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*Proved in Geometrical Order*

Edited by  
Matthew J. Kisner

CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE  
HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY



BENEDICT DE SPINOZA  
*Ethics*  
*Proved in Geometrical Order*

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HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

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BENEDICT DE SPINOZA

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*Ethics*  
*Proved in Geometrical Order*

EDITED BY

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## Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <i>Acknowledgements</i>   | page vii |
| <i>List of abbreviations</i>  | ix       |
| <i>Introduction</i>   | xi       |
| <i>Chronology</i>   | xxxix    |
| <i>Further reading</i>  | xliii    |
| <i>Note on the text and translation</i>                                       | xlvii    |
| <br>  |          |
| ETHICS  | I        |
| First Part: Of God  | 3        |
| Second Part: Of <i>the Nature and Origin</i> of the Mind                      | 43       |
| Third Part: Of <i>the Origin and Nature</i> of the Emotions                   | 93       |
| Fourth Part: Of <i>Human Servitude, or Of the Strength</i><br>of the Emotions | 157      |
| Fifth Part: Of <i>the Power of the Intellect, or Of Human Freedom</i>         | 221      |
| <br>  |          |
| <i>Glossary</i>   | 251      |
| <i>Index</i>  | 265      |



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## Abbreviations

Spinoza makes frequent references to the various parts of the *Ethics*. For the sake of conciseness, we employ the following abbreviations in the translation of the text and throughout this volume.

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| a    | axiom                      |
| app  | appendix                   |
| c    | corollary                  |
| def  | definition                 |
| DOE  | Definition of the Emotions |
| ex   | explanation                |
| L    | lemma                      |
| p    | proposition                |
| post | postulate                  |
| pref | preface                    |
| s    | scholium                   |

The part of the *Ethics* is indicated by an arabic number at the beginning of the citation. So 4p37s1 refers to the first scholium of proposition 37 of Part Four.



## Introduction

In July of 1675 Spinoza travelled from his home in The Hague to Amsterdam to oversee the publication of his *Ethics*. He must have been bursting with excitement. The *Ethics* was the culmination of nearly fifteen years of philosophical reflection. It was also an astonishing intellectual achievement, as close as anyone had ever come to attaining the holy grail of early modern philosophy: an integrated and comprehensive system of thought, covering the gamut of philosophical topics, including God, physics, psychology, knowledge and ethics. Furthermore, the *Ethics* audaciously purports to prove this system on the basis of geometrical demonstration, the sort of rigorous proof famously employed by Euclid, which attains the highest degree of certainty.

Spinoza's excitement was also mixed with trepidation, for he knew that the *Ethics* would be controversial, to say the least. The first reason for controversy was the *Ethics*'s evident debt to René Descartes (1596–1650), the renowned natural philosopher and mathematician, who had become a polarizing figure in Dutch universities. In opposition to much of the Aristotelian philosophy that traditionally dominated universities, Descartes defended a mechanistic science, which was a cornerstone of what is known as the Scientific Revolution. Mechanistic science aims to explain natural systems as one would explain machines, in terms of the arrangement and movement of matter in space. In the Netherlands, where Aristotelianism had a more precarious foothold, various kinds of Cartesian philosophy spread rapidly among the faculty, particularly in Utrecht and Leiden. Cartesianism was met with hostility by conservative theologians such as Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676) and

Jacobus Revius (1586–1685), primarily because it threatened a strain of Protestant theology that draws on Aristotelian metaphysics. In an effort to keep the peace in the universities, the provincial councils of the States of Holland and West-Friesland declared that professors of philosophy must take an oath to cease propounding Cartesianism, although it would eventually come to dominate Dutch universities. While Spinoza was highly critical of Descartes, much of the *Ethics* proceeds from Cartesian starting points. Spinoza was also associated with Descartes because he had published a commentary on Descartes's *Principles of Philosophy*, the only work to have been published under Spinoza's name during his lifetime.

But the *Ethics* was far more subversive than Descartes or the Dutch Cartesians. Among its many incendiary claims, the *Ethics* defended the idea that God is identical to nature. This view explodes the traditional distinction between the study of God and of creation, that is, between theology and natural philosophy. It also opposes fundamental claims of Christian theology, particularly the notion that God created the natural world *ex nihilo*. Furthermore, identifying God and nature commits Spinoza to a profound sort of naturalism: if all things are part of nature and there exist no supernatural entities or powers, then all things must be explainable in the same way in which we explain the natural world. This approach justifies using natural philosophy, including the new mechanistic science of Descartes and others, to understand not just physics, but also the human mind, psychology and emotions. This naturalistic approach to human behavior echoes Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). For these views, Hobbes was widely condemned and his writings were frequently banned. But Spinoza's view on the identity of God and nature are closer to those of Adriaan Koerbagh (1633–1669), a friend of Spinoza and a close intellectual associate. For publishing his views, Koerbagh was sentenced to ten years of hard labor in an Amsterdam prison, where he died under the harsh conditions. Given these stakes, Spinoza's decision to publish the *Ethics* could not have been an easy one.

But Spinoza was no stranger to controversy, no matter how much he may have disliked it. He was born Baruch de Espinoza on November 24, 1632 to Hanna and Michael de Espinoza. His father was a Sephardic Jewish merchant, and his family belonged to a community of Portuguese Jews who had moved to Amsterdam in order to practice their faith and

escape religious persecution, including forced conversion to Catholicism. In 1619 the Amsterdam city council granted Jews the right to practice their religion openly, but also required that the Jewish community strictly observe Jewish law, lest they become involved in religious disputes among Calvinists and dissenters. Partly for this reason, leaders of the Jewish community were concerned to police the theological views of their members, often by dispensing *herem*, writs of excommunication, to those who strayed from Jewish orthodoxy. Policing the boundaries of orthodoxy in this community was no simple task because many of its members were descended from Marranos, the Portuguese Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity. Their beliefs and practices had been influenced by Christianity, particularly in their efforts to continue practicing Judaism covertly during their forced conversions.

In his youth Spinoza attended the local Talmud Torah school in Amsterdam, where he studied the Hebrew language, the Bible and the Talmud. However, sometime after his father died and Spinoza, along with his brother Gabriel, took over the family business, it became evident that Spinoza's thinking had drifted from prescribed Jewish thought. Around this time, he is presumed to have begun studying Latin at the school of Franciscus van den Enden (1602–1674), a somewhat radical freethinker and political activist. Van den Enden's ultimate political projects included contributing, along with Pieter Ploekhoy, to the founding of a utopian settlement in the New Netherlands (present-day Delaware) and conspiring against the French King, Louis XIV, to establish a republic in Normandy; the conspiracy eventually resulted in his being hanged before the Bastille. Spinoza's studies at the school likely acquainted him with van den Enden's political views and possibly even Cartesianism. Through his studies and his new associates among the merchant class, Spinoza also became acquainted with the collegiants, a somewhat motley group of Protestant dissenters from various sects, including Anabaptists and Socinians, who eschewed institutional religion, confessionalism and clerical authority. Their biweekly 'colleges,' which resembled Quaker meetings, combined worship and study without the guidance of preachers or leaders.

Spinoza's expanding social horizons were likely both a cause and effect of changes in his philosophical, theological and religious beliefs, though his precise views at the time are unclear. Members of the Jewish community were evidently unhappy with the course Spinoza was

pursuing, for on July 27, 1656, Spinoza was excommunicated. While a *herem* would often be used as a tool to bring straying congregants back into the fold, Spinoza's *herem* did not contain provisions for repentance and forgiveness. The language of the *herem* was particularly punitive: 'the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven'.<sup>1</sup> The *herem* forbade any member of the Jewish community to communicate with Spinoza in any way, or to admit him into their homes, or even to allow him to approach within four cubits of them.

The consequences of the *herem* were momentous. For Spinoza it meant the end of his relationship with his family, and of his career in his family's business. In Spinoza's childhood, a similar *herem* had been issued against another member of the congregation, Uriel da Costa. He had been censured for his heterodox views, some of which may have been shared by Spinoza at the time of his *herem*, such as the denial of an immortal soul. According to da Costa's autobiography, he was allowed to rejoin the community, though the terms for repentance required a public whipping in the synagogue, after which the members of the congregation exited by stepping upon his prostrate body.<sup>2</sup> Da Costa ended his own life a few days after enduring this humiliation. The event demonstrates the enormous cost of free thinking in Spinoza's world.

It is extremely revealing of Spinoza's character that, having likely witnessed this cost firsthand, he accepted it willingly and without regret. Rather than contest the *herem*, which he apparently expected and perhaps even invited, he displayed the courage of his convictions by embarking upon a new life independent of the Jewish community, a life devoted to the pursuit of philosophical truth. He adopted a new vocation, grinding lenses for scientific instruments, which afforded him the freedom to pursue philosophy and put him into contact with some of the greatest scientists of his day, such as Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695). He immersed himself in a circle of intellectual associates

<sup>1</sup> This passage, which was read before the ark of the synagogue on the Houtgracht, is taken from the Jewish Archives of the Municipal Archives of the City of Amsterdam. The translation is from Asa Kasher and Shlomo Biderman, 'Why Was Spinoza Excommunicated?' *Studia Rosenthaliana* 12 (1978): 98–9.

<sup>2</sup> There is some question about the reliability of the autobiography, which may have been tampered with by da Costa's critics.

and like-minded friends, primarily collegiants, who admired and supported his philosophical endeavors. Spinoza even took a new name, replacing Baruch with the Latinized Benedict. He was evidently pleased with his newfound freedom. Many years later, in 1673, Spinoza was offered a chair in Philosophy at the University of Heidelberg, a flattering and prestigious offer, which he declined. Among his concerns, he worried that the position would confine his ‘freedom to philosophize.’<sup>3</sup>

Given Spinoza’s intellectual courage and profound commitment to free thinking, it is somewhat surprising that he reversed his decision to publish the *Ethics* within a few days of his arrival in Amsterdam to oversee the printing. The reasons have everything to do with his *Theological-Political Treatise* (TTP), which he had published anonymously five years earlier, though Spinoza’s identity as the author was an open secret. The TTP defended freedom of thought and speech, and criticized what Spinoza regarded as the greatest threat to freedom: religious superstition. While Spinoza had harbored naïve hopes that the TTP would be conciliatory and perhaps even warm the public to the philosophical system of the *Ethics*, the TTP was widely condemned and established Spinoza’s reputation as a threat to piety and religion. As a result, leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church and the secular authorities were on the lookout for Spinoza. From The Hague, Theodore Rijckius wrote,

there is a rumor among us that the author of the *Theological-Political Treatise* is about to issue a book on God and the mind, one even more dangerous than the first. It will be up to you and those who, with you, are occupied with governing the Republic, to make sure that this book is not published. For it is incredible how much that man, who has striven to overthrow the principles of our most holy faith, has already harmed the Republic.<sup>4</sup>

Once Spinoza caught wind of this opposition, he prudently withdrew the *Ethics*.<sup>5</sup>

The *Ethics* did not appear in print until after Spinoza’s death. Spinoza was still a young man of forty-four when he died unexpectedly on

<sup>3</sup> From letter 48 in Spinoza’s correspondence.

<sup>4</sup> From Freudenthal, J. *Die Lebensgeschichte Spinoza’s in Quellenschriften, Urkunden und Nichtamtlichen Nachrichten* (Leipzig: Verlag Von Veit, 1899), 200.

<sup>5</sup> See letter 68.



February 21, 1677, likely from a respiratory condition dating from his childhood and exacerbated by inhaling glass dust from his lens grinding. Spinoza's friends gathered up the contents of his writing desk, which included the *Ethics*, and prepared them for publication. His posthumous works appeared in Latin and Dutch by the end of the year. The fact that no edition of the *Ethics* appeared during Spinoza's lifetime accounts for many of the uncertainties about the definitive text, which are mentioned in the Note on the text and translation.

### The aim and method of the *Ethics*

It is peculiar that the *Ethics* lacks an introduction to explain its aims and methods. Rather, it unceremoniously dives into a series of technical definitions, which can leave readers stumped. Fortunately Spinoza provided something like an introduction in his earlier, unpublished *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* (TdIE), where he described in refreshingly personal terms what motivated his philosophical investigations:

After experience had taught me that all the things which regularly occur in ordinary life are empty and futile, and I saw that all the things which were the cause or object of my fear had nothing of good or bad in themselves, except insofar as my mind was moved by them, I resolved at last to try to find out whether there was anything which would be the true good, capable of communicating itself, and which alone would affect the mind, all others being rejected—whether there was something which, once found and acquired, would continuously give me the greatest joy, to eternity. (TdIE 1)<sup>6</sup>

These important autobiographical remarks provide insight into Spinoza's reasons for breaking with the Jewish community and devoting his life to philosophy. They also tell us the aims of his philosophical project: to attain the 'highest happiness' (*summa felicitas*) (TdIE 2) and the 'highest good' (TdIE 3), and to determine the 'conduct and plan of life' that will lead him to do so (TdIE 3). This project of planning one's life to secure the highest good and happiness is familiar from the history of

<sup>6</sup> The TdIE is cited by paragraph number. Translations follow Edwin Curley, *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) with minor modifications.

philosophy, particularly from the ethics of antiquity, an important part of the classical tradition that Spinoza had likely studied at van den Enden's school. The TdIE asserts that the highest good and the source of the greatest happiness is the perfection of one's nature that comes from acquiring 'cognition of the union that the mind has with the whole of nature' (TdIE 13). This claim echoes not only the ancients, but also the work of another Sephardic Jewish outcast, Moses Maimonides (1135/1138–1204), an important interlocutor of Spinoza's philosophy. Spinoza's autobiographical remarks indicate that the *Ethics* is the fruit of this philosophical investigation, that is, the knowledge that constitutes our highest good.

This way of thinking about the *Ethics* explains the connection between two of its central aims. The first aim, which is the starting point of the *Ethics* and has traditionally received the most attention by philosophers, is to explain the fundamental nature of reality. The second aim, which justifies the work's title, is to provide an ethical theory that explains virtue, perfection, freedom and our highest good. These projects are tightly interwoven, for the metaphysical project provides us with knowledge of nature and the mind's union with nature, while the ethical project shows us how this knowledge leads us to ethical ends, including attaining the highest good, the source of our highest happiness. This way of understanding the *Ethics* is evident in its structure: after showing in Part One that God is equivalent to nature, Spinoza then turns his attention in Part Two to the human mind and its place in nature. Part Three uses this metaphysical investigation to provide a theory of the emotions. Parts Four and Five then draw on this theory to show how this metaphysical knowledge – of the mind's place in nature – provides us with our highest good, and highest happiness. These last parts also explain how to live in order to attain these goals, or in other words, ethics.

