' interference with the course of nature, but rather the 'course of nature,' *i.e.* the 'common order of nature' as a privation of *Natura*, and morality as its redintegration towards perfection. Nature is thus not a blind mechanism wholly indifferent to moral distinctions, nor does man by becoming a moral agent set himself at issue with nature, but only with its emanational obfuscations. Morality is approximation to nature, not divorce from it; it is the emendation of the unnatural condition of the partially self-alienated man. Virtue and vice are the very ways of life and death of the agent, his corroboration and privation, his intrinsic recompense and retribution. It is, of course, one of the natural defects of durational apprehension that this lies partly concealed, and the virtuous man often faces durational suffering by reason of his virtue, and the wicked man often prospers durationally by reason of his vice. When this happens we are apt to say that neither gets what he *deserves*, as if the reward of virtue were durational prosperity, and the punishment of vice durational suffering. Yet, of course, durational prosperity is a natural 'good,' and durational suffering a natural 'evil,' so that it would seem that deeds that are morally good can be naturally evil, and *vice versa*. Wherein, then, lies the obligatoriness of virtue and

of the avoidance of vice, and how can the obligation come to be recognized by durational man?

Some will say that the obligation lies in the will of God as revealed in certain commandments – an account that at least has the merit of not supposing that obligation is a sort of concealed natural inclination (so that the heightened self-esteem of the virtuous man outweighs the suffering incurred). Yet how can durational man attain assurance of the truth of the revelation and of the authority of the ‘God’? We recognize no obligation to obey the commandments of Mumbo-Jumbo as reported by the medicine man. “Even the Holy One of the Gospels must first be compared with our ideal of moral perfection before we can recognize Him as such.”¹ Evidently, therefore, the obligatoriness of virtuous conduct must stem from a man’s own eternal nature, which, even as durationally emanated, is not merely subject to inclination which may oppose obligation. True *authority*, though transcendent, cannot be external: it implies the immanence of the *author*.

Spinoza’s account of the aetiology of this human predicament has been sufficiently expounded, and need not be further laboured. What has here to be considered is the manner in which the partially undefected ‘part’ of the *emanatum* under self-reference, which constitutes the primordial pre-condition of all individual moralization, can become truly effective and gain controlling power in the developed durational life, so that ‘passion’ is subordinated to ‘exertion,’ and *Imaginatio* to *Scientia*.

We have spoken of the inherence of the *nisus* to improvement in the durational conator, but this does not mean that moral improvement is in any sense automatic. Even automatism in Spinoza’s sense has application only to eternal agents. And it is obvious enough that mere practice does not necessarily tend towards moral perfection: men get more vicious as well as more virtuous in the course of ‘this present life.’ The man of inflexible ‘good will’ by practice increases in virtue; the man of ‘weak will’ makes little improvement of any kind save in the art of avoiding painful issues; the man of ‘vicious will’ becomes increasingly vicious. These are common expressions valid enough under the sophisticated psychological reading of human nature, but the nature and mode of operation of the ‘will’ that is called ‘good,’ ‘weak,’ or ‘vicious’ remains obscure. It is apt to be thought of as one of the ‘energies’ possessed by a man, additional to his intelligence over and above his ‘impulses,’ ‘appetites,’ and ‘desires’), and operating transeuntly in accordance with, or in opposition to, these (similarly operating). Its re-

¹ Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, § 2.

lation to his intelligence comes to be conceived as that by which 'mere ideas' are practically effective, and dreaming is transformed into doing. But who cannot see that this whole account results from abstraction, sophistication, and the hypostatization of *entia imaginationis*; that it is of vague exhortatory and dehortatory utility, but has no legitimate place in an analysis of the moral situation? Its *prima facie* air of definition and expository lucidity is but the cloak of real confusion, misconstruction, and hermeneutic impotence.

Spinoza firmly refuses to discuss the ethical problem in terms of any such jejune rigmarole: 'will,' desire,' 'appetite,' *etc.* are alternative expressions for the "*conatus in suo esse perseverare*,"¹ which is "nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself,"² *i.e.* the imperfect expression of the eternal *actio* which is its nature in the *communitas* of *Natura naturata*. Furthermore, 'will' (*i.e.* the *conatus* as related to the mind alone) is identical with intellect³ which is essentially active as such (though as finite its activity is derivative):⁴ a mode of Thought, whether adequate or inadequate, whether of the self or of an other (*i.e.* of *affectiones* of the self under the derivatively transeunt causality of the partially alienated complement), is a mode of *agency*, and no mere 'floating ideal content' needing an extraneous 'effort' of the 'will' to bring it to practical effectiveness. Its activity is 'judgement' (too often regarded as no more than somewhat more complex 'ideal content'); for ideas, as Hegel said, "have hands and feet," and, though they cannot actuate bodies, their 'hands and feet' are their agency or *conatus*; and the more adequate the idea, the more effective it is in the reconstitution of the self-alienated mind.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to how a man is to secure the more adequate ideas, with their superior effectiveness, which are necessary for vigorous moral improvement. I say to 'secure' them, for it is not sufficient merely to entertain them as vaguely noted hearsay *dicta*: they must be actively, *i.e.* genuinely, *thought* – or if not thought, at least so certified by a truly venerated authority as to be taken as true 'beyond a peradventure.'

This alternative indicates the two main ways by which, according to Spinoza, moral improvement may be achieved or expedited, corresponding to two main types of morality, which I shall call *the morality*

¹ *Eth. III., ix. Sch.*

² *Eth. III., vii.* It is the 'actual' essence because it is no mere potency, but potency-in-act.

³ *Eth. II., xlix. Cor.*

⁴ *Eth. II., xlviii.* The infinite series of transeunt causes here referred to is an emanation of the derivativity of the *creatum*.

of obedience¹ and the liberty of enlightenment. And to these we must add, both for the sake of completeness, and also because of its prominence in Spinoza's political thought, a third way which I shall call *the pseudo-morality of sanctions*, though, as the name suggests, it is morally deficient.

(i) THE MORALITY OF OBEDIENCE

It is one of the chief contentions of Spinoza in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* that Scripture teaches, not philosophy but morality, not metaphysical doctrines about the nature of God and his relation to man, but only such knowledge as is needful to convince men that God is "the perfect pattern of the true life." "Scripture nowhere gives an express definition of God, and does not point out any other of his attributes which should be apprehended save these" (*viz.* justice and mercy), "nor does it in set terms praise any others. Wherefore we may draw the general conclusion that an intellectual knowledge of God, which takes cognizance of his nature as it really is, and which cannot by any manner of living be imitated by mankind, or followed as an example, has no bearing whatever on true rules of conduct, on faith, or on revealed religion; consequently, that men may be in complete error on the subject without incurring the charge of sinfulness. We need no longer wonder that God adapted himself to the existing opinions and imaginations of the prophets ... or that the sacred books speak very inaccurately of God, attributing to him hands, feet, *etc.* ... or that they ascribe to him emotions such as jealousy, mercy, *etc.* ... or that they describe him as a judge in heaven sitting on a royal throne with Christ on his right hand. Such expressions are adapted to the understanding of the multitude, it being the object of Scripture to make men not learned but

¹ "Moral precepts, whether they receive the form of laws from God himself or not, are nevertheless divine and salutary; and whether we receive the good which follows from virtue and the divine love from God as a judge, or whether it emanates from the necessity of the divine nature, it will not therefore be either more or less eligible. ... Therefore, he asserts falsely that I declare that there is no room left for precepts and commands." (*Ep. xliii.*). It is in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (to some ill-directed criticisms of which *Ep. xliii.* is a reply) that the 'morality of obedience' is most distinctly emphasized: "Here I wish expressly to state (though I have said it before) concerning the utility and necessity of the Holy Scriptures, or revelation, that I hold it to be very great. For as we cannot perceive by the natural light that simple obedience is the way of salvation (*salus*), but revelation alone teaches, by the special grace of God, that which we cannot by reason attain, it follows hence that Scripture has brought very great solace to mankind. For all without exception can obey, and there are but very few compared with the whole human race, who acquire the state of virtue under the guidance of reason alone. Thus unless we had the testimony of Scripture we should doubt the salvation of nearly all men" (*ch. xv.*). Those inclined to doubt the sincerity of these statements should notice the application of analogous principles to the necessities of civic life as emphasized in *Eth. IV.* and elsewhere.

obedient.”¹ “A man is pious or impious in his beliefs only in so far as he is thereby incited to obedience, or derives from them licence to sin and rebel. If a man by believing what is true becomes rebellious, his creed is impious; if by believing what is false he becomes obedient, his creed is pious; for the true knowledge of God comes not by commandment but by divine gift. God has required nothing from men but a knowledge of his divine justice and charity: and that, not as necessary to true knowledge, but to obedience.”² And it is on this foundation that Spinoza formulates the essential dogmas of universal religion: the divine existence, supremacy, justice, and mercy, his unity, omnipresence, supreme right, dominion, and freedom, his right to human obedience, and his laws of justice, mercy, and love towards one’s neighbour, and the doctrine of salvation and perdition as dependent on obedience and disobedience, respectively. “If men did not firmly believe this there would be no reason why they should choose to be led by God rather than by delights”³ – *i.e.* no reason assuredly known to the multitude, for whom the morality of obedience is the only available source of effective virtue.

Obedience to God as he is revealed through the prophets, however, is not the only obedience that conduces to virtue: “It is certain that duties towards one’s country are the highest that man can fulfil ... There can be no duty towards our neighbour which would not become an offence if it involved injury to the whole State, nor can there be any offence against our duty towards our neighbour, or anything but loyalty, in what we do for the sake of preserving the State. For instance, it is my duty⁴ when my neighbour quarrels with me and wishes to take my cloak, to give him my coat also; but if it be thought that such conduct is hurtful to the State, I ought to bring him to trial even at the risk of his being condemned to death.”⁵ The ordinances of the State, therefore, being the preconditions of the rational applica-

¹ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, ch. xiii.

² *Loc. cit.*

³ *Op. cit.*, ch. xiv. Hence, there is no connexion, and no affinity, between faith or theology and philosophy: “the aims and the foundations of the two subjects ... are as wide apart as the poles.” (*Loc. cit.*)

⁴ “In the abstract,” Elwes interpolates; “in a state of nature.” says Taylor blunderingly (‘Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism’ *Mind*, XLVI. N.S., p.293). As if Christian morality could have application in a ‘state of nature.’

⁵ This is the passage on which Taylor founds his assertion that in his political theory Spinoza “ignores morality” (*loc. cit.*, p.293). What, in fact, Spinoza says is that the State, being the precondition of the possibility of moral development, must not be weakened even in the supposed interest of ideal morality, the development of which could only be thus postponed. And even Taylor admits in effect that Christian morality would be wholly inapplicable in a ‘state of nature’ (*loc. cit.*, p.294).

bility of the commands of Scripture (and thus more in accordance with the dictates of reason *under the conditions set by the natures of the individuals involved*),¹ take precedence even of these in so far as they come into conflict. But like them they claim obedience – a claim that is admitted by the citizen in so far as, actuated by rational ‘exertions,’ he follows the dictates of reason; and which, in so far as he is actuated by ‘passions,’ must be corroborated by sanctions which, under passion, induce at least outward conformity.

For the multitude, therefore, *i.e.* for men in their day to day concerns, Spinoza conceives morality as, in the main, a matter of obedience to commands: either those of God as interpreted by the prophets,² or those of the State operating as the precondition of human survival and well-being. And such obedience, *in so far as it is truly ‘obedience,’ i.e.* the outcome of ‘exertions’ so far manifesting the eternal nature of the individual, and *not mere servile subjection*, under passion, to sanctions, is founded on assurance of the truth of prophetic interpretation, or recognition of the superiority of the civic life over life in a ‘state of nature.’ Veneration for the prophet of God, manifesting this assurance, and for the State, implying this recognition, provide the superior effectiveness of the laws and commandments in their opposition to passion. The strength of the rational *affectus* of veneration or devotion,³ in so far as it is a continuant that persistently moderates the pulverulent, discordant, passions is, for the most part, with the vast majority of civilized men, in normal times, sufficient – though even here there can be no elimination of passive *affectus*, or transcendence of ‘exertion’: for moral man is but *emanatum*, and the ordinances of God and of the State are ‘obligations,’ never wholly natural inclinations. The man of simple faith, or the true patriot, will be ‘obedient,’ not submissive from fear of perdition or hope of bliss, from fear of the gallows or hope for civic honour: his piety or loyalty may, indeed, *approximate* to natural inclination, nay, he may even, not merely *express* the harmony of the laws and commandments with the dictates of reason, but in some sense and degree *recognize* it, so that, so far, he may pass from a mere morality of obedience towards the ‘liberty of enlightenment’ which in its fullness is beyond morality. In so far as a man acts from ‘natural piety,’ it is the love of God that energizes him; in so far as he acts from native sodality, it is patriotism, *i.e.* love of country, *viz.* of his *conciues*; and these are not

¹ See below, p. 200-201.

² For Spinoza a ‘prophet’ is an interpreter of the divine will, not a predictor of future events: or the latter only because the former.

³ See *Eth. III., lii. Sch.*

passions but 'exertions' – principles of integrity and co-operation, not of alienation and strife. This is the morality of obedience at its best and most effective. Though it issues from *Imaginatio* in prophet and legislator, it is not therefore opposed to truth, for such *Imaginatio* is a virtue of the mind.¹

(ii) THE PSEUDO-MORALITY OF SANCTIONS

But we must be careful to distinguish the morality of obedience from a pseudo-morality of sanctions with which it may easily be confused, and with which, doubtless, it is often contaminated.² Sanctions are superadded rewards and punishments re-inforcing or supplying the urge to conduct in accordance with reason, law, or commandment by recourse to the passions of hope and fear; they are necessary only in so far as true enlightenment or obedience are absent. So long as a man acts only from fear and hope he acts slavishly under the dominion of passion, lacking that constancy and fidelity to principle that is the foundation of 'true religion' and civic life. Indeed, as I have said, 'obedience' is truly imputed only where sanctions are superfluous. Thus the pseudo-morality of sanctions is only indirectly 'moral' as facilitating the liberation of *others* by restraining, not the passions of the agent, but their ill social effects. It is a form of subjection, and not of liberation, and concerns the external behaviour, not the inward character of the agent – save, perhaps, in so far as by the formation of habits of behaviour it may facilitate moralization by other means.

It is plain enough that Spinoza regarded the pseudo-morality of sanctions as at once important under the conditions of human association in 'this present life,' and as ethically contemptible. In relation to the civic State it is, of course, essential: "Although all are persuaded that religion teaches every man to love his neighbour as himself, *i.e.* to defend another's right just as much as his own, yet... this persuasion has too little power over the passions. It avails, indeed, in the hour of death, when disease has subdued the passions and a man lies inert; or

¹ See above, p. 57, note 2.

² Just as it may be partially elevated towards genuine liberty of enlightenment by insight into the harmony of the commandments and civic laws with reason. The pseudo-morality of sanctions, the morality of obedience, and the liberty of enlightenment, are variously associated in the moral life of the developed moral agent. In general they re-enforce one another, though, as human devotion and veneration are imaginative, opposition is not impossible. It is hardly necessary today to point out that venerated 'prophets' may be charlatans, and accepted 'rulers' tyrants. Only genuine enlightenment can guard the individual against these perils. And that is not easily achieved; but neither is it utterly 'beyond human understanding.'

in temples where men hold no traffic; but least of all where it is most needed, in the lawcourt or the palace. ... Reason can, indeed, do much to restrain and moderate the passions, but ... the road which reason herself points out is very steep, so that such as persuade themselves that the multitude, or men distracted by politics, can ever be induced to live according to the bare dictate of reason, must be dreaming of the golden age of the poets, or of a stage-play."¹ And what is true of the 'bare dictate of reason' applies in great measure to the religious and civic sentiments. Thus if the State is to have stability sufficient to fulfil its mission it must be based upon power superior to that of any effective majority of its citizens, and embody the will to make use of that power by the imposition of sanctions adequate to harness the passions in the interest of its ordinances. But in *Ethics V.* we are left in no doubt at all about Spinoza's opinion about the *ethical* status of this pseudo-morality: "The creed of the multitude seems to be ... that they are free in so far as it is allowed to them to obey their lusts, and that they give up a portion of their rights in so far as they are bound to live according to the commands of the divine law. Piety, therefore, and religion, and absolutely all those things that are related to magnanimity, they believe to be burdens which they hope to be able to lay aside after death; hoping also to receive some reward for their bondage, *i.e.* for their piety and religion. It is not merely this hope, however, but also, and chiefly, fear of dreadful punishments after death, by which they are induced to live according to the commands of the divine law, *i.e.* as far as their feebleness and impotent mind will permit; and if this hope and fear were not present to them, but if, on the contrary, they believed that minds perish with the body, and that there is no prolongation of life for miserable creatures exhausted with the burden of their piety, they would return to ways of their own liking, and would prefer to let everything be controlled by their own passions, and to obey fortune rather than themselves. This seems to me as absurd as if a man, because he does not believe that he will be able to feed his body with good food to all eternity, should desire to satiate himself with poisonous and deadly drugs; or as if, because he sees that the mind is not eternal or immortal, should therefore prefer to be mad, and to live without reason – absurdities so great that they scarcely deserve to be repeated."²

¹ *Tract. Polit., I., v.*

² *Eth. V., xli. Sch.*

(iii) THE LIBERTY OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Returning to the moral life more strictly so called, we saw that the morality of obedience is founded upon a continuant *affectus* or 'exertion' of devotion or veneration that moderates the passions, and, whether native or cultivated, is more truly the agent's own than his dearest passion. Obedience to a loved authority is of very early development in the ordinary civilized man, being first of all directed towards parents or guardians. That it can be cultivated is indubitable, both by the inward re-inforcement of reason and by the operation of *Imaginatio* under inward or outward control. But however fully and consistently developed the morality of obedience may be, after all it lacks the intrinsic assurance of essential morality: the genuine power of reason that I have called the 'liberty of enlightenment.'