While the primary aims of the *Ethics* are accessible, its method is less so. In the geometrical method, every conclusion is spelled out in a numbered proposition. In order to ensure the certainty of the conclusions, each proposition is accompanied by a proof, which deduces the proposition from the preceding propositions, as well as from a collection of axioms or necessary truths, and definitions of the fundamental terms. With the exception of Part Five, each part of the *Ethics* offers its own set of axioms and definitions, which are essential to understanding its

particular subject matter. In this way, the geometrical method can be understood as tracing the logical consequences of a few basic definitions and principles.

What, then, is the basis for the definitions, on which the whole edifice of proofs depends? While the geometrical method does not call for proofs of the basic definitions, Spinoza provides some insight into the nature and significance of definitions in the TdIE, which again proves a helpful companion for reading the *Ethics*: ‘to be called perfect, a definition will have to explain the inmost essence of the thing’ (TdIE 95). Definitions pick out essences, what gives things their distinctive character and qualities, what makes them the things that they are. Furthermore, definitions pick out ‘the inmost essence,’ which means that they identify the basis for deducing all of a thing’s essential features and, more generally, its properties (*proprietas*), the features of a thing that are necessary to it but do not belong to its essence.<sup>7</sup> When a definition ‘is considered alone, without any other things conjoined, all the thing’s properties can be deduced from it’ (TdIE 96). Given this understanding of definitions, Spinoza’s geometrical method can be understood as mapping out the chains of reasoning by which all of the complex properties of things can be deduced from their most basic qualities.

Spinoza’s method is importantly different from Euclid’s. Whereas Euclid applies his method to abstract, ideal figures, such as perfect circles, triangles and planes, which may exist only in our understanding, Spinoza applied his method to metaphysics, the study of the reality and natures of things, including things that exist in nature: minds, bodies, human beings. Spinoza’s application of the method supposes that our basic conceptions of things accurately reflect their actual natures and, furthermore, that the logical consequences of our conceptions map onto the actual order of things in nature. In other words, Spinoza’s method supposes that reality possesses a rational order, such that we can understand the natures of things by analyzing the logical relations among our concepts.

This notion, a cornerstone of what is loosely described as Spinoza’s rationalism, is enshrined in one of the most important axioms of the *Ethics*: ‘cognition of an effect depends upon the cognition of its cause and

<sup>7</sup> This is how ‘property’ was defined by Suárez in *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, 3.I.I.

involves it' (1a4). This axiom asserts foremost that properly conceiving of a thing requires conceiving of its causes. In other words, if  $x$  causes  $y$ , then the conception of  $y$  requires conceiving of  $x$ . According to this claim, the proper conception of any single thing requires conceiving of God, since God is the cause of all things. Spinoza also takes the axiom to imply the even stronger claim, that we can infer the causal dependence of one thing on another from the logical dependence of our concepts on one another. This is the dependence where one concept logically entails another in such a way that conceiving of the consequent requires conceiving of the antecedent. For instance, the Pythagorean theorem logically follows from the nature of a triangle so that one cannot even conceive the theorem without also conceiving of a triangle. For Spinoza, if conceiving  $x$  requires conceiving  $y$  in this way, then  $y$  must cause  $x$ . This second claim justifies reading off the order of nature from the logical relationship among our concepts. Taken together, these two claims assert that the relations of causal dependence among things mirrors the relations of conceptual dependence in our understanding of them; in other words, the relations are coextensive. This mirroring justifies Spinoza's method of deducing the nature of reality from a logical analysis of our concepts.

Spinoza's basic metaphysical terms: Substance, attribute, mode

Understanding this rationalistic commitment helps to make sense of Spinoza's basic metaphysical vocabulary, which is set forth in the first part of the *Ethics*. Spinoza belongs to a tradition that regards substances as the most basic and fundamental things. In this tradition a substance is supposed to possess a particular sort of independence, the sort which properties or qualities generally lack. Properties and qualities depend on a thing or subject in which they exist or inhere, as the whiteness exists in the snow, or a rip exists in a piece of paper. Aristotle put the point this way: a substance (*ousia*) is 'that of which the other things are predicated, while it is not itself predicated of anything else.'<sup>8</sup> For Aristotle, the substance is the subject of predication (the thing that is said to be white or ripped), but is not predicated of other subjects. In other words, it is

<sup>8</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* VII (Z), 1028b36. Translation by W. D. Ross from *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. II, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1624.

not the sort of thing that inheres in some other thing in the way that predicated things, such as the quality of being white, inhere in subjects, such as snow. This conception of a substance as an independent thing was articulated, albeit with important differences, by Descartes, who understood a substance more straightforwardly as ‘a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence.’<sup>9</sup>

Spinoza agrees that a substance is marked by the sort of independence that properties and qualities lack. His definition asserts that a substance is ‘in itself’ (1def3), in other words, it inheres or exists in itself only, not in other things, as properties and qualities do. Spinoza also claims that substance is conceptually independent, ‘conceived through itself, i.e. no concept of any other thing is needed for forming a concept of it’ (1def3). Because of Spinoza’s rationalistic notion that conceptual and causal relationships are coextensive, it follows that substance is also causally independent. According to this definition, a substance depends on nothing else for its existence. This echoes Descartes’s definition.

Spinoza’s rationalistic way of thinking about causation and conception informs his account of the main qualities of substance: attributes and modes. Descartes employed the notion of attribute in order to secure a mechanistic science, in opposition to the Aristotelian philosophy common in universities of the time. To this end, Descartes conceived of extension as the defining features of physical things, so that all of their qualities and properties are explainable in terms of the particular way they are extended and occupy space: their shapes, sizes and motions. Consequently Descartes described extension as the essence of all bodies, thereby downplaying the role that essences traditionally play in scholastic philosophy in distinguishing things from one another. Partly for this reason, Descartes introduced the notion of attribute to denote this special kind of essence: ‘one principal property which constitutes its [a thing’s] nature and essence, and to which all its other properties are referred.’<sup>10</sup> All of a thing’s other properties are ‘referred’ to the attribute in the sense that they can be explained and conceived in terms of the attribute. According to this view, all properties of bodies must be

<sup>9</sup> From René Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy*, Part I, section 52. Translations of the *Principles* are from *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>10</sup> *Principles*, Part I, section 53.

explained in terms of the particular shape and motion of some matter. Descartes refers to these other properties as ‘modes,’ the particular ways that things possess an attribute (in the case of bodies, particular ways of being extended): ‘by mode, we understand exactly the same as what is elsewhere meant by an attribute or quality. But we employ the term mode when we are thinking of a substance as being affected or modified.’<sup>11</sup>

Spinoza takes up Descartes’s notion that an attribute is the essence of a substance: ‘by attribute I mean that which the intellect perceives of a substance as constituting its essence’ (1def4). Since, as we have seen, Spinoza understands essences as the conceptual basis for conceiving all of a thing’s properties, he also agrees with Descartes that an attribute is the basis for conceiving and explaining all of a thing’s properties and qualities. For Spinoza, who regards conceptual relations as coextensive with causal relations, this claim implies that an attribute is also the cause of all a thing’s properties and qualities.

Spinoza also follows Descartes in conceiving the other properties and qualities of things as modes. Spinoza defines modes foremost as ‘affections’ or qualities of substance, that is, what is ‘in’ or inheres in a substance (1def5). Like Descartes, Spinoza identifies a close conceptual or explanatory connection between modes and attributes. According to Spinoza’s definition, modes are conceived through a substance (1def5). Since Spinoza holds that all of the properties of a thing must be caused by and conceived through its essence and that the essence of a substance is its attribute, this definition entails that modes can only be conceived through attributes. Furthermore, since Spinoza understands causal and conceptual relations as coextensive, it also entails that modes of an attribute must be caused by the attribute (see 1p16, proof).

### Nature as the one substance

These definitions set the stage for Spinoza’s bold metaphysical claims in Part One. The most fundamental of these is that there is only one substance, which is God. This claim is set up by Spinoza’s definition of a substance as what depends on no other thing for its existence, since

<sup>11</sup> *Principles*, Part I, section 56.

it is usually held that all things depend on God for their existence. Spinoza's proof for this claim (1p1–1p15) depends on his definition of God as 'absolutely infinite being,' more specifically, a substance possessing infinite attributes or essences (1def6). Given Spinoza's view that all of a thing's properties are derivable from its essence, it is unsurprising to find that Spinoza's definition of God as possessing all the attributes entails in short order that all things must be conceived through God. This entails that they cannot be independent substances because substances, by definition, are conceived only through themselves.<sup>12</sup>

According to this view, God is both identical to the natural world and the cause of the natural world. Consequently, God can be conceived in two ways: firstly, as the active principle in nature that ultimately causes all things and, second, as the effects or products of that activity. Drawing on ancient philosophy, Spinoza refers to the former conception as *natura naturans* (literally, nature naturing) and the latter as *natura naturata* (nature natured) (1p29s). According to the former conception, nature is the cause of itself and is conceived through itself. We understand nature in this way when we conceive of nature as attributes. This is because attributes, as the essence of substance, logically imply and, consequently, cause all of nature's properties, including everything in the natural world. According to the latter conception, nature is understood as an effect and, thus, as caused by and conceived through something else. We understand nature in this way when we conceive of nature as modes, since modes inhere in something else, through which they must be conceived.

Given this metaphysical picture, particular finite things (such as trees or people) must be modes, and not substances, contra Descartes and Aristotle. This is because finite things must be conceived through God, more specifically, through an attribute of God, since all things should be understood through their essences. While Spinoza identifies these particular things with God, he does not understand them as *parts* of God. Spinoza holds that parts precede the whole, both in the nature of things and in our understanding (1p12proof, letter 35). Consequently,

<sup>12</sup> I am describing here some conceptual pressures that lead Spinoza to substance monism. This is not quite how the argument actually goes. Spinoza's argument rather asserts that two substances cannot share the same attribute (1p5). Given that God has all attributes, this implies that there cannot exist any other substance (1p14).

claiming that particular things are parts of God would imply that they precede God, whereas Spinoza thinks that all things follow from God. Rather, Spinoza understands the relationship between particular things and God as the relation that holds between modes and substance: the inherence relation, the relation of being ‘in’ God. On this basis, it is sometimes said that Spinoza upholds not pantheism, the view that all things are God, but rather *panentheism*, the view that all things are *in* God.

This view of the relationship between particular things and God has an important metaphysical consequence. As I showed at the end of the previous section, Spinoza holds that God’s attributes logically imply the modes of the attributes. Since Spinoza also holds that conceptual and causal relations are coextensive, it follows that God’s essence causes the modes, and with the same necessity that one proposition logically entails another (1p16). This amounts to causal determinism, the view that all things are fixed or causally determined to happen as they do by some prior cause, namely God’s essence.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, Spinoza also holds that God’s nature is fixed, so that it could not ‘be other than it now is’ (1p33, proof). This implies necessitarianism, a strong version of causal determinism, which holds that all things are necessary. In Spinoza’s words, ‘things could not have been produced by God in any other way or in any other order than they have been produced’ (1p33).

Traditionally this strong sort of causal determinism has been regarded as inconsistent with the possibility of freedom. Consequently, it has also been regarded as inconsistent with morality, since freedom is often understood as a condition for being morally responsible, and for being subject to praise and blame. Spinoza, however, believes that freedom is possible in a causally determined world. The view that freedom is compatible with causal determinism is now called ‘compatibilism.’ He defines freedom as being the cause – even the necessary cause – of

<sup>13</sup> A qualification is in order here. Spinoza does not say that God’s nature or attributes give rise to modes directly. He claims that God’s attributes, considered absolutely, entail only modes that are infinite, eternal and necessarily existing, like the attributes themselves (1p21). These infinite modes are universal features of all modes belonging to an attribute; for instance, the property of being in motion or at rest belongs to all the modes of extension. In contrast, finite modes are not caused directly by God’s attributes, since they must be caused by other finite modes (1p28). Nevertheless, God is the cause of all things (1p18), which implies that even these finite modes are caused indirectly by God’s essence. Presumably God’s essence implies the infinite causal sequence of finite modes.



oneself, both of one's actions and existence (1def7). As such, a thing can be both causally determined and free, so long as it is causally determined by itself, rather than by external things. On this view, God is free, since his existence and properties are determined internally by his essence. Particular things, such as humans, also attain some degree of freedom to the extent that they determine their own states and actions. Attaining this sort of freedom is one of Spinoza's main ethical goals.

Of course, this conception of freedom is controversial because it opposes the common view that freedom requires acting spontaneously, that is, without being determined by prior causes. Partly for this reason, Spinoza rejects the existence of an internal power that determines us to act without being determined by any other causes, what is sometimes called free will (2p49s) or free decision (*liberum arbitrium*) (3p2s). Spinoza's conception of freedom also rules out the common view that God's actions are free in the sense that they depend only on his will (1p33s2). This claim is connected to the most radical aspect of Spinoza's conception of God: the denial that God is a deliberating agent, who makes choices as human agents do. Spinoza criticizes this personal conception of God as arising from people's prejudices, which ultimately 'depend upon a single one: that human beings commonly suppose that, like themselves, all natural things act for a purpose' (1app). According to Spinoza, God has no plans for us or for nature; nature and God simply are, without any purposive design. Spinoza's God is the power that determines all things, more like the big bang than the God of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This implies that God's actions cannot be described in moral terms, as just or fair, and we should not suppose that God envisions some ideal way of life for humans or provides moral commands for us. These conclusions should be taken not as denying morality or ethics – the text is ultimately directed at ethical aims – but rather as committing Spinoza to a secular ethics, grounded entirely independently of a divine will.

### Minds and bodies

Spinoza's notion that particular things follow from God's essence raises some difficult questions. We have seen that God has many – indeed, an infinite number – of essences or attributes, though, according to Spinoza, we only have knowledge of two attributes, the same attributes

recognized by Descartes: thought and extension. How are we to understand the relationship between these essences? How can a thing have two (or more) essences? And what is the relationship among the various modes of each attribute? The answers to these questions are best understood in the context of Spinoza's 'parallelism.' Spinoza establishes this view primarily in 2p7 and 2p7s, but it takes some philosophical and interpretive work to draw out the main claims. The view holds that the modes of the various attributes are parallel to one another in the sense that each mode of an attribute has corresponding modes in each of the other attributes. A mode of the attribute of thought (an idea) corresponds to some particular extended mode (a body), as well as to a particular mode for each of the other infinite attributes.

Parallelism endorses three specific claims about these parallel modes. First, the modes of the attribute of thought (ideas) represent the corresponding modes of the attribute of extension (bodies). For instance, the ideas in my mind represent the corresponding modes in my body. This implies that there are ideas for every bodily thing, so that even tables and chairs have some sort of primitive mind in the sense that they are perceiving things. Second, the causal and conceptual relationships between the modes of any attribute are mirrored by the causal and conceptual relationships between their corresponding modes in each of the other attributes. According to this view, if a body causes an effect to my body – suppose that a ball bumps up against my foot – then the idea that corresponds to the external body (the idea of the ball) must also cause an effect in the idea that corresponds to my body (the idea of my foot). Third, the parallel modes are identical (2p7s). So, the modes of my mind and of my body are the same thing, which is 'expressed' in different ways through the attribute of thought and extension respectively. This suggests that the modes themselves are what is invariant across the different versions of them expressed under each attribute: their causal relations and, thus, their causal powers. According to this view, thought and extension both qualify as the essence of substance because all the modes of substance (all particular things) can be explained by and are caused by both attributes.

Spinoza's commitment to parallelism makes an important break from – and, in Spinoza's view, a decided improvement over – Cartesian metaphysics. Descartes famously held that there are two distinct kinds of substances: bodily substances, which possess the attribute of extension,

and mental substances, which possess the attribute of thought. This substance dualism famously raises philosophical problems: if mental and bodily substances have entirely different properties, then how can they interact with one another? How can a thought bring about an effect in a body, such as putting it into motion, and how can a body cause an effect in a thought, when thought is not extended and does not occupy space? Furthermore, how can human beings be truly unified, when we are composed of two such different substances?

To some extent Spinoza sidesteps these problems because he denies that minds and bodies are different substances, but he must still explain the apparent interaction of minds and bodies, and how they can be unified in human beings, given that minds and bodies are completely different. Spinoza's parallelism addresses these difficulties, first, by explaining how minds and bodies are unified: minds and their corresponding bodies are identical (2p21, proof). This view is appealing to those who want to avoid dualism, though one might worry about how to make sense of the strange identity that holds between two essentially different things. Secondly, parallelism eliminates the need for mind-body interaction, which Spinoza actually rules out as impossible (3p2). According to parallelism, what appears to be an interaction between mind and body is actually two parallel but causally separated causal sequences, one among bodily modes and the other among the corresponding mental modes.

### Endeavor

While the foregoing metaphysical claims are interesting and valuable in their own right, we must not forget that their aim is ultimately ethical. To move his discussion in this direction, Spinoza traces the consequences of these metaphysical theories for understanding human beings. We have seen that Spinoza understands particular things, which include human beings, as finite modes of the one substance. But this leaves open the question of how to understand the natures or essences of particular things.

Because Spinoza understands particular things as modes of God, his answer depends on his conception of God. Spinoza accepts a version of the common theological view that God's essence implies his existence (1p11). In light of Spinoza's view that causal and conceptual relations are

coextensive, this implies that God is self-caused. From this Spinoza concludes that God's essence is power; in other words, the ability to bring about effects, specifically, God's actions and existence (1p34). It follows that particular things, which are modes of God's essence or attributes, are expressions of God's power, containing some aspect of God's power (3p6, proof). On this basis, Spinoza argues that particular things possess a special power by which they also act and exist, which he calls an endeavor. Endeavor is a thing's power to persist in existence and to resist opposing forces. For instance, endeavor is the power by which a stone continues to exist from one moment to the next and to resist the forces of erosion. Spinoza argues that endeavor is the actual essence of each thing (3p7), what makes it the particular thing that it is.

Spinoza also holds that this endeavor is directed at augmenting or growing the thing's 'power of action,' the degree of strength of its endeavor (e.g. 3p12, 3p28). So, endeavor is the power by which living things act and behave for their own benefit. Since this is the essence of the thing, it follows that a thing's essential power is necessarily directed to beneficial effects, that is, effects that preserve it and improve its power. This view is sometimes described as the 'conatus doctrine.' According to this view, it is necessarily beneficial to be active in the sense of causing effects from one's own essential power. The doctrine also implies, conversely, that any harmful effect – an effect that threatens a thing's existence or decreases its power – must be exogenous, of external origin (see 3p4, 3p5). However, it does not follow that exogenous effects must be harmful. Although harmful effects are necessarily exogenous, exogenous effects can be either harmful or beneficial, depending on the effect.

Spinoza's claims about endeavor must also be understood in light of parallelism. Since all particular things are modes, which are expressed differently through each attribute, the endeavor of particular things is also expressed differently through each attribute. Under the attribute of extension, particular things – specifically complex or compound bodies – express their power by maintaining bodily integrity. Spinoza follows Descartes in conceiving of bodies mechanistically as defined by their extended properties. Consequently, maintaining bodily integrity amounts to a thing maintaining a particular configuration among its parts over time, a fixed ratio or proportion of motion and rest (2a2''def). Particular bodily things also express their power by interacting with other bodies in beneficial ways. Meanwhile, under the attribute of

thought, particular ideas and minds express their power by representing the power of their corresponding bodies (3p11).

### The emotions

Spinoza employs the notion of endeavor to explain emotions in Part Three. He defines emotions generally as changes in our power of action (3def3). Emotions fall into three categories: joy, sorrow and desire. More specifically, he defines joy and sorrow as transitions to possessing a greater and lesser power of action, respectively (3DOE2, 3DOE3). For instance, sorrow is the transition to a lesser power of action brought on by, say, catching a cold, or by being hurt by another person. Joy is the transition to greater power when one recovers from a cold or is aided by friends. Desire, meanwhile, is a kind of appetite (specifically, conscious appetite), which amounts to particular expressions of our endeavor (3p9s). For instance, my endeavor for what is beneficial to me leads me to endeavor for breakfast in the morning, which is my appetite and desire for breakfast. It is not entirely clear how desires qualify as changes in our power of acting. Spinoza may hold that all particular expressions of our endeavor also involve some transition to greater or lesser power.

It is important to note that, while desires are expressions of our endeavor, they are not necessarily pure expressions of our endeavor. Desires are usually comprised of both our endeavor and the powers of external things. For instance, my desire to eat cereal for breakfast is comprised partly of my endeavor to persevere in existence and partly of the power of advertisers and other people's expectations of appropriate breakfast food. This point has important consequences: if desires were necessarily pure expressions of our endeavor, then, according to the conatus doctrine, they would necessarily direct us to act in beneficial ways. While Spinoza is committed to the view that active desires – desires arising entirely from our essential power – are necessarily beneficial, he recognizes that desires can direct us in harmful ways, when they include the power of external things that direct us contrary to our own endeavor.

Because of Spinoza's parallelism, all of these emotions comprise both mental and bodily states. According to his definition, emotions are both 'affections of the body by which the body's power of action is augmented or diminished, assisted or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of

these affections' (3def3). So, joy and sorrow are changes in our bodies – in their physical constitution and their relationships to other bodies – in virtue of which our bodies have a greater or lesser power of action, while they are also changes in our minds, in which our ideas have a greater or lesser power of action in virtue of representing the changes in the endeavor of our bodies. Similarly desires express our endeavor at the bodily level, as movements that tend to preserve and augment our power, and at the mental level, as the ideas representing these movements (3p9s).

According to this definition, emotions should be understood at the mental level as ideas. For instance, my desire to eat cereal for breakfast is an idea, perhaps an idea of breakfast cereal, which contains the power that moves me to eat cereal. The notion that emotions are ideas has important consequences. One might think of emotions, particularly desires, as purely conative mental states – in other words, purely appetitive or motivational states – rather than cognitive or apprehensive mental states, that is, states that represent things or possess some sort of mental content, in virtue of which they can be evaluated as true or false. In contrast, Spinoza understands desires as both conative – since they are bodily movements and motivating mental states – and cognitive – since desires are also ideas, which represent things and can be judged as true or false.

In fact, Spinoza holds that this dual nature is present in all of our ideas. Spinoza denies that there is any such thing as a will (2p49, proof), that is, a single faculty responsible for all voluntary or chosen action. Rather, he attributes our particular volitions to the power of our ideas (2p49). As modes of God, whose essence is power, all ideas possess some power, specifically, the power to affirm their content. Spinoza regards this power as responsible for the activity that philosophers usually attribute to the will, that is, responsible for judgments and actions. Spinoza understands our judgments and actions as resulting from the interplay between different, sometimes opposing ideas with varying degrees of strength (see, for example, 3p31, 3p37, 3p38), which present their contents as true, thereby inclining us to judge and act accordingly. According to this way of thinking, all ideas are simultaneously cognitive and conative, apprehensive and motivating.

This theory of the emotions has important consequences for understanding the relationship between the emotions and knowledge. Spinoza's theory of knowledge revolves around cognition (*cognitio*). Cognitions are

the mental states (namely, ideas) through which we are aware of things – in Spinoza’s language, ‘sense’ (*sentire*) things – and understand them. Unlike knowledge – at least as the term has often been understood – cognitions need not be true or justified, though Spinoza evaluates cognitions on the basis of their truth and justification. Characteristically, Spinoza evaluates the justification of cognitions in terms of their certainty, which he understands, like Descartes, as connected to their degree of clarity and distinctness (for example, 2p8s2), and their degree of confusion and mutilation; in other words, the degree to which they provide fragmented and partial understandings of things (for example, 2p29c).

Spinoza sorts our cognitions into three kinds: imagination, reason and intuition (2p40s2). Imagination consists of ideas that are derived from the senses or that resemble ideas from the senses (see also 2p17s). Reason and intuition consist of what Spinoza calls adequate ideas. While Spinoza’s explanation of adequate ideas is circuitous, they are best understood as ideas that are caused and conceptually entailed by other ideas in some mind. Consequently, the mind is active in conceiving and acting from adequate ideas, for in doing so it conceives and acts entirely from its own ideas and, consequently, from its own powers (3p3). According to this theory, all of God’s ideas are adequate because they are all caused and entailed by ideas contained within God’s mind (2p36, proof). Ideas can be inadequate only in the minds of finite, particular things (2p36, proof) when the ideas are caused and entailed partly by things external to the mind, as in sensory ideas or perceptions. Reason consists of adequate ideas arising from what Spinoza calls common notions: ideas of general, shared properties of things, which are contained in all minds (2p38c). Meanwhile intuition consists of adequate ideas that conceive the essences of particular things as following from God’s essence. Spinoza claims that reason and intuition, since they consist of adequate ideas, are necessarily true (2p41) and certain, although he suggests that intuition attains the highest degree of certainty, for he describes it alone as *scientia intuitiva* (intuitive knowledge), the Latin term usually reserved for the most certain knowledge (2p40s2; see also 5p36cs). According to this theory of cognition, imagination is the only source of falsity and confusion, which entails that cognitions based on experience are generally less certain and the only source of error (2p41).

Because Spinoza understands the emotions, at the mental level, as ideas, the foregoing classification of our cognitions also distinguishes

three kinds of emotions. Spinoza defines the passions as passive emotions, that is, emotions that are at least partly caused by something external (3def3). Since the passions, as emotions, consist of ideas, the passions are also ideas that are at least partly caused externally, which Spinoza understands as inadequate ideas, that is, the first kind of knowledge (3p1c, 3p3, 5p20s). For instance, the desire for breakfast cereal, understood under the attribute of thought as an idea, would qualify as a cognition of imagination because it is partly caused externally, by people's attitudes and beliefs about breakfast food. Similarly all forms of sadness, as decreases in our power, must have some external cause (3p59) and, consequently, must consist of ideas that belong to the first kind of cognition. Spinoza also allows for active emotions, namely desires and joys that come about entirely from our own power. These consist of adequate ideas and, thus, of ideas belonging to the second or third kind of cognition (3p58, 5p20s). It follows that these emotions, for Spinoza, qualify as true and justified cognitions, reason and *scientia*. In this way, Spinoza rejects the notion that emotions are opposed to knowledge and reason. Indeed, since Spinoza understands adequate ideas as possessing the power that inclines our judgment and action, all adequate ideas arguably qualify as desires, which implies that reason itself is inherently emotional.

### Spinoza's ethical goals

Spinoza's theory of endeavor is the basis not only for his theory of the emotions but also for his ethical theory, since his main ethical concepts revolve around the notion of endeavor. Spinoza defines virtue as equivalent to power: 'By virtue and power I mean the same thing' (4def8). 'Power' here refers to our power of action, which entails that being virtuous, for Spinoza, is equivalent to bringing about effects from one's essential power, which he sometimes describes as acting in accordance with one's nature or with the laws of human nature (for example, 4p24, proof). This is another claim that resonates with ancient ethics, particularly that of the Stoics. Endeavor is also important to Spinoza's notion of perfection. In general, perfection amounts to realizing or excelling in one's nature. Since Spinoza understands our nature as endeavor, augmenting the power of one's endeavor by augmenting one's power of action amounts to excelling in our nature and, consequently, contributes



to our perfection. On this basis, Spinoza equates augmenting and diminishing our power of action with augmenting and diminishing our perfection (for example, 3DOE3ex). Finally, endeavor is also important to freedom because endeavor involves being determined by oneself, specifically one's essential power. Spinoza connects human freedom to our endeavor most explicitly in his *Political Treatise*, which he was writing at the time of his death: a human being is called free 'only to the extent that he has the ability to exist and to operate according to the laws of human nature' (Chapter 2, paragraph 7).

According to these definitions, it promotes our virtue, perfection and freedom to augment our power of action. While we endeavor in a variety of ways, Spinoza's ethics places special emphasis on the endeavor involved in cognition of the second and especially third kind (reason and intuition), for these involve conceiving adequate ideas and, consequently, the self-determination involved in conceiving ideas from our own ideas and power. It follows that we attain Spinoza's ethical goals through understanding, which is precisely what the *Ethics* provides.