It follows from what has been said about the human predicament in relation to which morality is brought into operation, that what is at issue in moral improvement is not man's power over given external or transeunt causes, but over himself as he is emanated under unilateral self-reference: his power to emend the intellect with its agency, and thus to correct his metaphysical relativity. The moral agent is self-enslaved by his own passions. And he can only be saved by his own 'exertions.' A. E. Taylor complains that Spinoza does not show that truth, as truth, "has an inherent attractive power which can master the passions," that reason is "able to encounter and defeat the passions in its own strength" – interpreting Spinoza's assertions that *affectus* can only be restrained or removed by opposing and stronger *affectus*,² and that no *affectus* can be restrained by the true knowledge of good and evil, *qua* true, but only *qua affectus*³ as meaning that "a true and adequate idea has in itself no more hold over our 'passional nature' than a false and inadequate one; it can only prevail if it happens to be associated with a more powerful 'affect'." But this is only another example of the fatal mischief of attempting to interpret Spinoza's thought under an anachronistic set of presuppositions. Reason operates durationally, and defectively, *as* 'active *affectus*' or 'exertion,' and not by chance association with alien *affectus*. In the imaginational life of duration reason eccentrically informs the 'exertions' of the actual essence, or *conatus*, of the moral agent – nay, even informs his passions, though privatively.

¹ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism' (*Mind*, XLVI. N.S., p.287).

² *Eth. IV.*, vii.

³ *Eth. IV.*, xiv.

The 'active *affectus*' or 'exertions' are the modes of emanational irruption of adequate causes in the transeunt series of inadequate causes.

So far, then, is it from being true that reason can do nothing without the chance association of an *affectus* stemming from some other source, that reason alone, as mind, is fully active, and the 'exertions' of the durational mind are its imaginational expressions, while its passions are the imaginational expressions of this action as alienated, its *communitas* defected, under unilateral self-reference. "Killing *Truth*" may not "glare upon" the passions¹ and nullify them in the mere "indeterminate choice" (itself chimerical) of the durational agent, for thus there could be no emanation of finites into duration at all, no durational history, no 'original sin,' no need for salvation.

This is not to say that man is exclusively durational as emanated, with no 'eternal part' remaining, but that all durational emendation issues through the reason that informs durational *affectus*, *i.e.* through 'exertions.' Nor does the whole essence of morality lie in the control of the passions by the 'exertions'; its positive aspect is the resulting progressive eternalization of the agent, or the attainment of the 'liberty of enlightenment.' To use Taylor's platonic phrase, when the "eye of the soul" is "turned in the direction of the good"² its illumination is no mere increase in the range of knowledge: it is a change in the mind's 'axes of reference.'³ That this transformation and transvaluation is not wholly within the power of this or that durational agent at all times is both obvious and inevitable; but that it is wholly beyond his power, so that all care on his part, and all preparation, is futile, certainly does not follow from Spinoza's reading of the human predicament. Indeed, even 'sudden conversion' is not excluded as a possibility, as a great love will cure a man of his petty selfishnesses, for change of 'axes of reference' is always by its very nature by way of a leap however narrow or ample its scope.

For the most part, however, the morality of enlightenment involves a durational process of emendation, though each stage of liberation is an eternal moment of illumination marked in the durational life as the operation of an 'exertion' in opposition to otherwise prevailing passion. "An *affectus* which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it"⁴ – for a 'clear and distinct idea' is an 'adequate idea' embodying its proximate cause, so that an adequately

¹ Taylor, *loc. cit.*, p.287.

² *Loc. cit.*

³ It is thus that perfect 'liberty of enlightenment' is *beyond* morality.

⁴ *Eth. V.*, iii.

conceived *affectus* is an action of the mind itself.¹ What is here at issue is not how far this or that man is capable of such clear and distinct conception, but the power of reason, or adequate intellection, to control the passions by their transfiguration in a new creational system of reference. It is possible, according to Spinoza, because the whole life of the *emanatum* stems from an eternal source, and is thus durationally corrigible by reference to that source. And the transeuncy of the 'exertion' by means of which the passion is transformed is but the emanational expression of its source: the eternal finite *creatum*. True liberty belongs only to the perfectly enlightened agent, and to the partially enlightened in the degree of his enlightenment; for it is not causeless 'action' but action adequately caused by the potency-in-act that is the essence of the agent, whether original or derivative. It is a long-standing and obdurate error that Spinoza's repeated statements about man's *imagination* of his freedom are *denials* of his freedom. They are denials of indeterminacy. Men "*think they are free because they are conscious of their will and appetites but ignorant of the causes by which they are determined to will and desire*";² "*their idea of liberty, therefore, is this: that they know no cause for their actions; for as to saying that their actions depend on their will, these are words without meaning.*"³ The *true* idea of liberty is immanent causality, the actualization of potency, and it is thus that God is a free cause.⁴ And human liberty must be of the same general nature, even in its durational form of more or less free choice. In so far as his actions are modified transeuntly by things alienated by self-reference he is in bondage to those things, *i.e.* to his own 'original sin' by which his eternal complement is durationally alienated and fragmented. And to take ignorance of bondage for freedom is the very root of wickedness and perdition.

(iv) SELF-DETERMINATION AND SELF-LEGISLATION

The theory of freedom as self-determination, however, has sometimes been understood, or advanced, in terms, and under preconceptions, that confuse the moral issue, and in effect deny what it plainly affirms in the spinozistic *schema*, *viz.* that self-determination involves *agency* and *selfhood*, and not the mere nominal inclusion within the contour of the 'self' of a certain complex of transeunt causes. Such 'self-determi-

¹ *Eth. III., iii.*

² *Eth. I., Append. Cf. Eth. II., xxxv. Sch., et Ep. lviii.*

³ *Eth. II., xxxv. Sch.*

⁴ *Eth. I., xvii. Cor. ii. Cf. Eth. I., xxxii. Cor. i.*

nation' is merely nominal, and follows from the supposition that by 'determination' is meant exclusively subjection to transeunt coercion. Self-determination is thus equated with the conception of the self as constituting some part of the total series and congeries of transeuntly necessitated 'causes' and 'effects' – as a section of the total fabric of co-existent and serial 'natural' causes. Because certain of these 'causes' lie within the conventional contours of the 'self' and in some measure determine its behaviour, it is so far nominally 'self-determined.' But here, evidently, the causality, such as it is, does not issue from the self; on the contrary, the 'self' is a mere selected parcel of transeuncies, determined by what lies beyond it, and only effective as the nominal vehicle of causes that are the effects of causes beyond its nominal contours. Such merely nominal 'freedom' has no truly ethical significance, for moral freedom, or action, cannot be conjured out of such merely nominal 'self-determination' by the mere device of calling a section of the total congeries of transeuncies 'the self.' It is because the causal doctrine of Spinoza has generally been interpreted as mechanistic, and the 'self' as thus pulverulent, that his ethical theory has commonly been pronounced unsatisfactory – as, indeed, in that case it assuredly would be. Even if the category of reciprocity is introduced so as to transform a mere causal series into a causal 'web,' and the 'self' is taken thus to form an 'organic' whole,¹ holding transeunt causal relation with its sources and with the things that form its environment, the case is not essentially different from the ethical standpoint, for the self thus becomes no more than a mere node in the general fabric of nature, and not truly active as a self. No doctrine of moral freedom can be spun out of underived transeuncy and reciprocity.

The ethical inadequacy of the conception of self-determination as thus conceived was clearly realized by Kant when he substituted the conception of 'self-legislation' as the essence of moral freedom. This was, indeed, a necessary correction for him just because he had interpreted phenomenal causality as essentially transeunt and temporal.²

¹ 'Organic whole' is the 'blessed word' of radical objectivists vaguely aware of malaise but fearing a genuine remedy. Like 'dynamic,' 'organic' should ring like a tocsin. A system of reciprocal transeuncies, according as it is taken seriously or not, is chimerical or nominal. No real problem is solved, in philosophy as in politics, by the framing of a formula that conceals its urgency. Wholeness demands exposition in terms of categories transcending transeuncy and reciprocity, and only as so expounded is it related to moral freedom – or for that matter any sort of freedom. (Cf. also, *Aeternitas*, pp. 199-203, 295 note 1, 298 note 1, *et passim*.)

² Critics of Kant who fasten upon his attribution of causality to things-in-themselves while restricting it as a category of the understanding applicable to phenomena alone, discover nothing fatal to his theory. The inconsistency arises from a *laches* in the theory of causality.

For Spinoza, on the contrary, the distinction is implicit in the moral predicament because causality is immanent and genetic and under self-reference is bifurcated without division. Thus the causality of the self's eternal source as related to that of its emanational extancy is essentially legislative. Yet because emanation reduces immanency to transeuncy, and generation to endeavour, some discussion is necessary concerning the fashion in which rational genesis is related to durational endeavour, and *communitas* to *affectio*.

The distinction drawn by Kant between 'things-in-themselves' and 'phenomena' does not in that form appear, and could not have so appeared, in the philosophy of Spinoza; yet his distinction between the objects of *Imaginatio* and those of *Ratio* and *Scientia Intuitiva* is a version of the same type of distinction, and may be compared with it. For Kant the phenomenal world is essentially the world of science – indeed, of physics – of which the perceptual world is a naive, undeveloped, and partly illusory, form. The noumenal world, again, transcends the scientific and perceptual understanding, and is thus the object, not of science but of faith. We can *think* it after a fashion, and as moral agents we have experience of it, but we cannot have *knowledge* of it as we have knowledge of phenomena. For Spinoza, on the contrary, *entia in se* are the proper objects of adequate knowledge, and the objects of *Imaginatio* always in their degree unintelligible, though their unintelligibility is intelligible in terms of their eccentric derivation from *entia in se*. And so far from the perceptual world being more illusory than the world of physics, or of science, for Spinoza naive *Imaginatio* lies nearer to truth than its sophisticated elaboration and reduction under the *auxilia imaginationis*, time, measure, and number – or any of the intermediate stages of it that may pass as the 'common order of nature.' And though the distinction applies, like that of Kant, not only to 'things,' but also to the self (which in itself is an agent while making imaginational appearance as transeunt cause or conator in a world of transeunt causes or conators), unlike Kant, Spinoza understands that the transeuncy of the imaginational self is not complete, but that the durational self is not determined *ab extra* by 'natural causation' and reciprocity *sub specie temporis*, but by intrinsic *conatus sub specie durationis*. He is thus never faced by the insoluble riddle of Kantianism: how the man that is free as a member of the 'kingdom of ends' can be wholly determined as a part of phenomenal nature. Because he understands the 'phenomenal' as derived from the 'noumenal' he is able to relate the self-legislation of the moral agent with the self-determining *conatus* of durational life. In other

words, the Kantian account harmonizes with the traditional view of creation as complete in time and calling for supervenient repair, whereas that of Spinoza harmonizes with the view of creation as including, in de Burgh's phrase, "the whole scheme of the world's redemption," and thus, while eternally complete, durationally exponential.

The general character of Spinoza's deduction of the 'phenomenal' from the 'noumenal' has been sufficiently expounded: its main result is that durational determination is an abridged 'perspective' of the eternal, immanent, determination of the constitutive *communitas* of self and complement under the eccentric unilateral self-reference of the *creandum*. It thus appears in the 'common order of nature' as confused self-and-other-determination. Adequate causality is thus 'projected' on the 'axes' of a self relatively isolated from its complement as inadequate; the causality of the self is debilitated to *conatus*, or the endeavour to maintain and improve itself in a world of others, partly hostile and partly co-operative, which, as other, operates on it transeuntly, so that its self-determination is limited by their hostility, and realized by their sodality. Debilitated as it is, it is no mere cipher driven hither and thither under the coercion of alien 'forces,' a mere 'object' or 'event,' but an artist or craftsman self-limited by his material, but self-expressive through it.

Now, the self-legislation of the moral self is founded on its hierarchical constitution, with 'superior' elements exercising 'authority' over 'inferior' elements which are submissive thereto or rebellious therefrom. This Butlerian account, however, is no more than a *description* of the moral situation. It suffices to distinguish the self-legislation of morality both from the nominal self-determination of atomistic psychology, and from such abstract, formal, self-legislation as may be imputed to the species as determining the instance. The species 'legislates' for the instance, but there can be no question of 'submission' or 'rebellion' on the part of the instance: it is an instance only as conforming to the species, which, indeed, is posterior to it. The species is not the 'author' of the instance, and thus has no genuine 'authority' over it.

The moral authority of conscience can therefore be validated only by reference to the aetiology of the hierarchical constitution of the finite durational agent: the 'superior principle' as 'authoritative' must, in some sense, be the 'author' of the inferior elements, yet these inferior elements not its incorrigible products, but its defective expressions, and thus subject to it as norm. This is the peculiar intension of *moral* self-legislation; and the spinozistic *schema* is elaborated in response to the

metaphysical problem thus posed. The moral agent is neither a more or less remote 'instance' of a *summum genus*, nor a mere aggregate, mechanistic or 'organic,' of atomic elements,¹ but a microcosm of *Natura* in the very act of being created – involved in the dialectic of finite creation as it is 'telescoped out' in the plastic *speculum* of finite self-reference *as self*, and reference to God *as finite*. Thus it finds itself as engaged in a dialectical 'pilgrimage,' at once more or less alienated from its complement and source, and under obligation, through the *nisus* of microcosmicity, to seek the integrity of *communitas* and creatureliness. As a durational *emanatum* it strives, by reason of its extancy, to preserve itself in the face of hostility from, and to improve itself through co-operation with, its 'field'; and as moral, recognizes the authority of the principles inherent in its extancy, but partly occulted, and partly falsified – but only partly – by unilateral self-reference. Moral principle is the very redeeming 'moment' of finite creation, by obedience to which alone its finite dialectic can be completed. And though creation, as such, is 'beyond good and evil,' durational morality is momentous precisely because it is no mere stage-play of creation, but creation itself as emanently enacted in the finite *speculum*.

These are the principles that determine the durational moral life of the finite agent: it is not divorced from the eternal agency which is the source from which its endeavours emanate. That they are 'endeavours,' and not mere transitions or alternations, indicates their derivativity; that they are endeavours *after preservation and improvement*, indicates the depleted operation of their eternal source; that, in their measure, they are *moral*, indicates their unsevered connexion with inalienable – though abstracted – eternity. The moral law is the ordinance of man's eternal nature as *Deus quatenus finitus est*, from which his durational life is never rigidly separated, though by his wickedness he may be self-blinded to it. It is abstract and formal in proportion to his immersion in time; concrete and detailed in proportion to his enlightenment (or that of his venerated moral authority). For the 'worldling,' a standard that he can neither apply nor wholly ignore; for the man of 'good will' a continuant 'exertion' restraining the passions within the limits of his realized power, and remaining as a standard by which his achievements are judged; for the truly enlightened man, the essence of his *communitas* with all things, and with his source – the law by which he has knowledge "of himself, and of God, and of things." The completion of that enlightenment would wholly cancel "the shadow, Time," would "stab"

¹ See *Aeternitas*, p.115, note 1.

the emanent soul "broad awake." As 'moral ideal' it falls short of the perfect *communitas* of *Natura naturata*, which is 'beyond good and evil'; it may be defined as love to God and love to all things congruent with the utmost emendation of the self "*prout tempus et res postulat*"¹ – a definition lacking in precision of detail, but not of form, and gathering precision only in the actual development of the moral life. And that development is from barbarity to civility under sanctions, from civility to morality under obedience to obligations, or conscience, and from morality to perfection under enlightenment. In vulgar phrase, the 'natural' man, like Sancho Panza, "must scratch where it itches," the civilized man, like Kai Lung, "learns to itch where he can scratch," the morally obedient man, like Goethe's 'gentleman,' "refrains from scratching where he itches," and the enlightened man has so far ceased to itch.

¹ *Eth. II., xlix. Sch.*

CHAPTER IX

THE PRECONDITIONS OF THE MORAL LIFE

We have seen that the *Ethics* of Spinoza falls, in general, under his 'second kind of knowledge,' *Ratio*, so that the 'man' to which reference is made in *Parts II. to V.* is the *commune* 'man' rather than this or that man, though, of course, since the *commune* is that which is the 'common property' of all men, the principles deduced are applicable to this or that man. But the *commune* 'man' is not an existing individual,¹ universal or singular, but an *ens rationis*, whereas the moral life is lived by individual men. Thus we found it necessary in dealing with the *exemplar* by approximation to which men are morally good, and by recession from which morally bad, to identify this with the individual eternal nature of this or that man – his own true individual essence as *creatum* – for so only, on Spinoza's own principles, can moral goodness or badness be validly imputed. For the *emanatum* must be compared, not with some nature beyond his own individual scope, to the character of which he thus cannot attain, but with his own eternal and perfect essence.²

In thus interpreting the application of rational ethical principles to individual agency, we have so far taken but one step towards the full concretion of the moral predicament – confining our attention to this or that man as he stands related to his complement in *Natura* as alienated by his own unilateral self-reference, and capable of reconciliation (it would then seem) by his own self-emendation. We must now pass to a further emanational complication if the moral predicament is to be fully concreted; and this, indeed, is demanded by our original analysis of *Natura creata*. For in considering the 'process' of emanation as resulting from the unilateral self-reference of 'the microcosm' (palpably a *commune*) our account has been 'rational' (*i.e.* under the 'second kind of knowledge'), and in applying its issues to morality the self-reference

¹ *Eth. II., xxxvii.* I need hardly again point out that this does not mean, or imply, that the 'common properties' are abstract universals, or the '*commune*' a species.

² "It is especially to be noted that when I say that someone passes from a less to a greater perfection, and *vice versa*, I do not understand that from one essence or form he is changed to another (for a horse, *e.g.*, would be as much destroyed if it were changed into a man as if it were changed into an insect); but we conceive that his power of acting, in so far as it is understood by his own nature, is increased or diminished." (*Eth. IV, Praef.*)

has been considered as if it pertained to some particular individual – to this or to that man. But, of course, the emanation of the durational world is not attributable to the self-reference of any one individual man, nor can it be corrected by the emendation of any one man. The dialectic of finite creation is enacted in the creation of every individual agent or microcosm, so that the alienation of *emanata* issues not from one but from the distributive self-reference of all according to their status in the hierarchy of creation. The alienation is not unilateral but mutual. Similarly, the reconciliation of *emanata* is to be achieved, or approximated, not through the exemplary goodness of one, but only through the mutual exemplary approximation of all. The isolated ‘holy one’ cannot but be a ‘suffering servant of God’ by reason of the absence of mutuality.

In brief: all individual *creata* are in constitutive *communitas* in the *civitas Dei*; individual *emanata* suffer privation of this relation of perfect mutuality by reason of the multifarious eccentricities of their self-reference. Thus the defect is not unipolar but multipolar, as must also be its emendation. The fragmentation of the eternal *communitas* of *creata* involves the resulting *emanata* in *mutual* alienation not to be unilaterally corrected.

Thus each man as *emanatum* suffers both from his own self-reference and from that of his others, so that the application of rational moral principles to durational life is more highly complicated than *Ratio* would suggest. This or that man is no mere instance of the species ‘man’, but a member of a ‘society’ of singulars, each one of which is more or less similarly placed, and the aggregate of which is subject to varying relations of mutuality. Even if we could regard the ‘man’ of *Ratio* as a ‘concrete universal,’ and singular ‘men’ as its ‘individual embodiments’¹ abstractly and differentially expressing its universal nature, the mutual relations of these embodiments must also in some manner be ‘dictated’ by the concrete universal to the multiplicity of its embodiments together with their ‘epoch, place, and quantity.’ For ‘man’ exists only in ‘men,’ and the mutual relations of men are referrible to the nature of ‘man’ not less than the singular nature of each man. Men as *creata* hold, nay, are constituted by, relations of eternal *communitas*, each with all; men as *emanata* similarly hold, and are partially constituted by, relations of defected *communitas*, of co-operation and hostility, each with other; and ethical emendation is thus at once an individual and a ‘social’ function: for the emendation of any one individual man, however com-

¹ See Bosanquet, *Logic*, I, p.227.

plete, cannot transform *Natura emanata* into *Natura creata*. In 'this present life' morality must be "*prout tempus et res postulat*"¹ – human relations must fall short of perfect *communitas* even for the man of unalloyed 'good will.'

It would certainly not be true to say that Spinoza neglected this final complication and concretion of rational moral principle. There is much, especially in *Ethices IV.*, and in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and *Tractatus Politicus*, to show that he was well aware of its importance. It is, indeed, the foundation of his political theory, and is not *merely* implicit even in the account which he gives in the *Ethics* of the man who lives "according to the guidance of reason."

This or that man, then, is not durationally confronted with a 'field' of endeavour either merely 'given' or wholly emanating under the privation of his own self-reference; and his problem is thus neither that of accommodating himself to the other as 'fact,' partly hostile and partly co-operative, nor merely that of emending himself so as to achieve harmony with his other by insight into its true nature unoccluded by his own defect. It is that of combining these efforts in the most effective way. In so far as distributive self-reference results in mutual alienation the relations of finite *emanata* are those of mutual hostility; for each seeks his own preservation and profit under the universally valid 'law of nature,' *viz.* the essential actualization of potency, however defective and thus corrigible it may be, because as positive potency it is divinely derived. And in so far as, by reason of the varied hierarchical status of individuals in *Natura*, it fails wholly to exclude their mutual help, their moral relations are emanational foreshadowings of eternal *communitas*; for each, under the equally universal 'moral law,' seeks self-perfecting relation with its other as 'tool' or as 'medium,' according to status.²

Now, durational human life is a vast complication of activities or endeavours in which these hostilities and alliances are met or exploited; and it can best be reduced to tolerably rational order by distinguishing various kinds of 'state' or condition in which men may be supposed to live, and in part with more or less confusion of 'states' do live, according as they are conceived as mainly hostile one to another, or variously allied in action. For our present purpose it will, perhaps be sufficient

¹ *Eth. II., xlix. Sch.*

² For moral principle has not only *proper* application within human relationships, but also modified and derivative application to all forms of active relation: to that of the artist or craftsman with his tools and material, of the farmer with his land, the jockey with his horse, the engineer with his machine, and so on. The best can only be got out of the other by recognition of, and adequate submission to, its inmost nature.

to consider the 'state of nature,' the state of civility, and the moral state – not as being exhaustive, and certainly not as being exclusive of one another or of intermediate states which may have been historically prevalent in various times and places, but as affording sufficient scope for the clarification of issues.¹

(i) THE 'STATE OF NATURE'

Spinoza's contemporaries and earlier successors were apt to suppose that prior to the formation of civil States man existed in a state of universal hostility, and that it was upon this that civility was artificially imposed. Hobbes is the most notable example, and it is, perhaps, worth noting that although Spinoza has often been regarded as a political hobbist, with or without a difference, he has very little to say about this 'state of nature,' and that that little has not much in common with Hobbes. True, he writes at length about the 'Law of Nature' or 'Natural Right,' but this according to him has universal application, and is not confined to a supposed 'state of nature.' It is an expression, as has been said, of the nature of agency (which defines existence) as the actualization of potency, and is thus fundamental to all being whatsoever. Thus 'Civil Law' or 'Civil Right' is a special branch or expression of Natural Law or Right as it has application to man in a state of civility – nay, the Moral Law itself is but the supreme expression *sub specie durationis* of the Law of Nature.

It is now commonly, and rightly, held that mankind has never at any epoch or place lived in such a state of unbridled and universal individual hostility² – though mainly on historical, physiological, and sociological grounds. Indeed, to go no further, it is sufficiently plain that the conditions of human birth and early nurture must definitely exclude the possibility of such a state, whatever may be said of adult human life. For the spinozist, however, it is excluded on metaphysical

¹ Other 'states' which may be named are the gregarious and the social states. In the former individual selfhood is subordinated to that of a *grex* which thus operates as a single fluid animal with the individuals as separate locomotory 'cells.' By the 'social state' I mean that of distinct individuals living in a more or less complicated order of friendliness and occasional hostility sufficient to ensure a working sodality without ordered civil government. Collingwood has reminded us that 'sociality' existed under the 'customary law' of ancient communities in which 'civility' was inchoate – in the condition represented "in the Iceland of the sagas, where men were to be found who knew, and would tell an inquirer, what the law was, but where there was no person or class of persons professionally charged with the business of enforcing it; where most men for the most part obeyed it ...; but where the only way of enforcing it was for men who wanted it obeyed to get together and smash a man notoriously given to breaking it" (*The New Leviathan*, 28. 79.)

² Even beasts live in no such state of universal individual hostility.

grounds. For as we have seen, the self-referent 'moment' of the dialectic of finite creation issues in a *Natura emanata*, durationally continuant, and composed of finite conators which, according to their hierarchical status are more or less co-operant with, and less or more hostile to, one another. Thus the hobbesian 'state of nature' is no more than an 'ideal limit' to which the very lowest grades of being asymptotically approach under self-reference (just as the temporal instant is the 'ideal limit' to which their duration approximates, and the impotence imputed to mere 'events,' that to which their power approaches), and is thus chimerical, since to pass to the 'ideal limit' would be to pass to non-being. The life of the *emanatum simplicissimum* is not "nasty, brutish, and short" but empty, weak, and momentary, and the condition or 'state of nature' imputed by Hobbes to primitive man metaphysically unacceptable.

If, then, we are to speak of a spinozistic 'state of nature' (as we must), it will have to be in terms less extreme: as a condition lacking *civic* order, indeed, but not wholly devoid of *natural* order or concurrence. Nor need this concurrence be limited to the agreement on which even hostility must be founded (for things utterly disparate cannot conflict); for if some are by nature masterful, others will be submissive, individual isolation being thus variously qualified, and mutual hostility narrowed to group-hostility – but not thereby rendered less savage. This is a condition in which each individual pursues his own advantage exclusively, but according to his own natural disposition, masterful or submissive, in relation to this or that other with which he is brought into relation. Thus, parents will guide and protect their offspring, the warrior will use and defend the women he has captured, the chief will lead and direct his tribe as 'members' of a single 'body' subjected to the 'head' – children, wives, and tribesmen being taken as *extensions* of the parent, the warrior, the chief; not human beings with common rights. Here there is no rational consideration, no obligation to obedience to authority, customary or civic or religious; but only the reciprocal assumption of natural possession and being naturally possessed. Offspring, wives, and tribesmen are taken (let us say) as the 'social property' of parents, warriors, and chief.¹

In such a state actions cannot be called 'sinful' or 'criminal' as in the civic state, for all are right under the Law of Nature *in so far as* they actualize the potency of the self. But *only so far*, for though all means

¹ This account of man as 'higher ape,' of course goes beyond anything to be found in the text of Spinoza.

may be used for self-preservation, failure to use available means in the most effective way through sloth, or dissipation, would be a sin against the self. "In the state of nature there is no sin, or if anyone sins he sins against himself, and not against another."¹ And though it is true that "a man ignorant and weak in mind is no more bound by the Law of Nature to order his life wisely, than a sick man is bound to be sound in body,"² even in the 'state of nature' the moral law, if only under the cloud of *pseuditas*, has its narrowly restricted place and validity, since there will be men not so utterly ignorant and impotent as not to be able to choose between less effective but more pleasant ways of self-preservation, and ways more effective but less congenial, and thus to be either 'good' or 'bad' as barbarians.³

The pre-civil, or 'natural,' state of man, therefore, is neither that of Adam in Eden, having all things consonant with his desires, and under no demand or urge to preserve and to improve himself; nor that of the hobbesian 'state of nature' – a war of all against all, with life in consequence "nasty, brutish, and short," – but rather one that, though marked by general mutual hostility, is nevertheless tempered by the limited natural individual concurrence that such extensions of individual selfhood as the family, the household, and the tribe involve – the parent, the master, and the chief being, as it were, the '*persona*' of the incorporation. And under favourable conditions of territory and sustenance, such a 'state of nature' might endure for a long time, and though crude and uncultivated, life in it would not necessarily be either "nasty" or "brutish" in any sense in excess of the brutishness of the highest among the apes.⁴

Nevertheless, such a condition affords but negligible scope for the development of morality and culture; on the contrary, as offspring mature, and families develop into tribes which extend and occupy disputed territory, while *pari passu* submissive 'social property' develops into more or less independent strength, and thus incipient hostility *inter se* and against the family and tribal '*persona*,' it becomes increasingly

¹ *Tract. Polit.*, ii., 18

² *Loc. cit.*

³ Sin against individuals forming the 'social property' of an agent would be involved in sin against himself, and not otherwise distinguishable. For the concurrences of the 'state of nature' are not 'social' in the sense applied by Collingwood to pre-civil societies. See above p. 179 note 1).

⁴ This would not, perhaps, be true of a 'state of nature' resulting from the breakdown of the civic State through the preponderance of its subjects adhering to the 'state of nature' and not brought to submission. Hobbes was, perhaps, envisaging such a calamity. Here not 'nature,' but wickedness might be so involved as to degrade men below the level of the higher apes. Again, a hobbesian 'state of nature' is more credible as existing between civic States than among primitive individuals. See below, pp. 188–9.

difficult for individuals and corporate bodies to guard against oppression, or even to maintain their existence. "It follows hence that so long as the Natural Right of man is determined by the power of every individual, and belongs to every one, so long it is insignificant, but is a matter of opinion rather than actual, seeing that no security can be obtained for it. And it is certain that each has so much the less power, and consequently so much the less right, as he has greater cause for fear. Add to this that men can hardly support life, and cultivate their minds, without mutual aid. Thus we conclude that Natural Right, which is proper to all men, can hardly be conceived except where men have common laws, and can at once legally claim the lands which they are able to occupy and cultivate, defend themselves and repel all violence, and live according to the common judgement of all."¹

In spite of some of its *prima facie* suggestions, we must be careful not to read more into this statement than it fairly imports. There is no denial of the actuality of the 'state of nature' in which, prior to civilization, individuals exist by Natural Power which is their Natural Right. What is denied is that in such a state this Natural Power has the full actuality that is proper to it – for it is largely dissipated by the contingencies of mutual hostility, in no way offset by *free* co-operation, and is thus, though not *fictitious*, yet "a matter of *opinion*,"² *i.e.* no one can count upon it with tolerable certainty. Yet, of course, the remedy is already *latent* even in such a condition, in the solidarity of the family and tribe: latent, but in no degree *actual*, since the submissiveness of the offspring and the mass, equally with the masterfulness of the father and the chief, are but 'natural' dispositions, not transferable or subject to adjustment for the sake of greater certainty in the actualization of individual and corporate Natural Power and Natural Right. It is by the epigenetic development and extension of the solidarity of 'social property' that what is merely latent springs into actuality, as the bondage of solidarity is moderated towards mutuality of relation. In this transition mastery and submission remain, but the mastery comes to belong, not to this or that individual merely by reason of 'natural' status, but to men as presenting and seeking to secure a common way of life by which the actuality of Natural Power and Right is enhanced for all; and the submission to such as recognize the advantages of this common way

¹ *Tract. Polit.*, ii., 15.

² 'Opinion' is another name for '*imaginatio*' (*Eth. II, xl, Sch. ii*), and is thus not necessarily fictitious.

of life, or are by 'natural' disposition prepared to tolerate it. And such a common way of life is the state of civility (or pseudo-civility where it is not fully developed); and it is important to notice, first, that it can be maintained only in so far as those who seek masterfully to oppose it can be brought to submission; and second, that 'civic' power and right are but *canalizations* of 'natural' power and right, not as such *emendations* of it.¹ Civility produces security for individuals and their associations in the pursuit of self-preservation and profit, and this is its original virtue, though not, as we shall see, its final benefit for human life. Its emergence is *possible* because mutual hostility is itself patterned on the surviving *communitas* under self-reference of men by reason of man's status in the hierarchy of *Natura*;² it is *actualized* in so far as mutual relations among associated men, once the solidarity of 'natural' relation is, by natural growth, weakened (and further pulverization, in the absence of moral wickedness, rendered impossible by the *nisus* of creation in the *emanata*), require the establishment of a common way of life. Civility by facilitating the adequate actualization of Natural Power opens the way to, though it does not advance, human salvation, by the formal neutralization of 'original sin.'

(ii) THE CIVIC STATE

No part of the doctrine of Spinoza has received more vigorous condemnation in recent times than his political theory. It was for long conceived to be more or less identical with that of Hobbes, but according to A. E. Taylor³ (following Laird) "it is tainted by a *wickedness* from which Hobbes ... is entirely free. ... Spinoza has adopted ... one of the most abominable principles of the worst kind of ecclesiastic (*viz. nulla fides haeretico praestanda*) in its full extent, and enlarged its scope by making it apply to any man whose political allegiance is other than my own." He has "supplied the 'totalitarian State' with the standing defence of its fanatical particularism." These are strange words to use of "the ardent defender of the 'liberty of prophesying,'" the apologist for the "broadest toleration," who would confine political power strictly to the properly political sphere – as Taylor himself evidently felt: though he was pleased to style the paradox "an entertaining irony of history."

¹ And it is this that distinguishes the 'civic,' or 'common law,' the recognition of which is involved in canalization, from the 'moral law,' the recognition of which is involved in emendation.

² For things which have nothing in common cannot oppose each other. (*Eth. IV., xxix.*)

³ 'Some Inconsistencies in Spinozism.' (*Mind, XLVI. N.S.*, pp. 293-295).

But since the entertainment depends upon the historicity, it will be well to examine the latter before indulging in the former.

We have seen that the natural state of man as unemended *emanatum*, though not a hobbesian war of all against all, is one in which every man seeks to be 'a law unto himself,' *i.e.* to be without 'law.' The circumstances of human birth and early nurture, the development of the tribe from the family, *etc.* result from the natural submission of some individuals, under some conditions, to others (finding therein their greatest profit), so that even the 'state of nature' involves a certain 'pseudo-sociality' without civility or even pseudo-civility. True 'sociality,' however, requires a re-orientation of individual respect from unilateral self-reference towards reference to God – or at least to multilateral self-and-other reference, *i.e.* a recognition of a common law conserving the natural rights of many according to their native potencies. It is the growth of this recognition that constitutes civilization, and its attainment that constitutes civility. The incidence of this recognition, concomitant with the epigenetic development of 'social property.'¹ rather than any pre-historical 'compact' between individuals, leads first to a state of pseudo-civility more or less similar to that which Collingwood describes,² and subsequently to the formation of fledged civic States of various forms according to the prevalent characteristics of powerful men among their peoples. Pseudo-civility, however, belongs to the process of *civilization*, and, of course, finds no place in Spinoza's political doctrine.³ What we have to consider, or at least to touch upon in the space at our disposal, is the essential 'civic State' – its ground, nature, governing principles, limitations, and efficacy in canalizing and stabilizing the natural powers and rights of men as *emanata*, and thus opening the way to human liberation.

Laird has described political organization as a 'device,'⁴ thus *suggesting* that it is an artificial contrivance of human ingenuity; and though no one now supposes that the State is the result of any formal 'compact' among men, the term 'device' may be defended on the ground that States are posterior to individuals, not individuals to States – and are certainly not self-emanated from the *civitas Dei*.⁵ The civic State is a

¹ The mastery of the family or tribal '*persona*,' and the submission of his 'social property,' constitute no 'pseudo-civility.'

² See above, p. 179, note 1.

³ Though the theocratic State of the Israelites, considered in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, is in some ways comparable.

⁴ See, *The Device of Government, An Essay on Civil Polity*, with the defence of the description in Ch. I.

⁵ This stoic and augustinian phrase, which I find convenient, is also possibly misleading

natural device, *i.e.* natural to *emanational* man (not issuing from a “pattern laid up in heaven” – where civility would be wholly otiose), by which, governed as men are alternatively by ‘passions’ and rational ‘exertions’ (but mainly, in the ‘state of nature,’ by the former), are brought to live so far in accordance with reason as to refrain from mutual destruction, and thus to realize and enjoy their natural rights.¹ Metaphysically, it is not to be conceived as an abstract, minimal, expression of the constitutive *communitas* of *Natura creata*, but as the durationally extended inchoation of the second ‘moment’ of the dialectic of finite creation, the durational re-orientation of individual selves towards mutuality emending their *distributive* self-reference.²

Now, the civic State is essentially an emanational organization, and civility a condition of the lives of *emanata*. Further, emanation issues from individual self-reference, so that civility and the civic State must be explicated, not as a privation of the *civitas Dei*, but as a liberating canalization of the natural powers of emanational individuals. For “Nature creates individuals, not peoples,”³ and emanation can be imputed to *individual* self-reference alone. Civic States, therefore, are essentially emanational canalizations of individual powers and rights, not corporate emanations of *Natura creata*. “If men were so constituted by nature that they desired nothing but what is required by true reason,” *i.e.* if they were by nature ‘civil,’ not blindly egocentric, “society would plainly need no laws; it would suffice to teach true moral doctrines; men would freely act in accordance with their true interests.”⁴ The civic State is not *perfected* in the *civitas Dei*, but *nullified*.⁵ Emanational approach to

in this part of my book. The implication of ‘*civitas*’ must be discounted, since in *Natura creata* nothing analogous to civility is to be found. Nor, of course, anything analogous to morality – though this agreement in absence in no way implies that civility is a form of morality.