Since the second and third kinds of cognition are emotional states, there is also an emotional aspect to virtue, perfection and freedom. This aspect is central to Part Four, where Spinoza considers what is good and bad in the emotions. In taking up this task, Spinoza is explaining not only the emotional tendencies of virtuous people, but also their tendencies to action, for our emotions, specifically our desires, motivate action. In this respect, Spinoza's explanation of what is good and bad in the emotions also explains the practical dispositions of virtuous people; in other words, the virtuous character, which Spinoza describes as fortitude (*fortitudo*) (3p59s). Because attaining Spinoza's ethical goals involves increasing one's power of action, the virtuous are characterized by joy, rather than sorrow. Spinoza emphasizes rational self-contentment, the joy that comes from increasing one's power through reasoning and acting in accordance with reason (4p52). In contrast, Spinoza denies the ethical value of sorrow, including pity (4p50), humility (4p53), repentance (4p54) and shame (4p58s). Spinoza also steers clear of retributive ethics that focus on blame and indignation (4p51s), since these too are forms of sorrow.

In the course of considering the ethical value of the emotions, Spinoza introduces an important character into his ethical theory: the free person, an individual who is led only by reason (4p66s). The free person

may be understood as a hypothetical character, a sort of thought experiment, because Spinoza holds that human beings cannot be determined entirely by reason. For we use reason when we act entirely from our own ideas and powers, whereas humans are inevitably determined to some extent by external powers (4p1–4p6). Nevertheless, considering the emotions of a purely self-determining and rational being provides important practical guidance because it helps us to see the actions and emotions that follow from reason and adequate ideas. Spinoza claims that the free person avoids sorrow and ideas that bring sorrow; he thereby avoids fear (4p69) and ‘thinks about death less than anything’ (4p67). The free person also sheds light on rational desires and motives. For a free person is faithful (4p72), grateful (4p71), defers to the laws of the state (4p73), and prudently avoids both dangers (4p69) and entanglements with potentially harmful ignorant and irrational people (4p70).

Most importantly, Spinoza’s ethics aspires to attain the highest good. Contrary to a view common among earlier Christian philosophers, Spinoza does not believe that all existing things are intrinsically good and evil a privation of existence. This common view is often justified on the grounds that all existing things come about from the morally good choice of a benevolent God, whereas Spinoza denies that God can be described in ethical terms. Consequently, Spinoza holds that the qualities of good and bad exist only in our thoughts; they ‘indicate nothing positive in things, considered, that is, in themselves. They are simply ways of thinking’ (4pref). Nevertheless, Spinoza claims that we can have true cognition of good and bad, which he understands primarily as what helps and hinders our endeavor (4p8proof). Spinoza deduces that our highest good is the understanding of God (4p28). This is because, as we have seen, what most augments a thing’s power – and, thus, what is best for it – is understanding and ‘the highest thing that the mind can understand is God’ (4p28, proof).

According to Spinoza, this highest good also encompasses the state of perfection that is realized through understanding God, what Spinoza describes as blessedness (*beatitudo*) (4app4; 5p42; 5p27, proof). Spinoza also claims that this state involves the highest happiness (*summa felicitas*) (4app4), for the transition to our greatest possible power is necessarily accompanied by the highest possible joy (5p27, proof). Spinoza particularly emphasizes the joy and satisfaction that comes from the intuitive understanding of God, which most augments our power (5p27). Spinoza

describes this emotion as the love of God (5p32, proof), for it meets the definition of love: a joy accompanied by an idea of an external cause, God (3DOE6). In this way, the *Ethics* delivers on the project sketched in the TdIE: it explains how knowledge of ourselves and of our place in nature provides us with the highest good, which is the source of true happiness.

Spinoza's ethics takes a final goal, which has long puzzled readers and commentators. His philosophy seems to leave little room for an afterlife. For Spinoza, there exists nothing outside of the natural world and, thus, no heaven or hell populated by the souls of the departed. The parallelism doctrine implies that everything possesses both mental and bodily aspects, which seems to rule out the possibility of an immaterial soul that survives the body's death. Yet Spinoza believes that humans are capable of some kind of eternal survival in the sense that there is an eternal part of the mind (5p23). Spinoza holds that the eternal part of the mind becomes greater the better we understand things, specifically the more we understand things 'from the vantage of eternity' (*sub specie aeternitatis*). This is equivalent to understanding things through adequate ideas of their essences, rather than through the imagination, which represents things as existing in space and time and, thus, for a limited duration (5p39). Since we achieve Spinoza's other ethical goals (happiness, virtue and so forth) through the best understanding, living ethically also makes the eternal part of the mind greater, thereby providing some kind of salvation. Spinoza's view on the eternity of mind is a central place where he is entering into dialogue with medieval Jewish philosophy, most likely the work of Gersonides (1288–1344).

### Leading a good life

How, then, should we live in order to attain these ethical goals? Spinoza's practical recommendations include cognitive techniques for changing our thought processes to help us to obtain more adequate ideas, which provides us with virtue and Spinoza's other ethical goals (see 5p20s). These therapeutic techniques primarily target the passions. Spinoza does not seek to eliminate the passions altogether. Aside from the fact that he recognizes that externally caused ideas and passions can affect us in beneficial ways, Spinoza regards efforts to gain complete self-mastery and self-determination as hopeless. He begins his discussion of these techniques by criticizing what he regards as Descartes's view, that

it is possible for any soul to ‘acquire absolute control over its passions’ (5pref). Rather, Spinoza seeks to eliminate or replace harmful passions, which diminish our power of action. And where such passions cannot be eliminated, he seeks to govern them by decreasing their psychological power and influence. The five main techniques include ways of not only making inadequate ideas more adequate, but also ways of changing the associations among our ideas to increase the power and influence of our rational and adequate ideas. These can be understood as a kind of cognitive therapy, whereby one eliminates and constrains false and harmful thoughts and beliefs, much like cognitive therapy employed by psychotherapy today.

While Part Five, which outlines ‘the path that leads to freedom,’ concentrates on psychological techniques for changing our thoughts, Spinoza has more to offer in the way of practical recommendations in Part Four. He holds that conceiving adequate ideas has a practical dimension, since reason prescribes practical rules or dictates (4p18s). Since adequate ideas follow from our own power and endeavor, acting in accordance with these dictates amounts to acting from our power and endeavor. Consequently, the dictates of reason describe how people act when they are virtuous, free and perfect. They also provide practical guidance to those who wish to lead a life of virtue, freedom and perfection. Since the practical dictates follow from ideas of reason, understanding the dictates involves understanding the rational ideas from which the dictates follow. Consequently, understanding the dictates involves possessing the ideas that prescribe the dictates and, thus, involves taking them as dictates for oneself, governing one’s own actions. In doing so, one is determined by adequate ideas and, consequently, is self-determining.

The dictates of reason include foremost the command to seek one’s own advantage, which is equivalent to acting in ways that promote one’s power, ‘that everyone love himself, pursue what is useful for himself – what is useful for him in truth – and seek all that in truth leads a human being to greater perfection’ (4p18s). This dictate is consistent with the generally egoistic bent to Spinoza’s ethics: his definition of virtue identifies it with the self-interested aim of augmenting one’s power. However, Spinoza’s ethics is not narrowly egoistic, that is, indifferent to the welfare of others. This is evident from the dictates of reason commanding us to act for the good of others: from the guidance of reason, humans

‘want nothing for themselves, that they do not desire for all other human beings’ (4p18s). The basis for this command is that human beings, as collections of finite modes, are necessarily dependent on other things, especially other humans, for both their survival and flourishing. Consequently, the interests of human beings are connected in such a way that acting for the benefit of others is constitutive of promoting one’s interests.

### The reception of the *Ethics*

Spinoza’s philosophy has been enormously influential among philosophers, thinkers and artists of all sorts since its publication. Its influence has also been diverse, as his philosophy has been interpreted and employed in different ways, giving rise to various forms of Spinozism. I can here mention only a few central highlights. As Spinoza suspected, the publication of the *Ethics* was quickly followed by a flood of condemnation. In 1678, within a year of its publication, the *Ethics* – and all of Spinoza’s work – was banned by the States of Holland and the States General. In fact, they threatened authors, publishers and printers with long prison terms for even reworking and restating Spinoza’s ideas. The Leiden Reformed Consistory declared that the *Ethics* ‘perhaps since the beginning of the world until the present day surpasses all others in godlessness,’ and ‘endeavors to do away with all religion and set godlessness on the throne.’<sup>14</sup> The next year the Roman Catholic Office of the Holy Inquisition officially condemned the *Ethics*, along with Spinoza’s letters, the TTP and the *Political Treatise*.

Nevertheless, the book was widely read and highly influential in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a fact that was often overlooked until recently. Part of the reason is that Spinoza’s influence was often covert. In public, Spinoza was usually rejected and condemned, though his critics devoted great effort to refuting his philosophy, which ensured the wide dissemination of his ideas. For instance, Pierre Bayle’s (1647–1706) celebrated *Dictionnaire historique et critique* – one of the most popular works of the eighteenth century and an important source for

<sup>14</sup> From Jonathan Israel, ‘The Banning of Spinoza’s Works in the Dutch Republic (1670–78),’ in Wiep van Bunge and Wim Klever (eds.) *Disguised and Overt Spinozism around 1700* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 11–12.

David Hume – devoted a long critical entry to Spinoza. But in private many of these same critics were often attracted to Spinoza's ideas and developed their own views partly through engaging with him. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, who criticized Spinoza's TTP as 'an intolerably impudent book,' was also profoundly preoccupied with Spinoza's thought, which shaped and infused Leibniz's own philosophy.<sup>15</sup> He sought out a correspondence with Spinoza and even visited him in The Hague, engaging in what must have been a productive philosophical exchange.

Spinoza also received a more openly positive reception in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by deists, such as John Toland (1670–1722), who sought to dispense with divine revelation in theology, looking instead to reason and observation of the natural world. Spinoza was later openly celebrated in German philosophy in the eighteenth century, beginning with Lessing (1729–1781), a philosopher, dramatist and art critic, who proclaimed himself a disciple of Spinoza. Spinoza achieved greater recognition through the philosophy of Hegel, who declared Spinozism, 'in essence, the beginning of all philosophizing.'<sup>16</sup> Through these and other channels, Spinoza's philosophy was an inspiration and sounding board for generations of thinkers who defended reason as the utmost authority in matters of truth and science, who sought a more secular ethics and society, and who defended toleration and freedom of thought. In this way, Spinoza's philosophy exercised great influence over the important intellectual and social changes that are loosely referred to as the Enlightenment. In the *Ethics* this philosophy finds its most perfect expression.

<sup>15</sup> Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Die Philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Karl Immanuel Gerhardt (Weidmann, 1875), vol. I, 64.

<sup>16</sup> Hegel, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, iii: *Werke*, Jubilee Edition, ed. Glockner (Stuttgart, 1927–37), xix, 376.



## Chronology

- 1492 Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella decree that all Jews should be driven out of their kingdom and territories.
- 1496 The Jews are expelled from Portugal; remaining Jews are forced to convert.
- 1536 Calvin publishes the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
- 1566 Beginning of the Eighty Years War for Dutch independence from the Spanish.
- 1579 The Union of Utrecht establishes the United Provinces.
- 1587/1588 Spinoza's father, Michael, is born in Vidigueira, Portugal.
- c. 1588–1596 Michael and his family are forced to leave Portugal and settle in Nantes.
- 1596 René Descartes is born on March 31.
- 1603 Arminius and Gomar debate tolerance and freedom of the will at Leiden.
- 1618 The Thirty Years War begins.
- 1619 The States of Holland officially grant Jews the right to settle and build synagogues.
- c. 1596–1621 Michael settles in Amsterdam.
- 1632 Spinoza is born in Amsterdam on November 24.
- 1640 Uriel da Costa commits suicide in Amsterdam.
- 1641 Descartes publishes the *Meditations*.
- 1642 The English Civil War begins.
- 1642 Thomas Hobbes publishes *On the Citizen* in Paris.
- 1644 Descartes publishes the *Principles of Philosophy*.



## Chronology

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- 1648 Treaty of Westphalia ends the Thirty Years War and the Eighty Years War between the Spanish and the Dutch.
- 1649 King Charles I of England is executed by beheading on January 30.
- 1649 Descartes publishes the *Passions of the Soul*.
- 1650 Descartes dies on February 11.
- 1650 William II, Stadholder of the United Provinces, dies on November 6. With his son, William III, not yet born, the position of stadholder is left vacant.
- 1651 Hobbes publishes *Leviathan*.
- 1654 Spinoza's father dies and Spinoza briefly becomes head of the struggling family business.
- 1656 A *herem* is issued against Spinoza on July 27.
- 1656 States of Holland and Frisia issue a decree prohibiting the teaching of Cartesianism on October 6.
- 1656 Spinoza writes a now lost *Apology* in Spanish against the rabbis.
- c. 1656 Spinoza probably begins studying at Franciscus van den Enden's school.
- c. 1655–1657 Spinoza probably attends classes at the University of Leiden.
- c. 1657–1660 Spinoza begins work on the *Treatise of the Emendation of the Intellect*.
- 1660 The end of Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth in England and the restoration of the monarchy with Charles II.
- c. 1660 Spinoza probably begins work on the *Short Treatise on God, Man, and his Well-Being*, a precursor to the *Ethics*.
- 1663 Spinoza moves from Rijnsburg (near Leiden) to Voorburg (near The Hague).
- 1663 Spinoza publishes his commentary on Descartes's *Principles of Philosophy*, together with his own *Metaphysical Thoughts*, the only work he published under his own name during his lifetime.
- 1664 The Second Anglo-Dutch War begins.
- 1665 Van den Enden anonymously publishes *Free Political Institutions* in Amsterdam.