¹ Thus the aristotelian view of man as a ‘political animal’ is not wholly remote from the spinozistic conception of the *emanatum* as latently civil. For though the State is emanational, it derives from individuals; and the derivation is no mere afterthought, for by it alone is individual natural right adequately actualized by formal canalization: “If the Scholastics wished to call man a social animal because in the ‘state of nature’ men can hardly be a law unto themselves, I have nothing to say against them” (*Tract. Polit., ii., 15*).

² See below, pp. 199–201.

³ *Tract. Theo.-Pol., xvii.*

⁴ *Tract. Theo.-Pol., v. Cf. Eth. IV., xxxvii. Sch.ii.* To *creata*, with their duly subordinated egocentricity, even ‘true moral doctrines’ would not have to be taught. Spinoza is here speaking as a political philosopher, not as a metaphysician.

⁵ It is thus that the political theory of Spinoza is at once more essentially and exclusively ‘political’ than later theories developed under the impulse and influence of idealistic and humanistic conceptions: it is concerned with the radical essence of political order. Thus, though he notes the advantages enjoyed under the State by division of labour and mental cultivation, positively economic and cultural developments which, in our own time at least, have become more prominent as government (which is apt to be taken for granted) has become less, are beyond the scope of political philosophy as conceived by him. He shows no disposition to assimilate the civic State with the *civitas Dei* by conceiving all forms of sociality

the *civitas Dei* begins on the basis of civility; the approach itself is by moral and cultural individual emendation, fortified by moral and cultural association.

Civilization, then, consists in the movement from the contingently confused hostility of the 'state of nature' by the canalization of individual powers recognized as profitably aggregated – recognition concomitant with the epigenetic development of 'social property.' But this canalization is necessarily only partial, for all cannot be expected, with one accord, to recognize the partial agreement of their natural rights with those of hostile others, and dissentients must be induced to act conformably by means of sanctions sufficient to this end, and imposed by the united will and power of assentients. And though for the assentients there thus accrues an increase of liberty, for the dissentients there is no loss of such liberty as *may be available in the 'state of nature.'*

The civic State, therefore, not negates but canalizes the natural rights of individuals, by so conditioning human relations as that all, though seeking their own profit, act in harmony one with another. The observance of a common law is made agreeable with the passions – the hopes and fears – of the uncivil, as well as with the rational 'exertions' of the civil. Civilization is thus a rationalizing process, and though no

under its *aegis* as necessarily involved in its constitution. It is a canalization of the 'state of nature,' a means by which natural power and right are liberated, rather than a positive, though defective, expression of *Natura creata*. In the *civitas Dei* the distinction of State and society is superseded; in emanational life it is crucial; for the civic State expresses no more than the fundamental reorientation of distributive individual self-reference towards reference to God, and has no *essential* further part in the development, thus made possible, of an increasingly perfect human life for its citizens. But this does not mean that the function of the State is purely negative, for it is the ground of all individual and social liberty under the emanational conditions of human life. Its function is positive, *viz.* to negate the negation involved in self-reference. It thus opens the gateway to liberty; but the realization and development of that liberty remains the work of moral and cultural potency and right within the rampart thus established by natural power and right. For Spinoza the civic State, to use the phrase of A. D. Lindsay (*The International Crisis*, pp. 96–97) is "the indispensable rampart within which alone the life of the community can develop." He cites this as being "the traditional English view," but it is the view of most modern writers before the sentimental naturalism of Rousseau (which infected the idealistic doctrine) took possession of the field. Recent writers it is true have distinguished 'State' and 'Society,' and might therefore have been expected to distinguish the radical essence of political order from the positive moral, cultural, and economic ends of social order. But in so far as they have done so, the importance of the distinction has been further concealed by a reversal of the proper order of subordination. As Lindsay says: "The non-political life of Society somehow comes first in our consideration"; "it is the real life of the community" (*loc. cit.*). I should say, on the contrary, that the 'indispensable rampart' of the life of the community, ought not to come second under *philosophical* consideration, however natural it may be for the ordinary citizen in a settled State that more or less unobtrusively fulfils its radical functions, to think more of his other interests than of that without which all would be lost. But, of course, with disbelief in 'original sin' there naturally goes insensibility to the bases of deliverance therefrom. But what is the use of political philosophy if the most fundamental lessons cannot be derived from it, but must be thrust home by bitter experience?

civic State is fully rational, such as it is it is the *conditio sine qua non* of individual and social emendation and cultivation. Other societies of individuals exist for the pursuit of cultural, economic, and moral ends; *it* exists as the essential basis upon which alone they can arise and endure. It is requisite, not because *all* men are by nature, at all times, incorrigibly hostile (for so it could never have arisen), but because at all times, and in all places, and in all relations, *some* men are hostile barbarians – or perhaps because *most* men are sometimes hostile barbarians. If men were never led by passion contrary to the dictates of reason, the civic State would be otiose – for such ‘men’ would be, not unemended *emanata*, but civil, and salvable, and in the end *creata* in the eternal *communitas* of *Natura creata*.

It follows that, as with the individual, the civic right of the State lies in its power.¹ Yet this is not to say that all the powers which this or that State may arrogate to itself, and all the laws which it may seek to enforce upon its subjects, are in accordance with its civic right. For to attempt to do that which seems to lie within its power, but does not, does not lie within the *civic* right of the State. Only by resort to uncivil natural power can such actions be possible; and by this resort the State so far destroys itself. States, like individuals, may err, and do err in so far as their laws do not make for a common harmonious life among their citizens, *i.e.* are not *in accordance with the dictates of reason under the conditions set by the natures of the individuals involved*.² For the laws may be set too high or too low for the State to be able to maintain its control over the masses, or over the few strong enough to resist. And since it is in this control that its power is exerted, and its right is its power, it is but an analytical judgement that affirms that the State, *qua* State, has absolute civic power and right. And the limitations of the right of *this or that* State, *quatenus* State, lie in its defects as a ‘State.’ Broadly speaking, every people gets the degree of civility that it deserves, and none, therefore, perfect civility under incorrigibly rational laws; nevertheless, the State as the organ of civility congruent with the natures of the individuals which it organizes, if it is to fulfil its functions at all, must

¹ The manner, here adumbrated, in which the identification of ‘power’ and ‘right’ is to be discerned, is more fully expounded in my contribution (‘Ueber das vermeintlich Unmoralische von Spinozas politischer Theorie’) to S. Hessing’s *Spinoza 300 Jahre Ewigkeit*, pp. 68–72.

² For the State, like the individual in the ‘state of nature,’ can ‘sin against itself,’ and does so when *either* the ruler rules contrary to the wellbeing of the State, *or* the subjects fail to bring pressure *in accordance with the constitution* for reform of the law in the interest of the State. So far, neither the civic State nor the ‘state of nature’ are wholly and utterly pre-moral. Both are pseudo-moral. See below, p. 195, note 5. Spinoza emphasizes the danger to the State of disloyal and disgruntled subjects; it is no less necessary to emphasize the value to the State of subjects loyal and public-spirited.

be absolute in the exercise of its governmental power. For its power is not supervenient upon that of the individuals subject to it, but is derived from them in so far as they are loyal to it, though in relation to the disloyal it appears as supervenient, with force undiminished by the power with which their disloyalty is corroborated. Yet even with the disloyal the power of the State is not truly supervenient since it does but canalize the 'state of nature.' All that weakens its control over dissentients lessens its right, whether issuing from the subjects, or from the incongruence of its laws with the civility of the subjects from which it derives its power.

So far our attention has mainly been confined to the internal nature of the civic State, and the relations of government and subjects. Something must next be said about the relations holding between States. In the absence of supranational authority and sanction these are broadly analogous with those of individuals in the 'state of nature.'¹ In the seventeenth century this was very largely the actual situation; but today the civility of States corresponds broadly with Collingwood's pre-civil condition², with international 'law,' like the 'customary law,' being supported by the armed might of States strong and civil enough to threaten and if necessary to take the risk of making war on barbarian States infringing it. True State-civility would require orbital, or at least continental, government.³ It follows that just as in the individual 'state of nature' there can be no 'sin,' save against the self, so in that of States mutual faith is a dream save in so far as it remains in the interest of the independent States. Treaties are made between States, not their subjects as individuals; and Spinoza's teaching is that in the absence of State-civility under the security of supranational power (derived from loyal States, and thus ultimately from individuals) such treaties are valid only so long as they subserve the interest of all parties.⁴ In the international 'state of nature' international morality concerns only the avoidance of 'sin' against the self, for in the absence of civic order 'sin'

¹ But because States are relatively few in number, widely dispersed, and inwardly organized, their 'state of nature' can be more enduring even than that of individuals with their 'social property.'

² See above, pp. 179, note 1, 181, note 3, 184.

³ These topics are more fully discussed in my paper: 'World-Politics and the Philosopher' (*Proc. Arist. Soc.* 1942-43, N.S. XLIII, pp. 79-110).

⁴ It is on this doctrine, among others, that the charge of 'wickedness' has been levelled against Spinoza's political teaching (See above, p. 183). But it does not (as Taylor seems to suppose) imply that moral relations must be denied between subjects of independent States; for in so far as both States are civil, and not actually at war, their subjects will certainly be morally related. As well might we say that as subjects of independent States they cannot trade together, or cultivate the arts. Civility is but the *pre-condition* of morality and culture and commerce, which are thus not confined within its bounds conceived as national.

of one State against another is impossible. Only under an international civic, or pseudo-civic, order can international morality be developed; and for this it is not sufficient to make treaties without enforceable (and if necessary enforced) sanctions. A treaty that is not, naturally or artificially (*i.e.* by way of sanctions), in the interest of both parties is in truth a mere "scrap of paper." But how far such a doctrine is from the "abominable principle" (so described by Taylor): *nulla fides haeretico praestanda* need hardly be emphasized. To suppose that there can be a developed morality or immorality prior to the foundation of civility or at least pseudo-civility is to suppose that 'original sin' (*i.e.* distributive unilateral self-reference) is a myth, and that the good life as we know it owes nothing vital to the 'rampart' that civility provides.¹

(a) *The Civic State as Absolute*

We return, then, to the consideration of the civic State. This, I have said, is *defined* as absolute in power, *i.e.* in right, and this or that State is defective as a State in so far as it lacks such absolute power or right. The laws of the State, to this end, must be in accordance with the dictates of reason, not in the abstract, but *under the conditions set by the natures of the individuals involved*. How, then, can a State so conditioned be absolute in power and right? Spinoza's broad reply is that "the universal right of the sovereign power ... agrees not a little with practice; and though practice may be so arranged as to conform to it more and more, yet it must always remain in many respects merely theoretical." "No one can ever so utterly transfer his power to another, and consequently his right, as to cease to be a man; nor can there ever be a power so sovereign that it can carry out everything that it wishes. It will always be vain to command a subject to hate what he believes to be beneficial to him, or to love what brings him loss, or not to be offended by insults, or not to wish to be free from fear, or a hundred other things of this sort, which necessarily follow from human nature."² The question is: what

¹ Spinoza himself goes rather further: not only are promises made in a 'state of nature' not binding, but even in the civic state the sanctity of a promise depends upon the conditions under which it is given, and is to be kept: "Neither reason nor Scripture teach a man to keep his word in every case. For if I have promised a man *e.g.* to keep safe a sum of money which he has secretly deposited with me, I am not bound to keep my word from the time that I know, or believe, the money to have been stolen, but I shall act more rightly in endeavouring to restore it to its owners. So likewise, if the supreme authority has promised another to do something, which subsequent occasion or reason shows, or seems to show, is contrary to the welfare of its subjects, it is certainly bound to break its word" (*Tract. Polit.*, iii., 17). The "good faith inculcated by sound reason and religion" is in neither case made void, however; on the contrary, it is manifested by the breach – like the "quality of mercy" the "quality" of good faith "is not strained," and the supreme authority owes faith first of all to its subjects.

² *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xvii.

is the sphere within which the State must maintain absolute right, and thus fulfil its purpose, and to what limitations must this sphere be subject if the absolute right is to be more than “merely theoretical.”

As to its sphere, we have already seen that, *qua* civic State, its function is not to *advance* moral, cultural, and economic ends, but to provide the rampart of security within which these activities may be pursued.¹ But even so, we have also seen that the laws of the State are not dictates of pure reason, but of reason as accommodated to the prevalent level of human nature among the individuals subjected thereto. And it may well be that where great inequality of capacity is found among considerable portions of the citizenry, further accommodation will be requisite. Only with these limitations and accommodations can the absolute power and right of the State be *practical*. *With* these, however, the State cannot afford to yield one jot of its power if it is not to suffer serious set-back on the road to ruin. For as it fails to fulfil its function it suffers destruction – seeing that it has no true being of its own, deriving all its power (and therefore its existence) from loyal individuals. It is no emanation of the *civitas Dei* (which cannot thus be emanated), but only the potent re-orientation of individual self-reference towards reference to God by recognition of the effective harmony of the natural rights of many.

These limitations and accommodations, therefore, are intrinsic to the nature of the civic State, which has existence only as practical. As ‘merely theoretical,’ unlike the *civitas Dei*, it is nothing. And thus the absolute power and right of the State suffers no qualification with respect to its subjects² so long as it is restrained within these limitations and accommodations. But beyond them it has neither power nor therefore right. If it seeks to govern what is beyond its sphere, or if its laws are set too high or too low, so as to be incongruent with the prevalent natures of its subjects, it cannot but weaken itself, and in the end be destroyed. Granted, the State has a certain right to exceed its proper bounds, seeing that it has the power, but this power is not *civic* power but the uncivic, natural, power to weaken itself by such practices, so that the distinction which Spinoza incidentally makes between the

¹ It is thus that under civility men seek to “live according to the common judgement of all” (*Tract. Polit.*, ii, 15), *i.e.* under the authority of a ‘common law’, but under morality each is subject to the dictates of his *exemplar* (see above, p. 140), *i.e.* under the authority of his own eternal nature as *creatum*, qualified by the requirements of his ‘field’ (see below, chapter X.).

² With respect to other States, of course, its power and right are limited by their power and right so far as they are brought into relation. I will add that the accommodations with respect to the subjects will differ in degree according to the type of State: monarchical, aristocratic, democratic, *etc.* – being least with the democratic and greatest with the tyrannical. The question being: how great is the danger of sedition?

“strict rights” of the State and its “proper course of action”¹ comes to nothing more than the distinction between the “merely theoretical” rights of a fictitious State and the “practical” rights of an existing State.

Spinoza commends the “wise words” of Ferdinand of Castile (wondering at their utterance by one “accustomed to command not free men but slaves”) that “his kingdom would be stable so long as its safety was as much to the subjects’ as to the king’s interest, so that neither the king should outweigh the subjects, nor yet the subjects the king”;² and again and again he emphasizes the dangers faced by a badly governed State from its own subjects. “Necessity is often the mother of invention, but she has never yet succeeded in framing a dominion that was in less danger from its own citizens than from open enemies, or whose rulers did not fear the latter less than the former.”³ Many similar statements emphasizing the necessity of conciliating the subjects may be culled from the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, especially from *chapters xvi.* and *xvii.*, as well as from the *Tractatus Politicus*. The interference of the government in individual and social activities must thus be limited by what the subjects will tolerate for the sake of security, but these are limitations, not *of* the State but *proper* to the State: they are limitations *of* the State only where the State is in some way bad because its laws are set too high or too low in respect of its citizens. For “the firmest dominion belongs to the sovereign who has most influence over the minds of his subjects.”⁴ This is the essential weakness of the tyrant who, though he is greatly feared, yet is not obeyed by his subjects “with their whole hearts.” Indeed, “seditions, wars, and contempt and breach of the laws are not so much to be imputed to the wickedness of the subjects as to the bad state of the dominion.”⁵ For the individual does not yield up his whole natural right in becoming a citizen, he cedes, or contracts

¹ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, *xx.*

² *Tract. Polit.*, *vii.*, 30.

³ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, *xvii.* Perhaps it will be asked: what is the significance of the State’s ‘absolute power’ if the stability of the State depends on a *balance* of power between government and subjects? The reply is that the *functions* of government and subject are fundamentally distinct: to command and to obey. Thus the subject has no right to decide what is just or unjust; the decision rests with the ruler, and the subject must execute the commands “however unfair he may think them” (*Tract. Pol.*, *iii.*, 5). “Contracts or laws whereby the multitude transfers its right to one council or man should without doubt be broken when it is expedient for the general welfare to do so. But to decide this point ... is within the right of no one but of him who holds dominion.” (*Tract. Pol.*, *iv.*, 6). For he alone is not bound by them, *i.e. qua* ruler. But if the laws are such as to turn fear to indignation, the State is in extreme danger of dissolution. Thus reason counsels the private citizen not even to save his life at the expense of infidelity to the laws (*Eth. IV.*, *lxxii. Sch.*) – for in this matter Spinoza is as severe a mentor as Socrates in the *Apology*.

⁴ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, *xvii.*

⁵ *Tract. Pol.*, *v.*, 2.

out, part of it, but retains a part absolutely. Any attempt by the State therefore, to control its citizens beyond its due measure, so as to arouse "the indignation of the majority," produces "great danger" to itself, with a congruent diminution of its power or right, and in the limit civic jurisdiction gives place to the "awful arbitrament of war."

(b) The Limitations of the Civic State

When we speak, then, of the limitations of the civic State as such, it is not implied that its power, its potency-in-act, and right with respect to its subjects is not absolute, but that it must be defined by its proper functions alone, which are so limited. It has no other ground of existence. Without these limitations the State would be "*mere theoretica*," nowhere capable of existing among men, and thus not to be conceived as 'the State' *par excellence* which must be moderated to meet the defects of men. The actual State is *essentially* so limited in scope, and by accommodation to the individuals from the loyal among which all its power and right are derived, and which exist independently of it; and in so far as a State attains to this real, and theoretical, perfection, by approximation to which alone it is capable of actually performing the functions of a State, its power and right with respect to its subjects are absolute.

The characteristic limitations of a theoretically perfect State to which Spinoza makes reference may broadly be classed under three heads: (1) Its decrees must be capable of fulfilment, (2) they must not endanger its own existence, and (3) they must not be such as to weaken its authority. States are imperfect, let us say, in so far as they command what is *impossible*, what is *unsafe*, or what is *inadvisable*. Let it suffice to illustrate these heads of essential limitation of the civic State from Spinoza's own discussions.

(1) What is Impossible. "The most tyrannical governments are those which make crimes of opinions, for everyone has an inalienable right over his own thoughts."¹ By no reward or threat is it possible (*e.g.*) to make a man believe what is contrary to his reason. Nor can a man be commanded to feel this or that *affectus* with respect to this or that thing or person (though he may be *led* to do so). Though a State may be able to treat those who think or feel in ways contrary to what it takes to be its interest, as enemies – just as it can "rule in the most violent manner,

¹ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xviii.

and put citizens to death for very trivial crimes, but no one supposes that it can do this with the approval of sound political judgement. Indeed, inasmuch as such things cannot be done without extreme peril to itself, we may even deny that it has the absolute power to do them, or consequently the absolute right; for the right of the sovereign is limited by his power."¹ The 'impossibility,' of course, concerns not the attempt to control thought and feeling, but the ability to carry it out; and it is absence of the latter that evinces the impotence of the State.

Further, there are deeds "so abhorrent to human nature, that they are regarded by men as worse than any other evil that may befall them: as that a man should be witness against himself, or torture himself, or kill his parents, or not strive to avoid death, and the like; to which no one can be induced by rewards or threats."² To attempt to command such deeds is a sort of madness, "for what but an imbecility would such a right be, as could bind no man?"³

(2) *What is Unsafe.* An important example of dangerous legislation is that against freedom of speech. Because freedom of thought and feeling cannot be abdicated by the subject at the command of the ruler or another, the attempt to make him speak only in accordance with the dictates of the government may have dangerous results for the State. For those only who lack generosity and integrity of mind can be made to stifle their real opinions. "The more rulers strive to curtail freedom of speech, the more obstinately they are resisted – not, indeed, by the avaricious, the flatterers, and other numskulls, who think that the chief wellbeing consists in filling their stomachs, and gloating over their moneybags, but by those whom good education, sound morality, and virtue have rendered more free."⁴ Such laws are, therefore, "adapted less for coercing the ill-disposed than for irritating men of integrity; so that they cannot be maintained without great peril to the State."⁵ Yet there is a limitation to this limitation, for speech is an action that may injure the authority of the State as much as, or even more than, any other kind. Distinction must, therefore, be made between speech expressing rational judgement or opinion, and speech aimed directly or indirectly at the destruction of the State. For the latter is true sedition:

¹ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xx. The power and right of the State, *qua* State, is *civic* power and right.

² *Tract. Polit.*, iii., 8. Spinoza's assessment of human virtue was, perhaps, unduly high.

³ *Loc. cit.*

⁴ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xx. In so far as a State makes use of uncivic natural power it reverts to the 'state of nature,' ceasing to be a 'State'. See above, note 1 and p. 187, note 1.

⁵ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xx.

an attempt to stir up the people against the government, or to abrogate the law, without the consent of the rightful authority. "If a man shows that a law is repugnant to sound reason, and should be repealed, and if he submits his opinion to the judgement of the authorities ... and meanwhile acts in no wise contrary to that law, he has deserved well of the State, and has behaved as a good citizen should";¹ but if he tries to undermine the authority of the State, or to induce the people to disobey it, he is "a mere agitator and rebel."

But the danger to the State may be even more serious, and the reaction of the subjects defensibly more positive: this occurs when the enactments, or the conduct, of the rulers are such as to awaken indignation among powerful citizens rather than reverence and fear. For this breeds sedition and conspiracy which dangerously diminishes the power of the State. The State is bound to preserve the causes of fear and reverence, and thus must not make laws so contrary to sound reason as to promote indignation among the otherwise well-disposed. And further, the rulers must not violate their own laws, or bring the laws into contempt by slaying and robbing subjects, "ravishing maidens," "running with harlots drunk or naked in the streets, acting in stage-plays," and the like.² Not that by such scandalous conduct the rulers, as such, are guilty of crimes *under* the law (for *as rulers* they are not subject to the laws). Nevertheless, they sin against the State as its rulers,³ in that thus their power is turned to impotence, and civic order abrogated by a just transition to the law of war vindicating the indignation of the multitude. By acting contrary to sound reason under the conditions set by the natures of the individuals involved, the rulers themselves destroy the State, sin against themselves *qua* rulers, involve the State in sin against itself (save where the other party of the State, *viz.* the subjects, by constitutional resistance enforce reform), reducing it to impotence.

(3) *What is Inadvisable.* "He who seeks to regulate everything by law is more likely to arouse vices than to reform them. It is best to grant what cannot be abolished, even though it be in itself harmful."⁴ Just as it is possible to arouse the indignation of subjects, not only by bad laws and conduct, but even also by laws too rational for the general level of human excellence among them, so also, since there will always be many

¹ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xx.

² *Tract. Polit.*, iv., 4.

³ It is not suggested that this is their only sin: it is their only *political* offence.

⁴ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xx.

among the subjects who fall below the general level of excellence, and who therefore will find laws suited to the majority too exacting to win their respect, a certain forbearance is incumbent on the State. When, therefore, the matters arising are not of high general importance, it is better to tolerate their evils in the interest of general stability. In the nature of things the number of such matters must be very great, and Spinoza instances such things as luxurious living, envy, avarice, drunkenness, and the like. They are to be tolerated, uncivil as they are, and inimical to the State in their measure, because for one reason or another they "cannot be prevented by legal enactments".

Interference with the propagation, and observance of the rites of, religion seems, to some extent, to fall under this head. If these can become the source of general indignation among powerful classes in the State, they fall under the previous head as dangerous to the State. The propagation of a form of religion may, therefore, for good reason be forbidden,¹ at least so far as it involves more than "the true knowledge and love of God, *i.e.* 'rational religion,' so that opposition to a civic decree against it would require special divine authority. "As for external rites, it is certain that they can do neither good nor harm at all in respect of the true knowledge of God, and the love that necessarily springs from it; so that they ought not to be held to be of such importance that it should be thought worth while on their account to disturb public peace and quiet."² Control of these, therefore, though it may well be exercised by the government (since this would involve no interference with a man's freedom to "worship God with true religion, and mind his own business, which is the duty of the private man")³, is not always advisable. The State should not be unnecessarily active in such matters. But certainly the State has no concern with 'piety' and "the inward worship of God," or with "the means by which the mind is inwardly led to do homage to God in singleness of heart."⁴

So much, then, for the limitations which the State must, not *suffer*, but *place upon itself*.⁵ Its perfection lies in a nice balance between the extent to which its civilizing functions are requisite by reason of the

¹ See below, note 5.

² *Tract. Polit.*, iii., 10.

³ *Loc. cit.*

⁴ *Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xix.

⁵ Spinoza thus allows a certain flexibility in assigning the proper limits of civic action. In the same spirit, and to avoid a *doctrinaire* appearance arising from the emphasis I have placed upon the distinction of civility and morality, I will add that though security for its subjects is the proper business of the State, and not moral, cultural, and economic improvement, yet conditions of general individual incivility can be conceived under which, by reason of the

barbarity of its subjects, and the extent to which those subjects will tolerate the exercise of those functions. Nor is it possible to say which form of State in the abstract is the best, since much depends on the general standard of its people, their refractory or submissive character, their level of civility or barbarism, and their mental elevation or depression. The greater the barbarity and ignorance, the wider will be the necessity for State-interference in the interest of security; and on the contrary, the more refractory the people, the more they will resent such interference, and thus promote insecurity. It by no means follows, however, that the State can only be 'perfect' when its subjects are 'perfect,' for with such subjects it would be perfectly otiose. On the contrary, a State so imperfect as wholly to lack absolute power over its subjects would be no 'State' at all (being unable to perform the functions of a State); and as any State approximates to this limit it must lie under the threat of dissolution. In other words, *true* 'perfection' in a State, by which it exists in performing its functions, lies between these limits of non-existence and otiosity, in the absolute exercise of a power proportioned to the capacity and needs of the subjects, from the loyal among which it is derived.

(iii) CIVILITY AND MORALITY

I have described 'civility,' as established and maintained by the civic State and its pseudo-civic precursors, as the *precondition* of the development of morality and other forms of culture; and it is of first importance that this should be taken *au pied de la lettre*. It is a view that involves a complete break with the notion, ultimately derived from the Greeks, and generally prevalent in modern Western thought, that confuses civility with morality, regarding civic government as subject to moral principle, and commanding obedience only in so far as, in addition to the maintenance of security, it legislates with a view to the moral (and

bigotry, greed, and ignorance of the people, the latter could only be advanced by the State – provided, of course, that the rulers were not equally bigoted, greedy, and ignorant. Such a 'closed' totalitarian society may be *temporarily* defensible with a barbarous people fortunate enough to be ruled by an enlightened government. But least of all defensible in a democracy where rulers and subjects are equally civil or barbarous. Totalitarian socialism is proper only to a primitive society. On the other hand, as subserving security for moral and cultural development, the State is bound, from time to time, to 'take sides' against moral wickedness, cultural degradation, and even moral and cultural bizzareries, and thus formally to enter the fields of morality and culture. And on the contrary, moral and cultural advance in the citizens is reflected in the increasing leniency of civic sanctions, registering the growing otiosity of civic power and right. Yet there is danger even in this which must not be altogether ignored.

even the cultural) improvement of its citizens. In this view the State is subject to moral estimation, in that its authority is founded upon its pursuit of the moral and cultural elevation of society.

The view advanced in this chapter is, in the main, wholly opposed to this, so far as positive moral and cultural interests are concerned, though undoubtedly, as providing security for moral and cultural development, individual and social, the State must be regarded as morally and culturally *auxiliary*. In the 'state of nature' morality is confined to the avoidance of 'sin against the self'; in the civic state, which by canalizing 'natural right' provides the conditions under which individual and social power is enhanced, 'good for the self' is rendered positively realizable. The State opens the way to positive moral and cultural development; it is not the organ by which it is realized.

The divergency may be emphasized by contrasting, on the one hand, the platonic account¹ of the 'perfect city' as, for man, "confined to discourse" concerning "a pattern laid up in heaven," with that, on the other, which has been expounded above, according to which it is a 'device' whereby the *distributive* unilateral self-reference of *emanata* is deprived of its sting – the formal neutralization of 'original sin.' The *civitas Dei*, we have said, is no perfected civic State,² since its constitution involves 'reference to God,' *i.e.* the *correction* of unilateral self-reference, not its mere neutralization. Thus the essential function of the civic State finds no place in the *civitas Dei*, which is therefore not the fulfilment of civility, but its *nullibity*.³ In other words, the civic State cannot properly be regarded as a defective manifestation or emanation of the *civitas Dei* (for this, as God-referent, cannot thus suffer emanation), but only as a means by which the pulverulence of *distributive* unilateral self-reference among individual *emanata* can be so checked, in the absence of individual self-emendation, or morality, among a whole set of related individuals, or some part of it, as to render the whole capable of avoiding self-destruction, or at least self-stultification, by the inter-cine struggles of its parts.

Again, the aristotelian notion of the State or city as an association originating for the sake of the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of the good life,⁴ in itself justly admissible, is given a fatally false turn by the prior statement that it is an association that

¹ *Rep.*, IX., 592.

² Or even a perfected moral order – though morality is emendation towards the *civitas Dei*, whereas civility is but the canalization of the 'state of nature.'

³ See above, p. 112, note 1.

⁴ *Polit.*, I., ii.

includes all other associations.¹ For to be 'for the sake of' is not necessarily to 'include.' That, indeed, which "precedes in the order of nature"² must 'include' that which it precedes, but the State (in some form or other, civic or pseudo-civic) precedes all other associations, not in 'the order of nature,' *i.e.* of creation, but only in the order of duration which, as an emanation of distributive unilateral self-reference, *perverts* the order of nature. The Greek mind had no awareness of 'original sin'; the modern mind rejects it.

Popper³ has many hard things to say about the political doctrines of Plato, as essentially defining a 'closed society,' yet in so speaking he remains under the influence of the same general confusion of civility and morality (and other forms of culture) by which the State is conceived as 'including all other associations.' Plato, rightly conceiving the civic State, as such, to be 'closed,' seeks to make all other moral and cultural associations, conceived as included in it, equally 'closed'; Popper, rightly conceiving moral and cultural associations, as such, to be properly 'open,' seeks to make the civic State itself, conceived as including them, equally 'open.' But the fundamental error is the same: the failure to distinguish the nature and status of civility from those of morality and culture, so that the characteristics of the one are made to infect the other, and thus to determine the whole life of the individual. Resenting the totalitarianism of Plato, Popper elaborates a reversed totalitarianism equally unacceptable.⁴

¹ *Polit.*, I., i.; *Nic. Eth.*, VIII., ix.

² *Polit.*, I., ii.

³ See, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, I.

⁴ A further, and even more fateful, concomitant of this confusion of civility and morality is the tendency to derive from it an identification of the distinction of an 'open' and a 'closed' order with that of a democratic and a non-democratic polity. Thus it comes to be assumed that a democracy, as such and in itself, is 'better' than an aristocratic, monarchical, or tyrannical polity because it is less totalitarian – is, indeed, as many believe, the only escape from totalitarianism. But if democracy is "the best form of polity," and tyranny the worst (and something of the kind is suggested even by Spinoza (*Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xx.) – though he also says that "if such were the nature of patricians that they were free from all passion, and guided by pure zeal for the public welfare in choosing their patrician colleagues, no dominion could be compared with aristocracy" (*Tr. Polit.*, xi., 2).) – it is certainly not for this reason, for there can hardly be a more incurable form of tyranny than that of a democratic majority (the individual tyrant, after all, has only one throat, and an aristocracy but few). Democracy is to be preferred, according to Spinoza, because "of all forms of government it is the most natural, and the most consonant with individual liberty" (*Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xvi.), while being also "perfectly absolute" (*Tract. Polit.*, xi., 8). But even this judgement fails to take due account of what Spinoza elsewhere maintained, *viz.* that "Nature does not create nations but only individuals," (*Tract. Theo.-Pol.*, xvii.) so that any attempt to estimate the relative perfections of different forms of polity without reference to the natures and capacities of the subjects and the rulers thus organized, is altogether futile. For democracy requires the prevalency of democratic men, just as monarchy requires men loyal to a wise king, and aristocracy *plebs* devoted to public-spirited patricians. Even tyrants may have their place among ignorant and servile peoples. The modern craze for setting up so-called 'democracies' among

Finally, the metaphysical foundation of the distinction of civility and morality, *etc.* may now be succinctly stated in the light of the emanational principles explained at the beginning of this chapter.¹ The 'state of nature' is the state of *creanda* under unilateral self-reference, so that each unemended *emanatum*, being self-centred, operates from unilateral self-interest, though not, of course, therefore wholly *contrary* to the interest of others (for emanation does not wholly pulverize *Natura*) – and indeed, so far as individuals are by nature submissive, and constitute 'social property,' they operate in accord with the interest of their master, whose otherness is thus merely formal. The master makes use of his 'social property' for his own profit (and thus for the profit of the 'whole' body); the submissive (*quatenus* submissive) seek their own profit in subservience to the master. In so far as the submissive develop towards independence the relation of master and 'social property' develops hostility, or civility.

From this state of individual and corporate self-centred hostility there can be but one way of escape for durational 'man,' and therefore for durational *men* taken singly, *viz.* by moral and cultural self-emendation, *i.e.* by passage from unilateral self-reference towards reference to God. And if men *could* thus be 'taken singly' (or even collectively), *i.e.* if *distributive* self-referent emanation, and again, re-orientation and emendation towards reference to God, respectively, were *simultaneous* among all men, *there could arise no distinction between civility and morality*, for the former would have no function. But this is precluded by the *distributive* character of the individual self-reference by which the many

peoples the masses of which are illiterate, barbarous, unaccustomed to, and largely incapable of self-government, may be an exhibition of what Thrasymachus called "egregious good nature" (*Rep. I., 348*), but is nevertheless also one of political folly, and may therefore well bring serious consequences in its train. It is well, perhaps, that today 'democracy' has become a 'blessed word' made to stand for many highly qualified modifications (I speak with restraint) of pure democracy, either in the platonic (*See Rep. VIII.*) or in the spinozistic sense (*See Tract. Polit., xi.*).

As to the common belief that democratic polity affords a natural and effective safeguard against totalitarianism, it is one of the less "entertaining ironies of history" that Western democracies, with the fateful examples of totalitarian tyrannies in full view (sometimes also styled 'democracies'), and having sacrificed untold blood and treasure towards their destruction, are yet to be seen, step by step, though not unhesitatingly, moving towards the abandonment of individual and social liberty, towards the idolization of the State as all-devouring *Leviathan* – disguised, indeed, in the cloak, and decked with the garlands, of the 'welfare State,' *but still untamed.*

Some of the questions relating to the nature and requirements of the various forms of polity are surveyed by Spinoza in the *Tractatus Politicus* (though the treatment of democracy is largely wanting). Into this important region of political theory I have not entered, judging it to be not directly *apropos* to our main purpose.

¹ See above, pp. 176-9. I wish to invite the serious reader to pay special attention to the *distributive* character of unilateral self-reference among individuals, and its political and moral significance and importance. See below, chapter X.

individual lives are themselves durationally distributed, *i.e.* are emanated more or less in sequence. Hence it follows that each is ever faced by the hostility of others which issuing from *their* unemended self-reference, is irremediable by the emendation of the self, *even if this could be achieved* in face of overwhelming hostility. It is thus that self-emendation must await the institution of conditions (*viz.* those of civility) under which hostility is moderated by the canalization of individual and corporate natural power and right, sufficient to control the hostility of effective dissentients. On the basis of this reorganization of the 'state of nature' alone can positive moral and cultural transcendence be attempted without a conflict of natural power and right with moral and cultural power and right necessarily disastrous to the latter.