## Chronology

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- 1666 The States of Holland declare William III ‘Child of the State’ (ward of the Republican Dutch government), to reduce the chance of his future stadholderate.
- 1666 Spinoza’s friend, Lodewijk Meyer, anonymously publishes *Philosophy as the Interpreter of Holy Scripture* in Amsterdam.
- 1667 The Second Anglo-Dutch War ends.
- 1668 The trial and imprisonment of Adriaan Koerbagh in Amsterdam.
- 1669 Adriaan Koerbagh dies in prison on October 15.
- 1669/1670 Spinoza moves from Voorburg to the center of The Hague.
- 1669–1671 Spinoza’s *Theological-Political Treatise* is published anonymously in Amsterdam.
- 1670 Charles II signs the secret Treaty of Dover, conspiring with Louis XIV of France to form an alliance against the United Provinces.
- 1672 England and France declare war against the United Provinces, beginning the Third Anglo-Dutch War.
- 1672 A mob loyal to the House of Orange murders Cornelius de Witt and his brother Johan de Witt, Holland’s Grand Pensionary, who effectively controlled the Dutch Republic during the absence of the stadholder. William III, the eventual King of England, Ireland and Scotland, assumes the office of stadholder.
- 1673 Spinoza is offered and declines a professorship at the University of Heidelberg.
- 1674 The States of Holland and States General formally ban the TTP, together with Meyer’s *Philosophy as the Interpreter of Holy Scripture* and Hobbes’ *Leviathan*.
- 1674 The Third Anglo-Dutch War ends when the States General approves the Treaty of Westminster on March 5.
- 1674 Van den Enden is hanged before the Bastille on November 27 for conspiring against French monarch Louis XIV, to establish a republic in Normandy.
- 1675 Spinoza travels to Amsterdam to oversee printing of the *Ethics* and then backs out.

## Chronology

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- 1676 Leibniz pays a few visits to Spinoza in November.
- 1677 Spinoza dies in The Hague on February 21.
- 1677 Spinoza's friends publish the Dutch translation of the *Ethics*, and his *Posthumous Works*, including the Latin version of the *Ethics*, seventy-four letters to and from Spinoza and three unfinished treatises: the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*, the *Political Treatise* and a Hebrew grammar.
- 1678 The *Posthumous Works* are sold in the first weeks of January. The States General and the Supreme Court of Holland, Zeeland and West-Friesland ban Spinoza's *Posthumous Works* on June 25.
- 1679 The Roman Catholic Office of the Holy Inquisition officially condemns the *Ethics*, Spinoza's letters, the *Theological-Political Treatise* and the *Political Treatise*.

## Further reading

The most authoritative biography of Spinoza is Steven Nadler, *Spinoza: A Life* (Cambridge, 1999). For a more popular treatment of Spinoza's life, see Rebecca Goldstein, *Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity* (New York, 2006). For more serious scholarly inquiry, *Die Lebensgeschichte Spinoza* (Stuttgart, 2006) contains the earliest biographies by Colerus and Lucas, interviews and surviving historical documents pertaining to Spinoza's life.

On the significance of Spinoza's philosophy to the Enlightenment, see Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford, 2001), and the sequel *Enlightenment Contested* (Oxford, 2006). On the historical context for Spinoza's colleague associates, see Andrew Cooper Fix, *Prophecy and Reason: The Dutch Collegiants in the Early Enlightenment* (Princeton, 1991). On Spinoza's relation to Dutch Cartesians and Dutch academic philosophy, see Alexander X. Douglas, *Spinoza and Dutch Cartesianism: Philosophy and Theology* (Oxford, 2015). To understand the *Ethics* in the context of medieval Jewish philosophy, see the essays in *Spinoza and Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, ed. Steven Nadler (Cambridge, 2014). To understand the *Ethics* in the context of medieval, scholastic philosophy (as well as Jewish philosophy), see Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza: Unfolding the Latent Processes of His Reasoning*, 2 vols. (New York, 1961).

For an overview that helps to make the *Ethics* accessible, see Steven Nadler, *Spinoza's Ethics: An Introduction* (Cambridge, 2006). For an introduction that explains the *Ethics* as revolving around the principle of sufficient reason, see Michael Della Rocca, *Spinoza* (London, 2008).

On Spinoza's geometrical method and its significance for understanding his philosophical ambitions, see Aaron V. Garrett, *Meaning in Spinoza's Method* (Cambridge, 2007). On Spinoza's rationalism, particularly the relationship between causation and conception, see Yitzhak Melamed, 'Spinoza on Inherence, Causation and Conception,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 50 (2012), pp. 365–86.

For general work on metaphysical issues in the *Ethics*, see the essays in *Spinoza: Metaphysical Themes*, Olli Koistinen and John Biro (eds.) (Oxford, 2002). On Spinoza's commitment to necessitarianism, see Don Garrett, 'Spinoza's Necessitarianism,' in *God and Nature in Spinoza's Metaphysics*, ed. Yirmiyahu Yovel (Leiden, 1991), pp. 191–218. For Spinoza's view on the relationship between the attributes, including parallelism, see Yitzhak Melamed, *Spinoza's Metaphysics: Substance and Thought* (Oxford, 2015). On Spinoza's theory of conatus, see Valterri Viljanen, *Spinoza's Geometry of Power* (Cambridge, 2011).

For Spinoza's theory of knowledge, see Margaret Wilson, 'Spinoza's Theory of Knowledge,' in the *Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, Don Garrett (ed.) (Cambridge, 1996). For an overview of Spinoza's psychology, see Eugene Marshall, *The Spiritual Automaton: Spinoza's Science of the Mind* (Oxford, 2013). For work connecting Spinoza's theory of the emotions to contemporary neuroscience, see Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (New York, 2003).

On Spinoza's ethical theory, see Matthew J. Kisner, *Spinoza on Human Freedom: Reason, Autonomy and the Good Life* (Cambridge, 2011); Michael LeBuffe, *From Bondage to Freedom: Spinoza on Human Excellence* (Oxford, 2010). On this point also see the essays in *Essays on Spinoza's Ethical Theory*, Matthew J. Kisner and Andrew Youpa (eds.) (Oxford, 2014). On Spinoza's doctrine of the eternity of the mind in a historical context, see Steven Nadler, *Spinoza's Heresy: Immortality and the Jewish Mind* (Oxford, 2001).

For Spinoza's intellectual legacy, see Pierre-François Moreau, 'Spinoza's Reception and Influence,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza* (1995), pp. 408–34. For Spinoza's influence in England, see Rosalie L. Colie, 'Spinoza in England, 1665–1730,' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107 (1963), pp. 183–219. For Spinoza's reception in Germany, see *Spinoza and German Idealism*, Eckart Förster and Yitzhak Melamed (eds.) (Cambridge, 2015). For a closer look at

*Further reading*

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historical and textual issues surrounding the *Ethics*, its reception and Spinoza's philosophy generally, including a historically detailed glossary of Spinoza's main terms, see *The Continuum Companion to Spinoza*, Wiep van Bunge, Henri Krop, Piet Steenbakkens, Jeroen van de Ven (eds.) (London, 2011).



## Note on the text and translation

Our translation is based on the new critical edition of Spinoza's *Ethics* prepared by Fokke Akkerman and Piet Steenbakkers.<sup>17</sup> Ideally the authoritative source for any critical edition would be the so-called autograph, Spinoza's own manuscript, which he prepared for publication and brought to the Amsterdam bookseller and publisher Jan Rieuwertsz in 1675. Unfortunately, this text is lost. Previous critical editions have been based on two witnesses to the autograph: the Latin text printed in Spinoza's *Opera Posthuma*, and a companion Dutch translation (*De Nagelate Schriften van B.d.S.*). These texts were published together in 1677 and edited by Spinoza's friends, who were charged with preparing his work for publication. The previous critical edition by Carl Gebhardt (*Spinoza Opera*, Heidelberg, 1925) regarded these two works as equally authoritative on the mistaken assumption that the Dutch translation was based on an early authoritative version of the Latin text. The new critical edition, in contrast, looks to the Latin *Opera Posthuma* text as the more authoritative version, though it does take the Dutch translation into consideration. The new critical edition also takes account of a recently discovered third witness to the autograph: a manuscript of the entire Latin text, which was discovered in 2010 in the Vatican Library, without a title or author's name. This handcopied manuscript had been commissioned by Spinoza's correspondent, Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus. Visiting Rome in 1677, von Tschirnhaus lent it to Nicolaus Stensen, an acquaintance of Spinoza and a convert to

<sup>17</sup> Forthcoming from Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, with facing French translation, as part of the series, *Spinoza Œuvres*.



Catholicism, who brought the manuscript to the Inquisition as evidence for banning Spinoza's works.

Translating Spinoza's *Ethics* poses unique challenges, not the least of which is settling on consistent translations for key philosophical terms. While consistent translation is always desirable in philosophical texts, it is particularly so in the *Ethics*. In Spinoza's geometric method, the success of proofs depends upon terms being used without equivocation, and in accordance with their definitions. Furthermore, Spinoza employs a distinctive vocabulary to articulate his philosophical system. Many of these fundamental terms are not defined, and determining their precise meaning is difficult: there is precious little context in his spare geometrical style and, while the terms are often drawn from other philosophical sources and traditions, Spinoza frequently endows them with distinctive meanings; indeed, much of the philosophical action occurs in the way that Spinoza departs from and subverts the meanings of familiar terms. Consequently, the meaning of these key terms can often only be determined by attending to the way that Spinoza uses them. In order to help the reader to determine these meanings, then, we strive to translate key terms consistently, though a completely consistent translation of terms is not always possible or even desirable.

A few particular terms deserve mention. Spinoza uses two main terms for power: *potentia* and *potestas*. Whether these terms have different meanings has been a contested question. While it does not appear that Spinoza distinguishes these terms in a rigorous or entirely consistent way, he does tend to use the term *potentia* to refer to the powers that are identified with a thing's intrinsic endeavor, while he tends to use *potestas* more broadly to refer to what a thing can do, regardless of whether it possesses such a power in virtue of its endeavor or external things and circumstances. However one comes down on the issue, we favor, wherever possible, consistently using a different word for each of these terms so that the reader may judge for herself. In nearly all cases, we translate *potentia* as 'power' and *potestas* as 'ability' or 'abilities.' Related to these terms, Spinoza tends to use the term *aptus* to describe the powers that a thing has in virtue of the way that it is bodily constituted as a result of its causal history; we generally translate *aptus* as 'capable' or occasionally as 'adapted.'

While Spinoza usually uses the Latin term *animus* to refer to the mind, it has different connotations than either 'mind' or the Latin term *mens*. More like the English 'heart,' *animus* is associated with strength,

vigor and feeling. Spinoza makes use of these connotations by employing *animus* as the primary term for the mind when discussing the emotions, their strength, and character traits associated with emotions. He also trades on these connotations in the term *animositas*, a character trait connected to strength. To capture these associations, we generally translate *animus* as ‘spirit’ and *animositas* as ‘spiritedness.’ Spinoza also sometimes uses the term *animus* when discussing Descartes’s conception of *animus*. In Descartes’s work, this term is usually translated as ‘soul’ partly because *animus* has religious connotations that Descartes largely accepts; for instance, for him, the *animus* is immortal and has an afterlife. In these cases, we translate *animus* as ‘soul’ to make clear that Spinoza is referring to this Cartesian conception of the mind.

We translate Spinoza’s famous phrase, *sub specie aeternitatis* as ‘from the vantage of eternity.’ One might take the term *specie* here to mean kind, as in the Aristotelian notion of species, but this seems unlikely because Spinoza does not distinguish different kinds of eternity. Rather, we take the term *specie* in this phrase to mean appearance; more specifically, an appearance from a certain perspective. We found ‘from the vantage of eternity’ preferable to the more literal ‘under the aspect of eternity,’ because the English ‘aspect’ often refers simply to a feature or quality of a thing, which is not a meaning of the Latin term *species*. We also avoided ‘under the appearance of eternity’ because this suggests that this perspective may be different from reality, whereas Spinoza thinks that this perspective reveals the truth of things.

To avoid importing sexist language into the text, we translate the Latin term *homo* not as ‘man,’ but rather as ‘human being’ or, where the context is more familiar, ‘person.’

We follow Edwin Curley’s helpful convention of using italics to indicate when ‘or’ is a translation of the Latin terms *sive* or *seu*. These terms – unlike other Latin terms for ‘or’ (*vel* and *aut*) – often (though not always) communicate an equivalence or an alternative expression for the same thing.

For ease of reference we provide marginal citations to Spinoza’s *Opera Posthuma*, which generally match Gebhardt’s page numbers. We generally follow the critical edition with regard to the use of italics and capitalization. The new critical edition, faithful to Spinoza’s text, uses paragraph breaks sparingly. We have provided frequent paragraph breaks to promote readability and ease of reference.



ETHICS  
Proved in Geometrical Order  
*AND*  
*Divided into five Parts*  
*which treat*

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. Of God  | 3   |
| 2. Of <i>the Nature and Origin</i> of the Mind                   | 43  |
| 3. Of <i>the Origin and Nature</i> of the Emotions               | 93  |
| 4. Of <i>Human Servitude, or Of the Strength</i> of the Emotions | 157 |
| 5. Of <i>the Power of the Intellect, or Of Human Freedom</i>     | 221 |



## First Part of the Ethics

I

### OF GOD

#### Definitions

1. By cause of itself I mean that whose essence involves existence *or* that whose nature cannot be conceived except as existing.

2. A thing is said to be finite in its kind if it can be limited by another thing of the same nature. For example, a body is said to be finite because we always conceive bodies that are greater. Similarly a thought is limited by another thought. But a body is not limited by a thought nor a thought by a body.

3. By substance I mean that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, i.e. no concept of any other thing is needed for forming a concept of it.

4. By attribute I mean that which an intellect perceives of a substance as constituting its essence.

5. By mode I mean affections of a substance *or* that which is in another thing through which it is also conceived.

6. By God I mean absolutely infinite being, i.e. substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence.

#### Explanation

*I say absolutely infinite, and not infinite in its kind. For we can deny infinite attributes to anything that is infinite only in its kind; but if something is absolutely infinite, whatever expresses essence and involves no negation belongs to its essence.*

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7. A thing is said to be free if it exists solely by the necessity of its own nature, and is determined to action by itself alone. But a thing that is determined by another thing to exist and to operate in a specific and determinate way is necessary or rather compelled.

8. By eternity I mean existence itself insofar as it is conceived as necessarily following solely from the definition of an eternal thing.