Civility, therefore, though involving no moral transcendence – being essentially the organization of individual natural powers already available in the 'state of nature,'¹ a canalization sufficient for stability and security, but not involving individual self-emendation from the self-referent *status quo* towards reference to God – civility, I say, which brings to effective order the natural powers and rights already available, though in great measure mutually obstructed, in the 'state of nature' by reason of the *distributive* self-reference of the individuals involved in it, is the essential pre-condition of moral and cultural *emendation under these conditions of mutual relation*. Civility, in this sense, is non-moral (though it may come to be perfected among individuals already partly moralized) but – offsetting the contingent confusion resulting from distributive self-reference – it sets free, or furthers the enfranchisement of, man's moral and cultural potencies.

Yet so mingled and mutually qualified² in durational human life are

¹ But see below, note 2.

² The manner in which civility qualifies morality and culture need not be further laboured, but the reader may feel that in view of what has been said about their relation and order it is paradoxical to suggest that morality qualifies civility. That the moralization and cultivation of the individual does tend to render civility for him increasingly otiose can hardly be denied (for the good man is good independently of the sanctions of civic law); and certainly in this way morality qualifies civility. It may be objected that this is not so much 'qualification' as *elimination* yet closer consideration will show that the requirements of civility (and therefore the special forms of its laws and sanctions) must have regard to the moralization and cultivation advanced under its protection. Moral and cultural emendation are already facilitated under pseudo-civic organization, and in so far as these develop positively under the partial security thus afforded, the fledged civic State, when it comes to be established, will be a canalization of individual powers and rights, '*natural*' indeed, being actual, but *not emanationally primordial*. Its laws and sanctions, therefore, will properly be accommodated in nature to these partially moralized and cultivated conditions, though not exclusively. But *this in no way qualifies the essential form of civility as the canalization of actual powers and rights without transcendence*; it does not render the State a moral or cultural association. And though civility becomes increasingly otiose for the moralized individuals (not by mere elimination, but qualification – maintenance of essential form with modification of laws and sanctions reciprocating with

civility and morality that their fundamental distinctness of function is apt to be concealed even from those who do not adopt the merely empirical mode of approach, yet prefer the 'analytic' to the 'synthetic' order in metaphysics. For it is the 'synthetic' approach that reveals it unmistakably (and thus confirms its superior intelligibility). States and pseudo-civic organizations are certainly rationalizations of the 'state of nature,' by which the 'natural' powers and rights of men, otherwise rendered fruitless by the contingent pulverulence of distributive self-reference, are rendered effective by canalization sufficient for tolerable security. That civility is possible at all is, of course, due to the status enjoyed by man in the hierarchy of *Natura creata* (by which his self-reference is not wholly destructive of eternal *communitas*). For man in the 'state of nature' civility is a 'natural good': it is not in itself a 'moral good,' but only the pre-condition of all moral *advance under the conditions of distributive unilateral self-reference*, the excessive pulverulence of which, by reason of confusion, it so corrects as to maximize individual natural power and right. Nor does the distinction of morality and civility imply diversity of origin, for both, in due measure, are derivatives of man's relation as *creatum* with his complement in *Natura creata*. In the dialectic of finite creation the 'instant' of transition, or re-orientation, from the first to the second 'moment' for the *commune* 'man' (under *Ratio*) is, for the *individual* 'men,' as *distributively* emanated, 'telescoped out' to the *durational order of civility*, which underlies and secures the *concurrent* order of morality. And though in the life of the individual as such civility becomes increasingly otiose as morality is developed, it cannot become otiose in the life of society because sequent generations renew the need as they issue *ex utero Naturae*. It is thus that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance" – the price of morality and culture, continuant civic organization.

the moral and cultural elevation of these individuals), it cannot become otiose for *society* if sequent generations are not to relapse into primordial hostility. Men under civility need not be wholly unemended; but civility makes no positive contribution towards their emendation. In short, though civic law and sanction become increasingly otiose with the *individual's* moral and cultural development, the demands of civility become *pari passu* increasingly ample, both in order to ensure security for more highly moralized and cultivated loyalists, and also for the control of the moral wickedness and cultural depravity of dissentients that is likely to be parasitical on moral and cultural development. Yet this again involves no *positive* entry by the State into the spheres of morality or culture: for to defend the man of virtue or culture is not to moralize or cultivate either him or his enemies.

MORALITY AND SALVATION

From the essential pre-conditions of morality, let us first turn our attention to the permeating conditions imposed upon it by the *distributive* character of the self-referent roots of durational emanation. In *Natura creata* the perfect mutuality which I have called 'eternal *communitas*' is not merely tentative, contingent, and normative, but throughout its entire amplitude constitutive, necessary, and essential. In 'this present life' of emanational privation, of durationally corrigible defect, mutuality remains normative as morally constitutive, but conatively tentative and contingent. In mystical religion, perhaps, a man is alone with God, 'born again,' and trans-moral; in morality each man faces relation with *co-creanda* of every grade of perfection under the mutual alienation of *distributive* self-reference which, in their measures, variously infects, or may infect, them all. Thus, his other may be alienated from him not merely by his own self-reference, but *self-alienated*, so that the emendation of his own defect must, *sub specie durationis*, be accommodated to the self-reference, more or less emended, of the other, in accordance with, and in part constituting, a durational moral order. Love towards one's enemy, for example, is not properly expressed by non-resistance to, or appeasement of, him.

(i) EXEMPLARY AND MUTUAL ETHICS

The distinction between 'absolute ethics' and 'relative ethics' has been too well canvassed for it not to be necessary to warn the reader that the distinction which we are to draw between 'exemplary ethics' and 'mutual ethics' is not to be confused with it.¹ 'Mutual ethics' is not less

¹ Other distinctions such as those drawn between *theoretical* and *practical* ethics, *pure* and *applied* ethics, *abstract* and *concrete* ethics, *individual* and *social* ethics, and the like, with which the distinction of exemplary and mutual ethics has a vague, more or less verbal, affiliation, and is thus liable to be confused, one and all will be found to miss the essential ground of this distinction, *viz.* that between the essential principles of the ethical emendation of the self-referent individual as such, and the special ways in which this principle is uncompromisingly operant under the complex conditions of *distributive* self-reference in a durational society of individuals.

absolute than 'exemplary ethics' – for it represents no mere compromise in deference to practical difficulties or human expediency. Indeed, it may be much more difficult to determine, and sometimes to realize, than 'exemplary ethics,' though not, perhaps, more replete with futility and suffering.

The reader will recall that the ethical doctrine of Spinoza is formally elaborated under the 'second kind of knowledge,' *Ratio*, and thus considers the moral predicament of the *commune* 'man' rather than that of this or that man – the application of the resulting principles being left, but for examples, to the good sense of the reader. In identifying, as we have done, the moral *exemplar* of this or that man with his own nature as eternal *creatum*, rather than with the eternal *commune* 'man' (which is the *exemplar* of emanational 'man' according to *Ratio*), we took the first step towards the concretion of the abstract ethical principles elaborated by Spinoza; and by this step we understood the nature of 'exemplary' ethics, which thus remain partially abstract, as taking no account of the nature of this or that man's 'field' of moral endeavour. It is the further step that we now take by which those principles have fully concrete expression, as general principles short of casuistry, in relation to the actual durational life of 'men,' *i.e.* individuals standing in relations with other individuals, with full recognition of the mutuality of their durational natures and relations. By this step we understand the nature of 'mutual ethics': the fully concrete obligation to act in accordance with the dictates of reason *under the conditions set by the natures of the individuals involved*. In other words, it is not sufficient to consider this or that man as *emanatum* in relation to his source; for from that source there proceed, and emanate, a multitude of men and things which, with him, as *creata* constitute the eternal *communitas* of *Natura creata*. Not only the *exemplar* of the individual, but also this *communitas* of *Natura creata* must be privatively expressed in fully concrete ethics. For just as *communitas* is constitutive in the natures of *communia* (and thus also of the natures of the eternal finite *creata* as various integrations of *communia*), so mutuality among durational *emanata* is no 'external relation,' but permeates its terms. The abstract ethical principles of *Ratio* (*e.g.* the irrationality of hatred) as an obligation for this or that man (*e.g.* thou shalt love thy neighbour) thus do not constitute an 'absolute ethics' that must suffer compromise *sub specie durationis* by reason of excessive rigour, but rather the abstract *schema* of human salvation that must be realized '*quantum potest*,' or '*prout tempus et res postulat*'¹ by each man under the durational conditions set by the dis-

¹ *Eth. II., xlix. Sch. Cf. also Eth. IV., lxx. et Sch.*

tributive self-reference of the concourse of men and things (*e.g.* thou shalt love this or that man *according to his disposition and response, i.e.* by actions fit and proper, and not necessarily in agreement with his preferences). The aim is not the relativization and accommodation of too rigorous principles, but their *proper* application and expression, realizing their full severity under the concrete conditions of durational life in the durational world.

'Mutual ethics' are thus the exposition of the *via ad salutem* of the durational individual in a world of durational individuals, more or less pulverized by distributive self-reference and partial emendation – in which the eternal *communitas* of *Natura creata* is not merely emanated under the self-reference of some *representative* individual self, but is distributively self-emanated, and variously self-emended, by individuals to a state of *pseudo-communitas* that (on the analogy of eternal *communitas*) informs the natures of individual conators, modalizes their self-emendation, and thus sets bounds to its fruition. Thus the way of salvation, "steep and difficult" as it must be, is rendered doubly so by the company of those not trained for the ascent, or even resenting the effort, – and these are many. Contrariwise, it is made easier by the company of 'free men' – but these are few.

I have admitted a formal *lacuna* in Spinoza's overt exposition in relation to these matters, but I am less ready to believe that it is more than formal.¹ For not only have we the scathing indictment of utopianism in politics in *Tractatus Politicus, i.*, but as I have said, in *Ethices IV.*² there is to be found, admittedly in somewhat piecemeal form, and without formal deduction, statements concerning the 'free man' and his relation to his *conives* under the extant conditions of 'this present life' that imply the mutuality of their ethical relations. In virtue of this, too, the valuations of the *affectus* are moralized: for though joy and cheerfulness are good in themselves, and sorrow and melancholy bad,³ yet pleasurable excitement may be bad, and painful repression good.⁴

¹ The differences that have often been noted between the rational air of *Part IV.* of the *Ethics*, and the ethico-mystical air of *Part V.* may thus in part be accounted for. In *Part IV.* Spinoza is examining the ethical situation of 'man' as *commune*, and questions concerning human relations are introduced mainly by way of example – dealt with in 'realistic' fashion without showing how the special moral attitudes recommended are derived from the principles laid down – assuming the importance of response. In *Part V.* liberation by the 'emendation of the intellect' is considered, on the foundation thus provided, and the emphasis comes to be placed on the individual agent rather than on the aid or hindrance of his other – as if the imperfection of the world stemmed from *his* self-reference alone, or like the mystic, he were alone with his creator.

² Especially *Eth. IV., xli. – lxxii.*

³ *Eth. IV., xli., xlii.*

⁴ *Eth. IV., xliii.*

Again, love and desire, though in themselves good, as partial or excessive may be bad.¹ Glory, as joy in some accomplishment² is good, but that which arises from the discomfiture of another, *viz.* vainglory,³ is bad. Quietude of mind born of a clear conscience⁴ without pride, magnanimity without depreciation of the less worthy, but "as much as possible" avoiding their favours, shunning parasites and flatterers,⁵ cultivating the whole man in a whole life,⁶ without fear, anger, or hatred, accepting necessary evils both for the self and for others⁷ – these are the characteristics and endeavours of the 'man who is led by reason,' not reason in the abstract, but under the conditions set by the natures of the individuals involved. "All the actions that follow from the *affectus* that are related to the mind in so far as it thinks, I ascribe to fortitude, which I divide into strength of mind and nobility of mind. By 'strength of mind' I mean the desire by which each endeavours, from the dictates of reason alone, to preserve his own being; by 'nobility of mind' I mean the desire by which each endeavours, from the dictates of reason alone, to help others, and to join them to himself in friendship. ... Temperance, sobriety, presence of mind in danger, are species of strength of mind, moderation and mercy are species of nobility of mind."⁸ The 'free man' is "guided by consideration of what is profitable and honourable," remembering that "although men are ignorant, they are nevertheless men" with whom it is well, and even at the sacrifice of *strict* principle, to cultivate friendship.⁹ Man may be a wolf to man, he may also be a god.

In sum, then, though Spinoza's ethical teaching is centred on individual self-emption (which alone is within the power of the individual

¹ *Eth. IV., xlii.* Though hatred, unlike painful repression, can never be good (*Eth. IV., xlv.*). With hatred he couples envy, mockery, contempt, anger, revenge, etc. (*Eth. IV., xlv. Cor. i.*), as well as pity (*Eth. IV., l.*). Love or generosity is the 'free man's' response to hatred, anger, and contempt from his *conciues*: "He who wishes to avenge injuries by reciprocal hatred lives miserably indeed; but he who, on the contrary, strives to drive out hatred by love, fights joyfully and confidently, with equal ease resisting one or many, needing scarcely any assistance from fortune. Those whom he conquers yield gladly, not from the lack of strength, but from its increase." (*Eth. IV., xlv. Sch.*). Thus, the "handsome behaviour" which, according to Taylor, is confined to "those who happen to be connected by common subjection to the same sovereign," has a wider scope: for it is not hatred but law that makes non-*conciues* 'enemies' (*Tract. Theo. – Pol., xvi.*). In strife, hatred is a source of weakness.

² *Eth. III., Aff. Def. xxx.*

³ *Eth. IV., lviii. Sch.*

⁴ "*Acquiescentia in se ipso*" (*Eth. IV., xxv., etc.*). 'Self-esteem' has, in common use, an air of complacency which is foreign to Spinoza's phrase.

⁵ *Eth. IV., lvii.* Cf. also *Eth. IV., lxx. Dem. et Sch.*

⁶ *Eth. IV., lx., lxii., lxv., lxvi. et Cor.*

⁷ *Eth. IV., lxiii. Sch. seq. Cor.*

⁸ *Eth. III., lix. Sch.* Spinoza's terms are 'fortitudo,' 'animositas,' and 'generositas.'

⁹ *Eth. IV., lxx. Sch.*

al), which issues in what I have called 'exemplary ethics,' he is by no means unaware (as indeed he could hardly be) that in the moral life due consideration must be given to the response of the other in determining what it is precisely that reason dictates. Not to do so is to be involved in what in another connexion I ventured to assimilate with the formal fallacy of 'non-composition' or 'division.' Just as the mathematical tiro may argue that since the interior angles of the triangle are together equal to two right angles, and a polygon is composed of triangles, this property also belongs to the polygon, so the metaphysical tiro will infer that the mere generalization of the principle of spatio-temporal relativity is sufficient to determine the absolute character of the reality that appears *ab extra* in the form of space-time.¹ So in the present instance, if not inferred, it is often assumed that 'exemplary ethics' are applicable in their abstract form to individuals as socially related – whence arises the seemingly unresolved problem of the divorce of 'right' and 'good' in concrete moral experience, that in principle is a necessary entailment of distributive emanation.

Now all this is implicit, I suggest, in Spinoza's '*quantum potest*' or '*prout tempus et res postulat*'² – what is lacking is its formal exposition. Doubtless it is true *in principle* that a completely free man would find all things "as perfect as it is their nature to be," and 'right' and 'good' thus in essential harmony; but such a man would not be a durational emanatum. In 'this present life' no man is wholly free in the actualization of his potency. For the freedom of each implies the freedom of all, whether in eternity or in duration. Thus the *communitas* of *Natura creata* is, *sub specie durationis*, indefinitely postponed. Increased freedom is what the moral agent strives to achieve by relation with the *inseitas* of his other, human or non-human. In this endeavour he cannot ignore their distributive ignorance and subjection to passion, and escape the charge of fanaticism or enthusiasm. He must adjust his action to this under the dialectic of finite creation. He must do his part, not as if they were but the 'field' of his endeavour, but as fellow-beings labouring under the same dialectic of emanation and emendation, and with no pre-established ethical harmony. I do not say that non-resistance and patient suffering is *never* proper to the good man, but that ethical solipsism compensated by ethical quietism is not the characteristic attitude of

¹ Cf. 'Physical and Metaphysical Reality' (*Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1931-32, pp. 31-32). See above, p. 96, note 1. Here I complain, not of the argument (which may have its uses) but of the implied assumption that it has metaphysical significance; *i.e.* that metaphysics is but clarified 'natural science.'

² See above, p. 203, note 1.

virtue in a condition of civility. What it may possibly be in a semi-barbarous society is another matter.¹

(ii) MORALITY AS 'PSEUDO-COMMUNITAS'

Communitas is the relation holding between finite individual agents 'as referred to God,' and their complements of agents in *Natura creata*, by which each is at once constituted and distinct as microcosm and *creatum*. This perfect relation is shattered in proportion as in the dialectic of finite creation the self-reference of the individuals involves eccentricity of projection, *i.e.* in proportion to the varied subordination of the microcosmic hierarchy. Only macrocosmic *Natura creata* can be both self-referent and genetically centric. But the *communitas* of the individual with his congruent complement in *Natura* is no less imperfed for the finite agent by the self-reference of the members of his complement, so that self and other are doubly alienated. It follows that emendation that is not mutual either remains a mere ideal or is involved in durational tragedy. In moments of vision the mystic may bypass the indefinitely prolonged and inextricably involved maze that constitutes the moral life, by concentrating upon the eternal effluence of his inchoation in and undated 'present' – alone with 'The Alone' – but this is vision and not morality, and divorced from morality, mere mirage. For morality the problem is to find the most effective expression of abstract 'exemplary' principle within a 'field' that is in great part refractory, how to achieve the nearest approach durationally possible under the circumstances to eternal *communitas* – a state which I shall call '*pseudo-communitas*,' which is to be achieved by the severest application of moral principle, and not by ethical compromise or appeasement.