**Explanation**

*Such existence is conceived as an eternal truth just like the essence of the thing, and therefore cannot be explained through duration or time, even if duration is conceived as without beginning or end.*

**Axioms**

1. All things that are, are either in themselves or in another thing.
2. Anything that cannot be conceived through another thing must be conceived through itself.
3. If there is a determinate cause, an effect necessarily follows, and conversely if there is no determinate cause, it is impossible for an effect to follow.
4. Cognition [*cognitio*] of an effect depends upon cognition of its cause and involves it.
5. Things which have nothing in common with each other cannot be understood through each other, *or* the concept of the one does not involve the concept of the other.
6. A true idea must agree with its object.
7. The essence of anything that can be conceived as not existing does not involve existence.

**Proposition 1**

*A substance is prior by nature to its affections.*

**Proof**

This is clear from *def3* and *def5*.

**Proposition 2**

*Two substances with different attributes have nothing in common with each other.*

Proof

This too is clear from *def3*. For each substance must be in itself and be conceived through itself, *or* the concept of the one does not involve the concept of the other.

Proposition 3

*If things have nothing in common with each other, one cannot be the cause of the other.*

Proof

If they have nothing in common with each other, it follows (*by a5*) that they cannot be understood through each other, and therefore (*by a4*) one cannot be the cause of the other. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 4

*Two or more different things are distinguished from each other either by differences of the attributes of their substances or by differences of the affections of their substances.*

Proof

All things that are, are either in themselves or in another thing (*by a1*), i.e. (*by def3 and def5*) outside the intellect there is nothing besides substances and their affections. Therefore outside the intellect, there is nothing by which several things can be distinguished from each other besides substances *or* – and (*by def4*) this is the same thing – their attributes and their affections. *Q. E. D.* 4

Proposition 5

*There cannot be two or more substances in the universe with the same nature or attribute.*

Proof

If there were several distinct substances, they would have to be distinguished from each other either by a difference of attributes or by a difference of affections (*by the previous proposition*). If they are distinguished only by a difference of attributes, it will be admitted that there is



only one substance with the same attribute. But if they are distinguished by a difference of affections, it follows, since a substance is prior in nature to its affections (*by p1*), that if we strip it of its affections and consider it in itself – i.e. if (*by def3 and a6*) we consider it truly – it will not be possible to conceive it as distinguished from any other substance. That is (*by the previous proposition*), it will not be possible for there to be several substances but only one.

Proposition 6

*One substance cannot be produced by another substance.*

Proof

There cannot be two substances in the universe with the same attribute (*by the previous proposition*), i.e. (*by p2*) two substances that have anything in common with each other. Therefore (*by p3*) one cannot be the cause of the other *or* be produced by the other. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that a substance cannot be produced by something else. For there is nothing in the universe besides substances and their affections, as is clear from *a1 and def3 and def5*. But a substance cannot be produced by a substance (*by p6*). Therefore a substance absolutely cannot be produced by something else. *Q. E. D.*

Alternatively

This is also proved more easily from the absurdity of its contradictory. For if a substance could be produced by something else, cognition of it would have to depend on cognition of its cause (*by a4*), and therefore (*by def3*) it would not be a substance.

5 Proposition 7

*It belongs to the nature of substance to exist.*

Proof

A substance cannot be produced by something else (*by the corollary of the previous proposition*); it will therefore be the cause of itself,

i.e. (*by def1*) its essence necessarily involves its existence, *or* it belongs to its nature to exist. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 8

*Every substance is necessarily infinite.*

Proof

A substance of one attribute cannot exist unless it is unique (*by p5*) and it belongs to its nature to exist (*by p7*). Therefore, by its nature it will exist, whether as finite or as infinite. But not finite. For (*by def2*) it would have to be limited by another substance of the same nature which would also have to exist necessarily (*by p7*), and therefore there would be two substances with the same attribute, which is absurd (*by p5*). It therefore exists as infinite. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium 1

Since to be finite is in truth partly a negation and to be infinite is an absolute affirmation of the existence of any nature, it follows from *p7* alone that every substance must be infinite.

Scholium 2

I am sure it is difficult for all who judge things confusedly and are not used to getting to know things by their first causes, to understand the proof of *p7*. This is surely because they do not distinguish between modifications of substances and the substances themselves, and because they do not know how things are produced. Consequently they wrongly apply to substances the origins that they see in natural things. Those who do not know the true causes of things confuse everything. They have no more intellectual qualms about conceiving of trees talking than of people talking.<sup>18</sup> They as easily suppose that human beings are formed from stones as from semen.<sup>19</sup> They imagine any form being changed into any other form.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, people who confuse divine nature with human

<sup>18</sup> Maimonides ridicules the view that trees may speak, in *The Guide for the Perplexed* III, 29.

<sup>19</sup> The notion that men may be made from stones is suggested by the legend of Deucalion and Pyrrha. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I, 395–415.

<sup>20</sup> The possibility that things of one form may be transformed into things of another form is suggested by miracles, as Maimonides points out in *The Guide for the Perplexed* II, 29.

6 nature readily attribute human emotions to God, especially so long as they also remain ignorant of how emotions are produced in the mind.

But if people kept in mind the nature of substance, they would not doubt the truth of *p7*. In fact, this proposition would be an axiom for everybody and would be regarded as a common notion. For by substance everyone would understand something that is in itself and is conceived through itself, i.e. something that does not require for its cognition the cognition of anything else. By modifications they would understand that which is in another thing and the concept of which is formed from the concept of the thing in which they are. This is why we can have true ideas of modifications that do not exist, since even though the modifications do not actually exist outside of our intellect, yet their essence is so thoroughly included in something else that they can be conceived through it. But the truth of substances is not outside the intellect unless it is in the substances themselves because they are conceived through themselves. Therefore if anyone were to say that he has a clear and distinct, i.e. a true, idea of a substance and yet doubts whether such a substance exists, this bit of nonsense would be the same as saying that he has a true idea and yet wonders whether it may be false – as is obvious to anyone who thinks about it. Or if anyone states that substance is created, he has at the same time stated that a false idea has become a true one, and obviously nothing can be conceived that is more absurd than that. Therefore it must necessarily be admitted that the existence of substance, just like its essence, is an eternal truth. From this we can also by a different route reach the conclusion that there is only one substance of the same nature, and I think it is worthwhile to show this here.

But to do so in an orderly manner, we must notice some preliminary points. (1) The true definition of each thing involves or expresses nothing but the nature of the thing defined. It follows from this (2) that no definition either involves or expresses any specific number of individuals since it expresses nothing but the nature of the thing being defined. For example, the definition of a triangle expresses nothing but the simple nature of a triangle and not any specific number of triangles. (3) We must note that for each thing that exists there is necessarily some specific cause on account of which it exists. (4) Note finally that this cause on account of which a thing exists must either be contained in the very nature and definition of the existing thing (namely that it belongs to its nature to exist) or it must be outside it.

Given these points, it follows that if there exists in nature some specific number of individual things, there would necessarily have to be a reason why just those individual things exist and not more nor less. If for example 20 human beings exist in the universe (for greater clarity, I suppose that they exist at the same time and that no other human beings have existed in nature before), it will not be enough (in order to give the reason why 20 human beings exist) to show the cause of human nature in general. It will also be necessary to show the reason why not more nor less than 20 exist, since (*by point 3*) there must necessarily be a reason why each one exists. But (*by points 2 and 3*) this cause cannot be contained in human nature itself, since the true definition of a human being does not involve the number twenty, and therefore (*by point 4*) the reason why these twenty human beings exist, and consequently why each one exists, must necessarily be outside of each one. 7

Therefore we must conclude absolutely that everything that is of such a nature that several individual instances of it can exist, must necessarily have an external cause in order for them to exist. Now since (*by the proofs already offered in this scholium*) it belongs to the nature of substance to exist, the definition of it must involve necessary existence, and consequently its existence has to be inferred from its definition alone. But (*as we have already shown in points 2 and 3*) the existence of several substances cannot follow from its definition. Therefore it necessarily follows from it that only a unique substance of the same nature exists, as we proposed.

Proposition 9

*The more reality or being each thing has, the more attributes belong to it.*

Proof

This is evident from *def4*.

Proposition 10

*Each attribute of a single substance must be conceived through itself.*

Proof

An attribute is what the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of a substance (*by def4*), and therefore (*by def3*) it must be conceived through itself. *Q. E. D.*

8 Scholium

It is evident from this that even though two attributes may be conceived as really distinct, i.e. one can be conceived without the aid of the other, we can still not conclude from this that they constitute two beings *or* two different substances. For it is of the nature of substance that each of its attributes is conceived through itself, since all the attributes which it has have always been in it simultaneously. Nor could one have been produced from another, but each one expresses the reality *or* being of the substance. It is not at all absurd therefore to assign several attributes to one substance. In fact nothing is clearer in nature than that each being has to be conceived under some attribute, and that the more reality *or* being it has, the more attributes it has that express both necessity *or* eternity and infinity. Consequently too it is perfectly clear that an absolutely infinite being (*as we said in def6*) must necessarily be defined as a being that consists of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses a specific eternal and infinite essence.

But if in the light of this anyone now asks what the criterion is by which we shall be able to recognize differences between substances, he should read the propositions that follow. They show that there exists nothing in the universe but a unique substance; that this substance is absolutely infinite; and for this reason the search for that criterion would be fruitless.

Proposition 11

*God, or a substance consisting of infinite attributes each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists.*

Proof

If you deny this, conceive, if you can, that God does not exist. It would follow (*by a7*) that his essence does not involve existence. But (*by p7*) this is absurd. Therefore God necessarily exists. *Q. E. D.*

Alternatively

For each thing there must be a cause, *or* reason, both for why it exists and for why it does not exist. For example, if a triangle exists, there must be a reason *or* cause why it exists; and if it does not exist, there must be a

reason *or* cause that prevents it from existing *or* takes away its existence. 9  
But this reason *or* cause must be either contained in the nature of the thing or outside it. For example, why a square circle does not exist is shown by its own nature; it is because it involves a contradiction. And why substance does exist also simply follows from its nature – it is of course because it involves existence (*see p7*). But the reason why a circle or a triangle does or does not exist follows not from their nature but from the order of corporeal nature as a whole; for it is from this order that it must follow either that a triangle now necessarily exists or that it is impossible for it now to exist. This is all obvious in itself.

It follows from this that a thing necessarily exists if there is no reason nor cause that prevents it from existing. Therefore if there can be no reason nor cause that prevents God from existing or that takes away his existence, the conclusion inevitably follows that he necessarily exists. But if there were such a reason *or* cause, it would be either in God's nature itself or outside it, i.e. in another substance of a different nature. For if it were of the same nature, by that very fact it would be conceded that there is a God. But a substance which was of a different nature could (*by p2*) have nothing in common with God, and therefore could neither posit nor take away his existence. Since therefore the reason *or* cause which takes away God's existence cannot be outside of God's nature, it will necessarily have to be, if indeed he does not exist, in God's nature itself, which would therefore involve a contradiction. But it is absurd to say this of an absolutely infinite and supremely perfect being. Therefore there is no cause *or* reason either in God or outside of God which takes away his existence, and accordingly God necessarily exists. *Q. E. D.*

Alternatively

To be able not to exist is to lack power, and conversely to be able to exist is power (*as is self-evident*). Therefore if nothing now necessarily exists but finite beings, finite beings are more powerful than an absolutely infinite being, and this (*self-evidently*) is absurd. Therefore either nothing exists or an absolutely infinite being also necessarily exists. But we exist either in ourselves or in some other thing that necessarily exists (*see a1 and p7*). Therefore absolutely infinite being, i.e. (*by def6*) God, necessarily exists. *Q. E. D.*

10 Scholium

In this last proof I have sought to show the existence of God *a posteriori*, so that the proof would be more easily grasped, not because God's existence does not follow *a priori* from this same foundation. For since being able to exist is power, it follows that the more reality belongs to the nature of a thing, the more strength it has from itself to exist, and therefore absolutely infinite being, *or* God, has from himself an absolutely infinite power of existing, and he therefore absolutely exists.

But perhaps there will be many who cannot see the evident force of this proof because they are only used to noticing things that come into being from external causes. In particular, they see that things that come into being quickly, i.e. things that exist easily, also perish easily, and conversely they judge that things are more difficult to make, i.e. do not exist so easily, when they conceive that more things belong to them.

In order to free them from these prejudices, I don't need to show here in what sense this remark *what quickly comes into being quickly perishes* is true, nor even whether, with respect to the whole of nature, all things are equally easy or not. I need only say that I am not speaking here about things that come into being from external causes, but only about substances that (*by p6*) cannot be produced from any external cause. In the case of things that come into being from external causes, whether consisting of many parts or few, all the perfection *or* reality that they have is due to the virtue of the external cause, and therefore their existence arises only from the perfection of the external cause and not from their own. By contrast whatever perfection substance has is not due to any external cause; therefore its existence also must follow solely from its own nature, which accordingly is nothing but its essence. Therefore the perfection of a thing does not take away its essence but on the contrary posits it; conversely imperfection takes it away. Therefore we cannot be more certain of the existence of anything than of the existence of absolutely infinite *or* perfect being, i.e. of God. For since his essence excludes all imperfection and involves absolute perfection, by that very fact it takes away all cause of doubt about his existence and provides the highest certainty about it. I think this will be quite clear to anyone who takes the trouble to think about it.

Proposition 12

11

*No attribute of substance can be truly conceived from which it would follow that substance can be divided.*

Proof

The parts into which substance so conceived would be divided will either retain the nature of the substance or they will not. If the former, then (*by p8*) each part will have to be infinite and (*by p6*) the cause of itself, and (*by p5*) it will have to consist of a different attribute, and thus several substances will be able to be made out of one substance, and this (*by p6*) is absurd. In addition, the parts (*by p2*) would have nothing in common with their whole, and the whole (*by def4 and p10*) could be and be conceived without its parts, and no one can doubt that this is absurd. But if the second alternative is affirmed – namely that the parts will not retain the nature of substance – it will follow that when the whole substance was divided into equal parts, it would lose the nature of substance and would cease to be, and this (*by p7*) is absurd.

Proposition 13

*Absolutely infinite substance is indivisible.*

Proof

If it were divisible, the parts into which it was divided would either retain the nature of absolutely infinite substance or they would not. If the first, then there will be several substances of the same nature, and this (*by p5*) is absurd. If the second alternative is affirmed, then (*as above*) it will be possible for absolutely infinite substance to cease to be, and this too (*by p11*) is absurd.

Corollary

It follows from this that no substance, and consequently no corporeal substance, is divisible, insofar as it is substance.

Scholium

That substance is indivisible is more simply understood from the single point that the nature of substance can only be conceived as infinite,



12 and that part of substance can only mean finite substance, and this (*by p8*) contains an evident contradiction.

Proposition 14

*No substance can be or be conceived besides God.*

Proof

Since God is absolutely infinite being of whom no attribute expressing substance can be denied (*by def6*), and since he necessarily exists (*by p11*), if there were any substance besides God, it would have to be explained by some attribute of God. Thus there would be two substances with the same attribute. But (*by p5*) this is absurd. Therefore there can be no substance outside of God, and consequently no such substance can be conceived. For if it could be conceived, it would necessarily have to be conceived as existing, but (*by the first part of this proof*) that is absurd. Therefore no substance can be or be conceived outside of God. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary 1

It very clearly follows from this, first, that God is unique, i.e. (*by def6*) that in the universe there is only one substance and it is absolutely infinite, as we have already indicated in *p10s*.

Corollary 2

It follows, secondly, that an extended thing and a thinking thing are either attributes of God or (*by a1*) affections of attributes of God.

Proposition 15

*Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be, or be conceived, without God.*

Proof

There is no substance, nor can any be conceived, besides God (*by p14*), i.e. (*by def3*) no thing which is in itself and is conceived through itself. And (*by def5*) modes cannot be or be conceived without substance; therefore modes can be in the divine nature alone and can only be conceived  
13 through it. But there is nothing (*by a1*) besides substances and modes. Therefore nothing can be or be conceived without God. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

There are those who surmise that God consists, like a human being, of body and mind and as subject to passions. But it is evident from what we have proved above how far they are from a true cognition of God. I pay no attention to these people, for all who have in any way reflected on the divine nature deny that God is corporeal. They provide an excellent proof of this from the fact that what we mean by body is some quantity, of a certain length, breadth and depth, bounded by a certain outline, and this is the most absurd thing that can be said of God, i.e. of absolutely infinite being.

However at the same time the other arguments by which they endeavor to prove this point clearly show that they completely exclude corporeal *or* extended substance from the divine nature and insist that it was created by God. But they do not know at all by which divine power it could have been created, and this clearly shows that they do not understand what they are saying. I have proved quite clearly, at least in my own judgment (*see p6c and p8s2*), that no substance can be produced or created by something else. Furthermore in *p14* we showed that no substance can be or be conceived besides God; and we concluded from this that extended substance is one of the infinite attributes of God. But for a fuller explanation, I will refute my opponents' arguments which can all be boiled down to this.

*First*, they say that corporeal substance, so far as it is substance, consists of parts, and therefore, they say, it is not infinite and consequently it cannot belong to God. They explain this with many examples; I will give one or two. If, they say, corporeal substance is infinite, it may be conceived as being divided into two parts, and each part will be either finite or infinite. If the former, an infinite thing is composed of two finite parts, but this is absurd. If the latter, this will yield an infinite thing which is twice the size of the other infinite thing, and this too is absurd. Furthermore if an infinite quantity is measured in parts each a foot long, it will have to consist of infinite such parts; this would also be the case if it were measured in inches; and thus one infinite number will be twelve times larger than the other infinite number. Finally, if two lines, AB and AC, which are initially of a specific and determinate length, are conceived as extended to infinity from one point of a certain infinite quantity, it is undeniable that the distance between B and C continually

14

increases and will in the end be indeterminate instead of determinate. Since these absurd consequences follow, as they think, from the supposition of an infinite quantity, they draw the conclusion that corporeal substance must be finite, and consequently that it does not belong to the essence of God.

They also try to derive a *second argument* from the supreme perfection of God.<sup>21</sup> For, they say, since God is supremely perfect being, he cannot be acted on; but corporeal substance can be acted on since it is divisible; therefore it does not belong to the essence of God.

These are the arguments that I find in the writers who endeavor to show that corporeal substance is unworthy of the divine nature and cannot belong to it. However anyone who looks at these arguments carefully will find that I have countered them already, since they are based solely on the supposition that corporeal substance is composed of parts, and I have already shown (*by p12 with p13c*) that this is absurd. Then, anyone who reflects properly on this question will see that all these absurd suggestions (if indeed they are all absurd; I am not arguing about that now), from which they wish to conclude that extended substance is finite, do not follow from the supposition of infinite quantity but from the supposition that infinite quantity is measurable and made up of finite parts. From the absurdities that follow from this, the only conclusion they can possibly draw is that infinite quantity is not measurable and cannot be made up of finite parts. Now this is the very thing that we have already proved above (*by p12 etc*). So in truth they are turning against themselves the weapon they meant to aim at us.

Therefore if by this absurd argument of theirs they still insist on inferring that extended substance must be finite, they are proposing the same kind of nonsense as someone who imagined that a circle has the properties of a square and inferred from this that a circle does not have a center from which all lines leading to the circumference are equal. For corporeal substance can only be conceived as infinite, unique and  
15 indivisible (*see p8, p5, p12*); but they conceive of it as being composed of finite parts, and as being multiple and divisible, in order to reach the conclusion that it is finite. In just the same way others have imagined that a line is composed of points, and once they have done that, they exercise

<sup>21</sup> The likely target of this argument is Descartes. See *Principles of Philosophy* I, 26–7.

their ingenuity to invent many arguments to show that a line cannot be infinitely divided. Surely it is no less absurd to posit that corporeal substance is composed of bodies *or* parts than that a body is composed of surfaces, surfaces of lines, and lines finally of points.

All who know that clear reasoning is infallible must admit this, and especially those who deny that there is a vacuum. For if corporeal substance could be divided so that its parts were really distinct, why could one part not be eliminated while the remaining parts stayed connected with each other as before, and why must all the parts be so fitted to one other that there is no vacuum? For of course when things are really distinct from each other, each one can be without the other and remain in its own state. Since therefore there is no vacuum in nature (we discuss this elsewhere)<sup>22</sup> but all the parts must harmonise in such a way that there is no vacuum this is another argument that those parts cannot really be distinct, i.e. corporeal substance, insofar as it is substance, cannot be divided.

If however anyone now asks why we are so prone by nature to divide quantity, I reply that we conceive quantity in two ways, i.e. either abstractly, in other words superficially, as it is in our imagination, or as substance, a thing that is done only by the intellect. If then we focus on quantity as it is in the imagination, which we do often and quite easily, it will be found to be finite, divisible and made up of parts. But if we focus on it as it is in the intellect and conceive it simply as substance – and this is very difficult to do – then as we have already fully proved, it will be found to be infinite, unique and indivisible. This will be clear enough to all who have learned to distinguish between imagination and intellect, especially if we also take into account that matter is everywhere the same, and its parts are not distinguished except insofar as we conceive it as matter modified in different ways, so that its parts are distinguished only modally and not in reality. For example, we conceive of water as being divided and its parts as being separated from each other insofar as it is water, but not insofar as it is corporeal substance; for in that respect it is neither separated nor divided. Furthermore, water as water is subject to generation and decay, but as substance it is not subject to either.

16

I think that with these points I have also replied to the second argument, since it too is based on the supposition that matter as

<sup>22</sup> Spinoza is likely referring to his *Descartes's Principles*, Part II, proposition 3 – assuming that Spinoza's commentary intended to endorse this Cartesian view.

substance is divisible and made up of parts. And even if this were not so, I do not know why matter would be unworthy of the divine nature, since (*by p14*) there can be no substance outside God by which it might be affected. All things, I insist, are in God, and everything that happens, happens solely by the laws of God's infinite nature and follows from the necessity of his essence (as I will show later). Therefore there is no way that it can be said that God is acted on by any other thing, or that extended substance is unworthy of the divine nature, even if it is supposed to be divisible, provided that it is allowed to be eternal and infinite. But enough of all this for now.

Proposition 16

*From the necessity of the divine nature infinite things must follow in infinite ways (i.e. all things that can fall under an infinite intellect).*

Proof

This proposition must be obvious to anyone, if only he will note that the intellect infers from the given definition of a thing several properties that in truth follow necessarily from it (i.e. from the very essence of the thing), and it infers more properties, the more reality the definition of the thing expresses, i.e. the more reality the essence of the thing defined involves. Now since (*by def6*) the divine nature has absolutely infinite attributes and each of them also expresses infinite essence in its kind, infinite things in infinite ways (i.e. all things that can fall under an infinite intellect) must necessarily follow from its necessity. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary 1

It follows from this that God is the efficient cause of all things that can fall under an infinite intellect.

17 Corollary 2

It follows secondly that God is cause through himself and not by accident.

Corollary 3

It follows thirdly that God is absolutely the first cause.

Proposition 17

*God acts by the laws of his own nature uncompelled by anyone.*

Proof

We have just shown in *p16* that infinite things absolutely follow solely from the necessity of the divine nature or (the same thing) solely from the laws of that nature, and in *p15* we proved that nothing can be, or be conceived, without God, but that all things are in God. Therefore there can be nothing outside of him by which he is determined or compelled to act, and therefore God acts solely by the laws of his own nature and not compelled by anyone. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary 1

It follows, first, that there is no cause besides the perfection of his own nature which prompts God, extrinsically or intrinsically, to act.

Corollary 2

It follows, secondly, that God alone is a free cause. For God alone exists by the necessity of his own nature (*by p11 and p14c1*), and acts solely by the necessity of his own nature (*by p17*). Therefore (*by def7*) he alone is a free cause. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Others think that God is a free cause because in their view he can ensure that things that we have said follow from his nature, i.e. things that are within his abilities, do not happen *or* are not produced by him. But this is the same as saying that God can ensure that it does not follow from the nature of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles *or* that from a given cause the effect does not follow, and this is absurd. 18

Later<sup>23</sup> I will show, without relying on this proposition, that neither intellect nor will belong to God's nature. I know of course that many think they can prove that supreme intellect and free will belong to God's nature. They say that they know nothing more perfect that they can

<sup>23</sup> See the end of this scholium.

attribute to God than that which is supreme perfection in us. Moreover, even though they conceive of God as supremely intelligent in actuality, they do not believe that he can bring into existence all the things that he understands in actuality; for they think that this is to deny the power of God. If, they say, he had created everything that is in his intellect, he would not later have been able to create anything else, and they believe that this contradicts God's omnipotence. Therefore they have preferred to take the view that God is indifferent to all things and does not create anything except what he has decided to create by his so-called absolute will. But I think I have shown quite clearly (*see p16*) that from God's supreme power *or* infinite nature, infinite things in infinite ways (i.e. all things) have necessarily proceeded or always follow by the same necessity, just as from eternity to eternity it follows from the nature of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles. Therefore God's omnipotence has been actual from eternity and will persist to eternity with the same actuality. And thus in my judgment God's omnipotence is rendered far more perfect.

In fact (to speak frankly) my opponents seem to deny the omnipotence of God. For they are forced to admit that God understands an infinite number of things that could be created but which he will never be able to create. Otherwise, i.e. if he were to create everything that he understands, he would, according to them, exhaust his own omnipotence and render himself imperfect. Thus in order to maintain that God is perfect, they are driven to say at the same time that he cannot effect all the things to which his power extends. I cannot imagine any claim more absurd or more inconsistent with God's omnipotence.

19 I also want to say something here about the intellect and the will that we commonly attribute to God. If intellect and will do belong to the eternal essence of God, we must certainly mean something different by both these attributes than is commonly understood. For an intellect and a will that constituted the essence of God would have to be totally different from our intellect and will, and would not agree with them in anything but name – no more in fact than the heavenly sign of the dog agrees with the barking animal which is a dog. I prove this thus. If intellect does belong to the divine nature, it will not be able, as our intellect is, to be posterior (as most believe) or simultaneous by nature with what is understood, since God is prior in causality to all things (*by p16c1*). To the contrary truth and the formal essence of things are

such precisely because they exist as such objectively in the intellect of God. That is why God's intellect, insofar as it is conceived as constituting God's essence, is in truth the cause both of the essence of things and of their existence. This seems to have been noticed also by those who have maintained that the intellect, the will and the power of God are one and the same thing.

Since God's intellect is the sole cause (as we have shown) both of the essence and of the existence of things, it must necessarily differ from them both in regard to their essence and to their existence. For the thing caused differs from its cause precisely in what it has from its cause. For example, one human being is the cause of the existence of another human being but not of his essence; for his essence is an eternal truth. Therefore they can completely agree in their essence; but in their existence they must differ. This is why if the existence of one comes to an end, the existence of the other will not therefore come to an end. But if the essence of one could be taken away and be made false, the essence of the other would also be taken away. This is why something that is the cause of both the essence and the existence of an effect must differ from that effect both in respect of essence and in respect of existence. But God's intellect is the cause of both the essence and the existence of our intellect. Therefore God's intellect, insofar as it is conceived as constituting the divine essence, differs from our intellect both in respect of essence and in respect of existence, and it cannot agree with it in anything except name, and this is what we set out to prove. One may make the same argument about will, as anyone may easily see.

Proposition 18

*God is the immanent and not the transitive cause of all things.*

Proof

All things that are, are in God and must be conceived through God (*by p15*), and therefore (*by p16c1*) God is the cause of the things that are in him; this is the first point. Then, there can be no substance besides God (*by p14*), i.e. (*by def3*) nothing which is in itself outside of God; this is the second point. Therefore God is the immanent and not the transitive cause of all things. *Q. E. D.*



Proposition 19

*God, or all the attributes of God, are eternal.*

Proof

God is a substance (*by def6*) which (*by p11*) necessarily exists, i.e. (*by p7*) it belongs to his nature to exist *or* (which is the same thing) it follows from the definition of God that he exists, and therefore (*by def8*) he is eternal. Then, by the attributes of God we must mean the thing which (*by def4*) expresses the essence of the divine substance, i.e. belongs to the substance; the attributes themselves, I say, must involve this thing. But eternity belongs to the nature of substance (*as I have already proved from p7*). Therefore each of the attributes must involve eternity, and therefore they are all eternal. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This proposition is also completely evident from the way in which (*p11*) I proved the existence of God. That proof, I say, establishes that God's existence, like his essence, is an eternal truth. Then, I have in *Proposition 19 of my Descartes's Principles of Philosophy* proved the eternity of God in another way also, and there is no need to repeat it here.