The *pseudo-communitas* that constitutes, in one mode or form or another, the actual limit of the free men's relation to his other, is thus not selective *communitas* supplemented by indifference, for he cannot escape relation with the dissonant elements of his world – nor will he attempt to do so. Though all things alike "follow from the necessity of the divine nature," no *emanatum* can enjoy perfect *communitas*, as if by the correction of his own unilateral self-reference creation would drop into focus. He remains *in* the world though he is not wholly *of* the world, and for him the 'tower of ivory' would be the 'chamber of death.' Though "the

¹ The pacificistic teaching of the Gospels may well have been best suited to the special conditions of the Christian community living in a hostile but subject State. But if so, it is a proper application of 'mutual ethics,' not a misapplication of 'exemplary ethics.'

brave man will consider that ... whatever he thinks to be injurious and evil, and whatever seems to be impious, dreadful, unjust, or wicked, arises from this, that he conceives things in a disturbed, mutilated, and confused fashion"; nevertheless, the failure of his conception is by no means his sole affair: it depends also upon the other that lies beyond his direct control, so that he can only "endeavour *as much as possible* to do well and rejoice." "How far human virtue reaches in the attainment of these things, and what it can do"¹ is another matter that is deferred to *Ethics V.* And though it is true that in thus deferring the matter Spinoza is found to be thinking rather of the defects that arise from the impotence of the self than of those reciprocally resulting from the impotence of the other, it must not be forgotten that the passions that express the impotence of the self are *affectus* congruent with its inadequately determined *affectiones*, confusing self and complement, and that there is a limit set to the adequation of its causality in so far as it remains durational: "Everyone has the power, *partly at least, though not absolutely*, of understanding himself and his *affectus* clearly and distinctly, and consequently of bringing it about that he suffers *less* from them."² He is never wholly at their mercy.

Thus, in the earlier propositions of *Part V.* of the *Ethics* Spinoza speaks in terms of a greater or less impotence or power, not of complete power to achieve *communitas* with the other. For up to proposition *xx.Sch.* he is avowedly treating of "what relates to this present life." Nevertheless, as I have allowed, his procedure under *Ratio* is apt to suggest to the unwary that the application of the principles of 'exemplary ethics' thus expounded to *singularia* must be that of the abstract universal to particulars in *Barbara*, and thus to confuse the issue. The application cannot be syllogistic, because by descent into duration constitutive *communitas* of self and complement is degraded to a complex of *concinnitas* and strife with the other; so that the free man in 'this present life,' *i.e.* the self-enfranchising man, attains the end set forth by 'exemplary ethics' only *quantum potest*, not by compromise of principle but by its proper application. The doctrine of the latter portion of *Ethics V.*, therefore, with its insistence on the omniprevalence of 'intellectual love' throughout creation, must not be allowed to be in conflict with the 'realism' of *Part IV.*, nor to suggest that 'quietistic love' is the only available remedy

¹ These passages are from *Eth. IV., lxxiii. Sch.* forming the transition to *Part V.* The removal of hindrances to true knowledge arising from his own nature is the first essential if he is rightly to envisage the obligations of 'mutual ethics.'

² *Eth. V., iv. Sch.* The proposition itself states that "there is no *affectio* of which we cannot form *some* clear and distinct conception."

for the mutual impedance of durational *emanata*. The importance of love's inferior modalities in relation to the self-reference of the other, that lies beyond the direct correction of the self, must not thus be minimized or discounted.

I have spoken of the 'realism' of *Part IV.* of the *Ethics* and its seeming conflict with what, for brevity, I may, perhaps, be allowed to call the 'idealism' of *Ethics V., xxi.* onwards. Thus the innocent device of separately considering the conditions of human bondage and human freedom is apt to produce the effect of a double theory of morals if it is forgotten that by 'morality' is signified neither bondage nor freedom but *enfranchisement*. "The power by which *singularia* ... preserve their being is the actual power of *Deus sive Natura* ... in so far as it can be manifested by (their) actual essence,"¹ *i.e.* by their *conatus*,² so that the power of man "is part of the infinite power of *Deus sive Natura*, *i.e.* of his essence." But this too easily suggests that *Deus sive Natura* is but the totality of singular *conatus* – a description that fails even to characterize the *facies totius universi*, which is eternal, and is only in part applicable even to the 'common order of nature.' Now, as part of the 'common order of nature' each man is "necessarily always subject to passions" in so far as he "follows and obeys the common order of nature, accommodating himself to it as much as the nature of things requires"³ – a principle that, *taken alone*, of course excludes morality. This is not surprising, seeing that human bondage is being discussed. But it is a prior truth that this 'common order of nature' is no ineluctable 'given,' but an emanation of the distributive self-reference of *singularia*, so that the passions by 'nature' ineliminable are by 'morality' indefinitely corrigible by 'reference to God.' The 'common order of nature' is posterior to the active *singularia*, and thus, with them, emendable. To this emendation each *singulare* can contribute, but by none in isolation can it be perfected.⁴ The moral life, therefore, which, as belonging to the 'common order of nature,' is a conflict of *affectus* (of passions and 'exertions'), has an aetiology transcending that order, and thus in part determining it. In *Ethics V.* the principles of that transcendence are expounded in relation

¹ *Eth. IV., iv. Dem.*

² *Eth. III., vii.*

³ *Eth. IV., iv. Cor.*

⁴ This is, indeed, the foundation of Spinoza's assertion that "an *affectus* cannot be restrained or removed save by an opposed and stronger *affectus*" (*Eth. IV., vii.*), and that even the "knowledge of good and evil" cannot restrain an *affectus* in virtue of its truth, but only in so far as it is an *affectus* (*Eth. IV., xiv.*) – for the knowledge of good and evil is "nothing else than an *affectus* of joy or sorrow in so far as we are conscious of it" (*Eth. IV., viii.*). But this is not to say that the *affectus* are ineluctable *data* like forces acting on a particle.

to emanent and emendable 'man,' but what is lacking and is a plain *desideratum* if the moral predicament of 'men' is to be deduced is the application of these 'exemplary' principles to the situation of this or that man in the 'common order of nature' that reciprocates with the varied degree of emendation in himself and in his other. It is this that sets the concrete moral problem: how, and how far, can the durational moral conator realize his transcendence *sub specie durationis* in a society of imperfectly emended conators?

Ethices V., as discussing human liberty, provides the *principle*: the correction from unilateral self-reference to 'reference to God'; but moral *enfranchizement* requires the proper relating of the opposed principles of bondage and freedom, *i.e.* the concrete application of these where unilateral self-reference is distributive. For complete liberation of the individual is not within his power, but demands mutual correction and liberation. We have considered some of the conditions conducive to this: primordially, a sufficient foundation of mutual agreement among individuals capable of co-operation must be established and made secure by the imposition of sanctions on those otherwise by nature incapable – *i.e.* the civic State in some form – and within this rampart, augmented by all available means by which individual self-emendation may be promoted, or its absence compensated, moral, cultural, and economic institutions may develop. Each may now emend himself *quantum potest* in accordance with such "remedies" as are expounded in *Ethices V.*, *i.-xx.* and tabulated in the *Scholium* to the latter proposition. In so far as he does so, his passions are transformed, not into eternal actions, but into 'exertions' with respect to conators that remain alien (both by reason of his own residual defect, and by reason of their own unemended character). By these 'exertions,' though eternal *communitas* is indefinitely postponed *sub specie durationis*, he will establish a state of *pseudo-communitas* of appropriate modality. It is thus that the individual can play his part in the salvation of the world, in which is bound up his own salvation – and thus alone, however virtuous he may be. By the impedance of the other his 'right' and his 'good' suffer partial divorce, for complete divorce would spell the utter futility of morality, just as their identity would mean its supersession. Though eternal *communitas* in the *civitas Dei* is "beyond good and evil," it is this, indeed, that, under the diverse modalities and in varying degree and quality, vitalizes and illumines every form of *pseudo-communitas* that lays open and straightens the 'crooked ways of Time.'

(iii) THE MODES OF 'PSEUDO-COMMUNITAS'

What, then, are the relations that the self-enfranchizing man must seek to establish with his others of all classes in the 'common order of nature'? What are the relations that as morally good he holds with his natural and human 'field' of endeavour under the conditions of partial natural and human concinnity – that middle state most familiar to us, and lying between the 'ideal limits' of pure indifference (or non-being) and eternal *communitas* (or 'creatureliness')? By 'natural concinnity' I mean that mutual adaptation of man and his sub-human other that is exemplified at its best in the technical efficiency of the artist or craftsman in relation with the tools and materials of his craft; by 'human concinnity' I mean the mutual adaptation of men which civility liberates, and which is developed within its rampart, and is the essence of all moral, cultural, and economic relation among men, whether they be *concives* or not. For human concinnity even among *concives* transcends the order of political civility, and our relations of concinnity with citizens of other States falls, for the most part, beyond the *aegis* of civic law. Thus, by 'human concinnity' I mean the aptness of relation that holds between men enjoying moral, cultural, and economic order, whatever may be their civic bond.¹ And I couple natural and human concinnity because they are of the same general character: morality in its full amplitude is not solely concerned with human relations, though these are, admittedly, of vital importance. The craftsman's relation with his tools and materials, the farmer's with his land and cattle,² and even the mathematician's or scientist's with his 'objects,' are subject to moral valuation.

Of the conduct of a rational man in a 'state of nature' enough has already been said. Morality for him would be concerned solely with his duty to himself and his 'social property,' and neglect of this would be tantamount to suicide. He must fight or take to flight in the face of hostility. How far it is legitimate to style such relations 'forms of *pseudo-communitas*' is a question that need not detain us, though we can say that in so far as hatred of an enemy weakens resistance or skill in flight, they do not fall wholly beyond such a description.

¹ The term 'civilization' is commonly used in the broad sense of human concinnity; but this moral, cultural, and economic extension of 'civility' is founded on, though not developed from, civility in the political sense.

² Expressed by the farm-bailiff in his judgement of the new motor-plough: "It don't turn the earth a spit deep, 'taint no good for the honour of the land"; or the gardener who refused to use old seeds: "I can't put this 'ere seed in, it waun' grow, I call it *a-baulking the ground*." Nor is this mere fanciful analogy.

Nor need we consider further the relations of rational men as combined to constitute the civic State as such. It is determined by 'obedience' based on civic veneration, not servility based on hope and fear of civic sanctions. He who seeks at once to set aside the laws of the State, yet cleverly to avoid their sanctions and enjoy the benefits of general civility, may be rational in his way, but he is a rational barbarian, and a very irrational citizen. For the *rational* foundation of the civic State is the endeavour after security, only attainable by that *submission* to a common law which, under qualification by the morality thus liberated, is perfected in the *obedience* of the loyal subjects.

If security constituted the whole endeavour of men, the absolute power and right of the State would be a sufficient determinant of all human conduct, and morality would be identical with civic obedience. But, as we have seen, it is but the means to a life that transcends security, as the good life must be supervenient on mere survival.

Now, it is the rational application of the special principles governing the 'state of nature,' the civic State, and the eternal *civitas Dei*, *i.e.* their proper ordering and relation within the conditions of the prevalent state of variant concinnity among men and things, that determines specifically 'moral' relations; and to failure to understand Spinoza's position in this matter must be ascribed the common ascriptions of naturalistic 'wickedness,' on the one hand, and intellectualistic pocuscuranteism, on the other, to the ethical teaching of the philosopher. His supposed 'mechanistic' leanings are taken as favouring the universal application of the 'law of nature' as it operates in a 'state of nature,' and his metaphysical theomorphism as favouring an individualistic identification of morality with mystical religion. Those who impute the double bias to him regard him as involved in an ethical dichotomy. But the former bias has been more generally imputed, for a quietistic morality must be supplemented by a stoical asceticism with respect to the issues of durational life, and Spinoza's rejection of asceticism can hardly be overlooked.¹ What remains, therefore, is to consider something of the nature of the principles that govern the relations of the self-enfranchizing man with his extant durational other in that middle state of distributive civility, barbarism, and variant concinnity in which the agent transcends the 'state of nature' in relation with his *conceives*, faithful or unfaithful, and (under conditions of peace) with more or less moralized men beyond his civic pale.

Broadly, we may distinguish five modes of *pseudo-communitas* consti-

¹ Cf. *Eth. IV.*, *xlv. Sch. seq. Cor. ii.*; *lxvii.*; *etc.*

tuting the relations of the self-enfranchizing man to the various types or conditions of other within his field of endeavour: indifference, opposition, toleration, co-operation, and love – the first and last, in all strictness, being of the nature of ‘ideal limits.’ The self-enfranchizing man is the rational man, *i.e.* durational man in so far as he is rational. The aim of such a man, we have seen, is self-enfranchisement by such adaptation of self to other as will best promote that concinnity of self and other by which mutual potency-in-act is maximized. Where the other is ill-adapted to this end it is evident that whatever may be the emendation of the self, free co-operation of self and other is impossible – the hostility of the other must be tolerated or opposed. But not so that concinnity is rendered still more remote: the aim must be to induce self-emendation in the other. It is for this reason that Spinoza deprecates such *affectus* as hatred, mockery, contempt, anger, revenge, and pity, and commends strength and nobility of mind. Opposition, toleration, and co-operation, the main forms of *pseudo-communitas* must, therefore, be such as issue from the latter ‘exertions,’ as eliminating the former ‘passions.’

One danger that arises from the too common restriction of morality to human relations lies in the resulting tendency to minimize the differences of ontological status which must also be taken into account in determining moral attitudes of self to other – it being too easily assumed that all men are (in some undetermined way) ‘equal.’ The Kantian principle, *e.g.*, “So act as to treat humanity ... in every case as an end, and never as means only,” if taken *au pied de la lettre*, suffers from this restriction. For true as it may be as a principle of ‘exemplary ethics’ it can hardly be transferred as a principle of ‘mutual ethics’ without expansion to the form: “So act as to treat the other (of every grade) as an end for itself, and as means in so far as it is of inferior status.” Nor can even this formulation satisfy us; for ‘treating the other as means’ may signify treating it as a mere ‘object,’ or *ens ab extra*, to be used as such for the seeming profit of the self, neglecting its *inseitas* as being *its* sole affair. But this is very far from being the case seeing that in order effectively to make use of the other as means it is necessary to take account of its *inseitas*. The *agency* of the ‘object’ must be regarded. Thus it is not a question as to whether to treat the other as end or as means, for it can only be treated as means *by* taking it as an end. The distinction of ends and means, therefore, like that of form and matter (to which it is related) is not merely relative but mutual, and it confuses the issue by suggesting that morality is concerned with the attainment

of objective ends by the utilization of objective means under purposive transeuncy, whereas it is concerned with agents, with *entia in se*, and their rational association.¹ Moral action involves a transition from unilateral self-reference towards reference to God in so far as self and other are related as co-derivatives of one source, as *entia in se* united by concinnity appropriate to their relative status in *Natura creata*. Only thus can an other be an effective means to the ends of the self – only so far as a physical instrument, *e.g.*, becomes, as it were, an extension of the agent's body, his tool or medium, can it serve the ends of the craftsman; and the essential objection to any attempt to use the other as means without this ability to enter into its *inseitas*, is that the result is fumbling, incompetence, and failure. For the other has a nature of its own by accommodation to which alone the self can make use of it.² By the 'emendation of the intellect' the self-enfranchizing man transcends as far as possible the imaginational perspective of 'objects,' and views both self and other as *agents* 'living their own lives' as *entia in se*, or if you will, as 'ends in themselves' (*i.e.* not as 'ends' at all, but as *creata*). Thus, for the 'free man' the 'right' and the 'good,' though divergent, are related through the distributive dialectic of finite creation, whereas for the 'slave' they are taken as identical while remaining utterly divergent.³ He imagines his other as a mere 'object,' an *ens ab extra*, to be sought after as means to his profit, or avoided, and if possible destroyed, as a threat of loss, and not as an *ens in se* capable by reason of its agency of entering into appropriate relations of *pseudo-communitas* with the self according to its status and degree of self-emendation. For there is in all cases an appropriate relation of concinnity between self and other determining the action of the self as 'morally good' or 'morally bad': the other is no mere passive material to be exploited by the self. And I say that morality is of wider amplitude than personal relationship, for it is this attitude to his 'material' that makes the good shoemaker, the good craftsman, the good sportsman, the good soldier in opposing his 'enemy': in common life we often call it 'sympathy' with tools, medium, quarry, or 'enemy,' and the relation of self to other in such cases as 'technique.' It is not for nothing that we speak of 'good' and 'bad' sportsmen, craftsmen, strategists or tacticians, for technique is a species of morality. Just, then, as technique must vary from material

¹ See my contribution to the Symposium on 'The Moral Good as a Relation between Persons' (*Hume and Present Day Problems, Arist. Soc. Supp. Vol. XVIII.*, p.171 *et passim.*).

² The 'simple converse' of this proposition, *viz.* that exploitation of the other is justified by its efficiency, does not follow from it.

³ These topics are more fully considered in the symposium referred to in note 1 above.

to material, and from instrument to instrument, with unchanging significance (for the artist cannot make successful use of the same technique with marble as with clay), so morality requires appropriate rather than uniform action with respect to others of differing status and responsiveness. What is appropriate for a 'buffer,' is not appropriate for a 'tool'; and what is appropriate for a 'tool' is not appropriate for a 'medium.'

It is evident, then, that the main problem of morality is how to achieve appropriate relation with the other as co-derivative, so as to secure, in lieu of the abstract spontaneity that it curbs, the concrete freedom that concinnity alone can provide. And the solution of the problem thus generalized will depend as much on the nature of the other as on the emendation of the self: you cannot 'make a silk purse from a sow's ear, or a Mercury of quicksilver, or a true friend of an inveterate bully. The Kantian injunction itself has application only in so far as men are 'rational beings' – not as 'objects' belonging to a system of nature that is in great part heteronomous. Even men, as moral agents, are partly rational and partly sentient according to Kant, and this may explain why they should be treated as ends "and never as means *only*." But since nothing *can* be treated as means only (for the best of tools is no 'tool' to the fumbling tiro), and God alone as end only, men and things must be treated as both ends and means – as means by the recognition of their nature as ends; *i.e.* not as means to the sole and exclusive profit of the self, but for that common profit which, according to individual status and disposition, is derivable only from concinnity.¹ We may use a man as porter or caddie, we may use him as expert or teacher, but only by assigning the agency or endeavour, physical or mental, to him as *ens in se*, for only so can he be of any use to us. We must 'enter sympathetically,' as we say, into his active entity.

Thus in the end morality is the discovery and expression of the appropriate *communitas* or *pseudo-communitas* of the hierarchical self with its hierarchical other. It is dissipated when the self, and modalized when the other, falls short of concinnity; for thus the relation is trans-

¹ Analogous principles apply to man's relation with superior beings, though here the difficulty that we find in identifying such beings "puzzles the will" save in relation with the primordial source of all agents:

... not even while the whirl was worst
 Did I, – to the wheel of life
 With shapes and colours rife
 Bound dizzily – mistake my end, to slake Thy thirst:

So, take and use Thy work:
 Amend what flaws may lurk
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
 R. BROWNING, *Rabbi ben Ezra*.

formed into one of emanent discrepance or hostility by which both self and other are degraded. Even more fatally is it impaired when under bilateral self-reference an illusorily satisfactory relation is achieved. For there is a durational reciprocity of 'objective' relation by which accidental, and therefore transitory, satisfaction may be enjoyed. This is that "*summum periculum*" of which Spinoza speaks as like a "mortal disease" for which we must seek a remedy with all our strength;¹ for to be satisfied by what is by nature unsatisfying, to rest in a reciprocity infected with transeuncy and transiency, to treat both self and other as reciprocal means to a futile end, or to treat as ends what can be but means (or ends only for some inferior being in the hierarchy of nature) – in sum, to take privation for perfection – this is the very essence of vice.

No detailed account of the special dictates of reason that govern the moral life of the self-enfranchizing man in presence of hostility, discrepancy, and concinnity is here to be attempted. Much may be learned from the *Appendix to Part IV.* of the *Ethics* and the propositions preceding on which it is founded. Let no one suppose that such a moral life consists in the relatively easy process of finding methods of compromise and appeasement with a view to superficial agreement. "Men are diverse (for they are rare who live in accordance with the prescripts of reason), yet they are mostly envious, and more inclined to vengeance than to pity. To bear with each, therefore, according to his disposition, and to keep oneself from imitating their *affectus*, needs a singular power of mind."² "But human power is very limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes, so that we do not possess absolute power of adapting to our use the things which are without us. Nevertheless, we shall bear with equanimity those things which happen contrary to what reason requires for our profit if we are conscious that we have done our duty, that the power we have could not have stretched itself so far as to enable us to avoid those things, and that we are a part of the whole of nature, the order of which we follow."³ For man's dependence on "the whole of nature," which in eternal creation is the very condition of man's freedom and agency, in durational emanation is a source of bondage and impotence only to be emended by the distributive correction of distributive self-reference in which each must play his part, must do his duty, and with equanimity suffer the dereliction of the other so far as by greatness and nobility of mind he cannot induce

¹ *De Intell. Emend.*, §.7

² *Eth. IV.*, *Append. xiii.*

³ *Loc. cit.*, xxxii.

it to play its part (for by hatred, contempt, coercion, and the like, he will never do so). Yet greatness and nobility of mind promote actions adapted to the status and disposition of the other, and not uniform and indifferent tenderness or 'pathological' love. That which is contrary to love is alone excluded; for *pseudo-communitas* is a privation, and not the negation, of eternal *communitas*.

Let us now attempt, briefly and summarily, to correlate the variant expressions *sub specie durationis* of *communitas* with typical circumstances in relation with which their claim to rightness can be authenticated. An infinite agent is wholly occupied in creating, *i.e.* eternally actualizing its primordial potency. The finite *creatum* is involved in this eternal act as existing by the *communitas actionum* of all by which it is expounded. The finite *emanatum*, by reason of mutual self-alienation congruent with *distributive* self-reference, is compelled to work through a 'matter' or 'field' with which he must establish concinnity if his agency is to be productive. The other is the self's 'opening,' at once canalizing and enfranchizing it in so far as the act is good or virtuous. The infinite and eternal perfection of *Natura* permeates all modes of *pseudo-communitas* as the essential source of their moral validity, and of which they are variant expressions, in so far as its creativity is diminished by a 'matter' that is never wholly congenial, and often discrepant or repugnant. To each of these types there corresponds an appropriate form of active relation. In relation to the conjugate other, or *alter ego*, moral relation means that mutual realization of self in other that at all levels we call 'love'; in relation to the responsive other it is friendship, amity, sodality, virtuosity, or technique, according to the relative status of self and other; in relation to the insouciant, diffident, or reserved, it is invitation or experiment; in relation to the discrepant, observant and generous toleration; in relation to the irreconcilably hostile, vigorous opposition, but in no spirit of hatred. For moral relation is always "love among the ruins" of Time, taking the form best suited for the emendation of both self and other, and the redintegration of the pulverulence that issues from *distributive* self-reference under the dialectic of finite creation. "Oh, there's repristination!"¹ But the field of its actuality, as Bishop Blougram says, "is Rome or London, not Fool's-paradise."

(iv) THE INCIDENCE OF SALVATION

But though moral relations consist in *communitas* always in some measure

¹ R. Browning, *The Ring and the Book*, i, 23.

infected with *pseuditas* in the “crooked ways of Time,” man’s “noisy years” are but “moments in the being of the eternal silence” of *beatitudo*, and only their redemptive *pseudo-communitas* is of permanent value in duration – not by reason of its *pseuditas*, but of its latent, vitalizing, active *communitas* – because it thus transcends duration. All else is evanescent save as the spectral *nimbus* of finite eternity (the soul’s ‘garden of Eden’), and fatal only if taken as providing the fruit of the ‘tree of knowledge’. Nor do perishable achievements constitute the essential ends of morality, which are not objects of pursuit but are present in the virtuous act¹ as manifesting and participating in that “love for a being infinite and eternal (which) feeds the soul with joy alone, with a joy free from all sorrow,”² “a joy continuous and supreme for eternity.”³

Spinoza-students have often found reason for dubiety in the interpretation of this phrase: ‘continuous ... for eternity,’ with which may be linked the equally doubt-provoking statement with which Spinoza makes the transition to the final section of *Ethices V.*: “With these (propositions) I have concluded all the things which relate to this present life ... It is now time, therefore, to pass to those things which relate to the duration of the mind without relation to the body.”⁴ But if, it is asked, the mind is “the idea of the body *et nihil aliud*,”⁵ how can it endure “without relation to the body?” And again, if eternity “cannot be explained by duration ... even without beginning or end,”⁶ how can there be a joy “continuous for eternity?” How are these *prima facie* paradoxical statements to be explained? As merely defective linguistic approximations to the expression of valid intellectual conceptions; as revelations of final intellectual bankruptcy; or as precise declarations of coherent doctrine? Though the incidence of the first two suggestions cannot be wholly excluded (for the language to express it always limps uneasily behind the thought to be expressed; and the human mind is, after all, but human, and thus never fully solvent), anyone familiar with the lapidary precision of the normal style of Spinoza will be prompted to seek, by all reasonable means possible, a formal significance in these statements coherent with the philosophy as a whole.

The present importance of so doing concerns the relations to be maintained between morality as the “*via ad salutem*,” and the salvation

¹ *Eth. V.*, *xlii.*

² *Tract. de Intell. Emend.*, §.10.

³ *Op. cit.*, §.1.

⁴ *Eth. V.*, *xx. Sch.*

⁵ *Eth. II.*, *xiii.*

⁶ *Eth. I.*, *Def. viii. Explic.*

to which it leads – which must evidently be distinguished since, according to Spinoza, salvation is to be secured either by obedience (with the many)¹ or by enlightenment (through the emendation of the intellect): two paths to one goal available in different degrees to all. To this concern I will confine myself as far as possible.

The simple solution might seem, *prima facie*, to be that man's salvation means the completion of his creation, and is eternal *communitas* in *Natura creata*, while morality is the process of durational emendation towards this end. But this suggests that eternity lies at the far end of duration, so that eternal *communitas* is indefinitely postponed. Not much consideration is required in order to show that here we have no solution of the paradoxes remotely consistent with Spinoza's doctrine, not to say in itself reasonable. A 'goal' wholly unattainable by the means available (and especially in man's brief duration) is, so far as moral 'exertion' is concerned, a mirage. Salvation, if it is to be the moving spirit of morality, the very root of moral obligation, must in some sense, or degree, or manner, be durationally available. The 'ought,' as the Kantians say, implies the 'can' – and, we may add, the 'can' implies the 'is'.

Next, let us take note of the distinction which Spinoza draws between the *durational existence* of the body, and its *eternal essence*,² *i.e.* between its *durational actuality* as *emanatum*, and its *eternal potency-in-act* (from which proceeds its *eternal actuality* as *creatum*).³ In each respect it stands *vis-à-vis* united with the mind which is the 'idea of the body.' We have seen, too, that man, like all finite *creata*, suffers privation of his eternal actuality by self-reference only in proportion to his subjacency in the hierarchy of *Natura creata*. As *emanatum*, therefore, he is thus not entirely cut off from his eternal actuality. But neither is he the mere *sum* of two parts, one eternal and the other durational: he is an *individual agent* suffering privation, and his bifurcation involves no dissociation;⁴ and according as his endeavour after self-emendation suffers the hindrances of self-reference, his apprehension of his eternal actuality remains subject to the categories of his impotence. It is thus that we may *imagine* our minds as enduring *after* the limited duration of our bodies.

Now, Spinoza denies that the mind so endures:⁵ it endures (properly speaking) only as the idea of the durational actuality of the body; yet while it thus endures, it may also exist "without relation" to the en-

¹ See above, p. 168, note 1.

² *Eth. I., xxv.; II., iii.; II., viii.; V., xxii.*

³ *Eth. V., xxii. Dem. cf. V. xxix. Sch.*

⁴ See above, p. 153, note 2.

⁵ *Eth. V., xxiii. Sch.*

during body (*i.e.* without direct *epistemic* relation with it – for the relation of mind and body is essentially epistemic). For its eternal actuality is so far present, and further available, at all times *during* the life of the imaginal body, and may thus fairly be said to be *enduringly* present and available “without relation” to the body *quatenus* enduring – for its object is the *eternal* actuality of the body.

It is thus justifiable to speak of the “duration of the mind without relation to the body,” and of the “blessedness” which is virtue as a “joy continuous and supreme for eternity,” not because the eternal essence of the mind endures, or blessedness is continuous joy, but because while self-reference infects man’s apprehension, eternity itself, which determines the durational ‘present’ as the moment of action, can only be approximated to an unlimited or continuous ‘present.’ This, too, is part of the price of ‘original sin.’

Salvation thus does not lie beyond the end of a durational process of emendation, but because it is ‘eternal life,’ and all duration stems from eternity, it is never wholly absent, and is always further available, in the durational life of man – available, and actually realized in the virtuous act which is itself “blessed” in so far as it is a reflux of duration towards eternity. Not that this or that virtuous act, taken in relative isolation, or even a lifetime of such more or less mutually isolated acts, is of much avail for the realization of ‘eternal life’ while the body endures (and especially in view of the demands of ‘mutual ethics’ for variant modes of *pseudo-communitas*). In such ‘peddling morality,’ which has but little, and that a subordinate, place in the spinozistic conception of the *via ad salutem*, there is little eternal profit. The eternalization of ‘this present life’ depends rather upon the *integrity* of moral ‘exertions’ than upon their occasional, and largely contingent, success – though each success enhances, as each failure impairs, the agent’s moral liberty of choice. It is by the rational *ordering*, or integration, of durational efforts that such integrity of mind is chiefly promoted, and duration irradiated by ‘eternal life’ – either, as we have seen, by an obedient recognition of true moral authority, or by well-conducted emendation of the intellect, or by both in harmony. For thus only is the duration, emanated *stillatim* under the *distributive* self-reference of men, reconsolidated *sub specie aeternitatis*, as the “star” of the melody issues from the sounds of the notes, or the ‘sense’ of the utterance from the meaningful words, and thus the duration of the performance or the utterance transcendently consummated.

Though vulgar ‘enthusiasm’ is remote indeed from the characteristic

disposition of the mind of Spinoza (who, though neither, is nearer to the stoic than to the fanatic), I will venture to describe this transcendent re-consolidation of duration as the 'enthusiasis' of the mind¹ by which its *conatus* is infused with the eternal agency from which it emanates, and *Deus quatenus finitus est* is durationally manifested. It is thus that for Spinoza the 'morality of obedience' is focused in "the love of God in singleness of heart," and the 'liberty of enlightenment' in the "intellectual love of God which arises from the third kind of knowledge,"² i.e. from *Scientia intuitiva* in which the common principles of *Ratio*, the second kind of knowledge, are integrated in the *intellectual life* of the *individual* mind.

And this, too, is available while the body endures, though "without relation" to the durational actuality of the body – for the object of *Scientia intuitiva* is the eternal, not the durational, actuality of the body. Nor, indeed, is it ever *merely* 'available,' but always in some degree actually in being: from the inchoate consciousness of self in the mere relation and contrast with durational others, through all degrees up to its eternal perfection in *communitas* with its co-created complement in *Natura creata*. For consciousness of the active self is essentially intuitive in all its forms (as Descartes rightly suggested – for '*cogito ergo sum*' means '*cogitans sum*,' and involves no inference), and it is thus that the emendation of the intellect leads to that intellectual integration of "self and God and things" which is God's infinite intellectual love of himself in so far as he is actual in man as finite *creatum*.³ It is in virtue of this essential presence, and unlimited further availability, of intuitive knowledge of self as integrated with other selves divinely co-created, that human salvation, or the love of God, imaginational or intellectual, takes many forms or modalities, from philosophic quietude of mind in the contemplation of the transcendent unity of the infinite multiplicity of things, to single-minded obedience to the prophet's freely imagined commands of God; and from a consistently developed and conserved righteousness of disposition to such apparently praeternatural imaginational transvaluations and illuminations as were experienced by the apostle on the road "nigh unto Damascus."⁴

¹ I.e. possession by God (ἐνθεός). In comparison with Spinoza's 'intellectual love of God,' the divine possession of Bruno's *De gli eroici furori* appears as a caricature, a romantic fanaticism – its '*hyperaemia*' inevitable because man as finite *creatum* is conceived as possessed by *Deus* – *quatenus infinitus est*. The *enthusiasis* of man as conceived by Spinoza is possession of man as *emanatum* by his own eternal potency-in-act as *Deus quatenus finitus est*.

² *Eth. V.*, xxxiii.

³ *Eth. V.*, xxxv., xxxvi.

⁴ Nor should we forget Richard Jefferies seated on his grass-grown tumulus, "absorbed in

In the moral life man 'pulls himself together'¹ to seek with all his strength a remedy against the mortal peril confronting him as *emanatum*. In the apolaustic life there is dependence on the contingent co-operation and hindrance from an other alienated (in part at least by the self itself) by self-reference, with periods of joy and sorrow determined by, and promoting, endeavours after natural goods, and away from natural evils, that, as objective (and thus largely beyond the controlling power of the self) provide no continuing satisfaction. And to pursue them beyond their proper scope is to take "the broad way that leadeth to destruction"; for the 'natural' man is but a species of higher ape, and the wicked man labours to destroy himself – each being but a "tool in the hand of the workman, which serves unconsciously, and perishes in the use." "Vain and futile" *to the self itself* is such a life, not so much by reason of its content as by reason of its disorder. For "consciousness of self and its power of acting" is the source not only of "*acquiescentia in se ipso*,"² i.e. quietude of mind with a "conscience like a sea at rest," which is eternal *beatitudo*, but even of durational 'joy'³ which is experienced when *conatus* with respect to an other issues in a transition to a greater perfection. For both the 'active *affectus*,' or durational 'exertions,' and eternal *beatitudo* are *ideae ideae*, ideas of self-appraisal, the former summary, the latter adequate, signaling the transition to, and the enjoyment of, perfection respectively. And though, as Spinoza insists,⁴ with joy it is the *transition* that measures a man's durational 'power of acting,' durational joy is by nature transitional because it is but (though also, at least) the privative, continued, emanation of *beatitudo*, which under emendation can be reconstituted, losing only the *pseuditas*. Partial and parasitical 'excitements'⁵ may be "vain and futile," but true joy, undivorced from its transcendent source, is an essential characteristic of the good durational life. For Spinoza was no preacher of asceticism.⁶

In short, then, though moral development must be durational, that which it achieves is not postponed, but is ever 'present in the act,' which draws from an influx of eternal potency sufficient for the enactment, the glory of the day, the sunshine, the sweet air, the yellowing corn"; feeling the nothingness of the transeuncy of Time, and the eternity of the ever-present Now: "Now is eternity, now is the immortal life. Here this moment, by this tumultus, on earth, now; I exist in it" (*The Story of My Heart*, chap. 3.). Cf. p. 108, note 1 above.

¹ *Se cogere*. Cf. *Tract. de Intell. Emend.*, §.7.

² *Eth. III., Aff. Def. xxv.*

³ *Eth. III., Aff. Def. ii.*

⁴ *Eth. III., Aff. Def. iii. Explic.*

⁵ 'Titillatio' (*Eth. III., xi. Sch.*)

⁶ Cf. *Eth. IV., xlv. Sch.* See above, p. 57, note 2.

and, as enacted, conveys congruent enfranchisement. The salvation by which morality is irradiated and crowned lies, as it were, along another 'dimension' than that of time, is no "far-off divine event," no durational object of pursuit. The "narrow way that leadeth unto life," difficult as it may be to discern, and steep to ascend, is nevertheless open from every occasion of man's duration. By its discovery and ensuement 'life eternal' may be enjoyed "while the body endures," as a "joy supreme and continuous for eternity" which, not *survives* the death of the body, but *transcends* its durational actuality, being thus not subject to the limitations, either intrinsic or extrinsic, of finite duration. And not only is the gift of eternal life not postponed to a problematical future life, it is not reserved for the few who can claim to be "wise and understanding" – it may be sought and found, while the body endures, by the "wayfar-ing man" as by 'obedience' he seeks to "naturalize himself to the employments of eternity"; nay, it may be enjoyed even by the truly naive – each in his own way:

"If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not."¹

¹ Wordsworth, *A Beauteous Evening*

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