Proposition 20

*God's existence and his essence are one and the same thing.*

Proof

God (*by p19*) and all his attributes are eternal, i.e. (*by def8*) each one of his attributes expresses existence. Therefore the same attributes of God that (*by def4*) explain his eternal essence, at the same time explain his eternal existence, i.e. the thing that constitutes God's essence at the same time  
21 constitutes his existence, and therefore his existence and his essence are one and the same thing. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary 1

It follows from this, first, that the existence of God, like his essence, is an eternal truth.

Corollary 2

It follows, secondly, that God *or* all the attributes of God are immutable. For if they were changed in respect of existence, they would also (*by p20*) have to be changed in respect of essence, i.e. (self-evidently) instead of being true they would have to become false, and this is absurd.

Proposition 21

*Everything that follows from the absolute nature of any of God's attributes must have existed for ever and be infinite or they are eternal and infinite through that attribute.*

Proof

If you deny this, conceive, if you can, that there is in any of God's attributes something following from his absolute nature that is finite and has a determinate existence *or* duration, for example God's idea in thought. Since thought is supposed to be an attribute of God, it is necessarily (*by p11*) infinite by its nature. But insofar as it has God's idea, it is supposed to be finite. But (*by def2*) it cannot be conceived as finite unless it is determined through thought itself. But not through thought itself insofar as it constitutes God's idea, for to that extent it is supposed to be finite; therefore it must be through thought itself insofar as it does not constitute God's idea, which nevertheless (*by p11*) must necessarily exist. There is therefore thought that does not constitute God's idea, and therefore God's idea does not necessarily follow from its nature insofar as it is absolute thought. (For it is conceived as constituting and as not constituting God's idea.) But this is contrary to the hypothesis. Therefore if God's idea in thought or anything in any attribute of God (it does not matter which one we pick since the proof is universal) follows from the necessity of the absolute nature of the attribute itself, it must necessarily be infinite. This is the first point.

Then, anything that follows in this way from the necessity of the nature of any attribute cannot have a determinate duration. If you deny this, suppose that the thing that follows from the necessity of the nature of some attribute is in some attribute of God, for example God's idea in thought, and suppose that at some time it did not exist or will not exist. But since thought is regarded as an attribute of God, it must both

necessarily exist and be immutable (*by p11 and p20c2*). Therefore the thought will have to exist without the idea of God, outside the limits of the duration of God's idea (for it is supposed that at some time it did not exist or will not exist); and this is contrary to the hypothesis; for it is supposed that God's idea necessarily follows from the given thought. Therefore God's idea in thought or anything that necessarily follows from the absolute nature of any attribute of God, cannot have a determinate duration but is eternal through that attribute. This is the second point. Note that we must say the same thing about anything which in any attribute of God necessarily follows from the absolute nature of God.

Proposition 22

*Anything that follows from any attribute of God insofar as it has been modified by a modification which itself necessarily exists and is infinite through it, must also necessarily exist and be infinite.*

Proof

The proof of this proposition proceeds in the same way as the proof of the previous one.

Proposition 23

*Every mode which necessarily exists and is infinite, must have necessarily followed either from the absolute nature of some attribute of God or from some attribute modified by a modification which itself necessarily exists and is infinite.*

Proof

23 A mode is in some other thing through which it must be conceived (*by def5*), i.e. (*by p15*) it is in God alone and can be conceived through God alone. If therefore a mode is conceived as necessarily existing and as being infinite, both of these things must necessarily be inferred or perceived through some attribute of God insofar as it is conceived as expressing infinity and the necessity of existence or (*which is the same thing by def8*) eternity, i.e. (*by def6 and p19*) insofar as it is considered absolutely. Therefore a mode which exists necessarily and is infinite must have followed from the absolute nature of some attribute of God.

And it must have followed either immediately (*on which see p21*) or by some mediating modification which follows from its absolute nature, and which (*by the previous proposition*) also necessarily exists and is infinite.

Proposition 24

*The essence of things produced by God does not involve existence.*

Proof

This is evident from def1. For that whose nature (considered in itself) involves existence is the cause of itself and exists solely from the necessity of its nature.

Corollary

It follows from this that God is not only the cause that things begin to exist but also that they persevere in existing *or* (to use the scholastic term) that God is the cause of the being of things. For whether things exist or do not exist, whenever we focus on their essence, we find that it involves neither existence nor duration. Therefore their essence cannot be the cause either of their existence or of their duration but the cause can only be God, to whose nature alone it belongs to exist (*by p14c1*).

Proposition 25

*God is not only the efficient cause of the existence of things but also of their essence.*

Proof

If you deny this, it follows that God is not the cause of the essence of things, and therefore (*by a4*) the essence of things can be conceived without God. But this (*by p15*) is absurd. Therefore God is the cause of the essence of things. *Q. E. D.* 24

Scholium

This proposition follows more clearly from p16. For it follows from that proposition that both the essence of things and their existence must necessarily be inferred from the divine nature as it is. To put it in a word, in the sense in which God is said to be the cause of himself, he must also

be said to be the cause of all things, and this will be established still more clearly by the following corollary.

Corollary

Particular things are simply affections of God's attributes *or* modes by which God's attributes are expressed in a specific and determinate way. The proof is evident from p15 and def5.

Proposition 26

*A thing which has been determined to operate in a specific way has been so determined necessarily by God; and a thing which has not been determined by God cannot determine itself to operate.*

Proof

That by which things are said to be determined to operate in a specific way is necessarily something positive (as is self-evident). Therefore by the necessity of his nature God is the efficient cause both of its essence and of its existence (*by p25 and p16*). This is the first point, and the second point very clearly follows from it. For if a thing which has not been determined by God could determine itself, the first part of this proposition would be false, and that is absurd, as we have shown.

Proposition 27

*A thing which has been determined by God to operate in a specific way cannot make itself undetermined.*

Proof

This proposition is evident from a3.

25 Proposition 28

*Any particular thing, or anything that is finite and has a determinate existence, cannot exist or be determined to operate, unless it is determined to exist and operate by another cause, which is also finite and has a determinate existence; and this cause in turn is also unable to exist or be determined to operate, unless it is determined to exist and to operate by another thing, which also is finite and has a determinate existence, and so ad infinitum.*

Proof

Whatever has been determined to exist and to operate has been so determined by God (*by p26 and p24c*). But nothing that is finite and has a determinate existence could have been produced from the absolute nature of any attribute of God; for whatever follows from the absolute nature of any attribute of God is infinite and eternal (*by p21*). It must therefore have followed from God or from some attribute of his insofar as it is considered as affected by some mode. For there is nothing besides substance and modes (*by a1, def3 and def5*), and modes (*by p25c*) are nothing but affections of God's attributes. But neither could it have followed (*by p22*) from God or from any attribute of his insofar as that attribute is affected by a modification which is eternal and infinite. It must therefore have followed, or have been determined to exist and to operate, by God or by some attribute of his, insofar as that attribute has been modified by a modification which is finite and has a determined existence. That is the first point. Then, this cause *or* this mode in turn (*by the same reasoning by which we have already proved the first part of this proposition*) must also have been determined by another cause which is also finite and has a determinate existence, and this latter cause in its turn (*by the same reasoning*) by another cause, and so ever on (*by the same reasoning*) *ad infinitum*. Q. E. D.

Scholium

26

Some things must have been produced immediately by God, namely those things that follow necessarily from his absolute nature, and some things by the mediation of these first things, which still cannot either be or be conceived without God. It follows therefore, first, that God is the absolutely proximate cause of things immediately produced by him but not in their kind, as they say.<sup>24</sup> For God's effects cannot either be or be conceived (*by p15 and p24c*) without their cause. It follows, secondly, that God cannot properly be said to be the remote cause of particular things, except perhaps in order to distinguish them from those which he produced immediately or rather which follow from his absolute nature. For by a

<sup>24</sup> Spinoza's discussion of proximate and remote causation here is likely informed by the work of Adriann Heereboord, a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Leiden. See *Meletemata Philosophica* II, 22.

remote cause we mean the sort of cause that is in no way closely joined to its effect. But everything that is, is in God, and is also so dependent on him that without him they could neither be nor be conceived.

Proposition 29

*Nothing in nature is contingent but everything is determined to exist and to operate in a specific way by the necessity of the divine nature.*

Proof

Whatever is, is in God (*by p15*). But God cannot be said to be a contingent thing; for (*by p11*) he exists necessarily and not contingently. Then, the modes of the divine nature have also followed from it necessarily and not contingently (*by p16*), either insofar as it is regarded as the divine nature absolutely (*by p21*) or insofar as it is considered as determined to act in a specific way (*by p27*). Moreover God is not only the cause of these modes insofar as they simply exist (*by p24c*) but also (*by p26*) insofar as they are considered as determined to operate in a specific way. But if (by the same proposition) they are not determined by God, it is impossible, and not contingent, that they should determine themselves, and conversely (*by p27*) if they are determined by God, it is impossible, and not contingent, that they should render themselves undetermined. Therefore all things are determined by the necessity of the divine nature not only to exist but also to exist and operate in a specific way, and nothing is contingent. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Before going any further, I would like to provide an explanation or rather a caution about what we should understand by *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. For I think that it is already clear from what we have said so far that by *natura naturans* we must mean that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, or such attributes of substance as express eternal and infinite essence, i.e. (*by p14c1 and p17c2*) God, insofar as he is considered as a free cause. And by *natura naturata* I mean everything that follows from the necessity of God's nature or of any of God's attributes, i.e. all the modes of God's attributes insofar as they are considered as things that are in God and can neither be nor be conceived without God.

Proposition 30

*An actual intellect, whether finite or infinite, must comprehend God's attributes and God's affections, and nothing else.*

Proof

A true idea must agree with its object (*by a6*), i.e. (self-evidently) anything that is objectively contained in the intellect must necessarily be there in nature. But (*by p14c1*) there is only one substance in nature, namely God, and no other affections (*by p15*) but those that are in God and that (*by the same proposition*) can neither be nor be conceived without God. Therefore an actual intellect, whether finite or infinite, must comprehend the attributes of God and the affections of God, and nothing else. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 31

*An actual intellect, whether it is finite or infinite, as well as will, desire, love, etc., must be related to natura naturata and not to natura naturans.*

Proof

28

By intellect (self-evidently) we do not mean absolute thought but only a particular mode of thinking, a mode that differs from other modes like desire, love etc. Therefore (*by def5*) it must be conceived through absolute thought, i.e. (*by p15 and def6*) it must be conceived through some attribute of God which expresses the eternal and infinite essence of thought, so that without that attribute it can neither be nor be conceived. Therefore (*by p29s*), along with the other modes of thinking, it must be related to *natura naturata* and not to *natura naturans*. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

The reason why I speak here about actual intellect is not because I accept that there is such a thing as potential intellect, but because, as I desire to avoid confusion, I wanted to speak only about a thing which we perceive with complete clarity, namely intellection itself, and there is nothing that we perceive more clearly than this. For we can understand nothing that does not contribute to a more perfect cognition of intellection.



Proposition 32

*The will cannot be called a free cause but only a necessary one.*

Proof

Will, like intellect, is only a particular mode of thinking, and therefore (*by p28*) no volition whatsoever can exist or be determined to operate unless it is determined by another cause and this in turn by another, and so on *ad infinitum*. Even if we suppose a will which is infinite, it too must be determined to exist and to operate by God, not insofar as he is absolutely infinite substance but insofar as he possesses an attribute which expresses the infinite and eternal essence of thought (*by p23*). Therefore in whichever way it is conceived, whether as finite or as infinite, it requires a cause which determines it to exist and to operate, and therefore (*by def7*) it cannot be said to be a free cause but only a necessary or compelled cause. *Q. E. D.*

29 Corollary 1

It follows from this, first, that God does not operate from freedom of will.

Corollary 2

It also follows, secondly, that will and intellect are related to the nature of God just like motion and rest and absolutely all natural things, which (*by p29*) must be determined by God to exist and to operate in a specific way. For like all other things, the will needs a cause which determines it to exist and operate in a specific way. And even though infinite things follow from the given will *or* intellect, God cannot because of this be said to act from freedom of will any more than he can be said to act from freedom of motion and rest because of the things that follow from motion and rest (for infinite things follow from them too). Therefore will no more belongs to the nature of God than all other natural things do. It is related to his nature just like motion and rest and all other things which we have shown follow from the necessity of the divine nature and are determined by it to exist and to operate in a specific way.

Proposition 33

*Things could not have been produced by God in any other way or in any other order than they have been produced.*

Proof

All things have followed necessarily from God's nature as it is (*by p16*), and have been determined by the necessity of God's nature to exist and to operate in a specific way (*by p29*). Therefore if things could have been of a different nature or determined to operate in another way so that the order of nature was different, then the nature of God also could be other than it now is, and accordingly (*by p11*) that too would have to exist, and consequently there could be two or more Gods. But (*by p14c1*) this is absurd. Therefore things could not have been produced by God in any other way or in any other order, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium 1

30

By this I have shown more clearly than the light of day that there is absolutely nothing in things because of which they may be said to be contingent. And so now I want to explain in a few words what we shall have to understand by contingent. But first I want to explain what we must understand by necessary and impossible. A thing is said to be necessary either by reason of its essence or by reason of its cause; for the existence of anything necessarily follows either from its essence and its definition or from a given efficient cause. Then, a thing is also said to be impossible for these reasons, i.e. either because its essence *or* its definition involves a contradiction or because there is no external cause determined to produce such a thing. But the only reason why a thing is said to be contingent is owing to a failure in our cognition. For if we do not know that a thing's essence involves a contradiction, or if we are clear that it involves no contradiction, and yet we cannot affirm anything for certain about its existence because the order of causes is hidden from us, this thing can never seem to us to be either necessary or impossible, and therefore we call it either contingent or possible.

Scholium 2

It follows clearly from all this that things have been produced by God with supreme perfection, since they have followed necessarily from the

most perfect nature there is. This does not allege any imperfection in God; for it is his perfection that has compelled us to affirm it. In fact from the contrary of this it would clearly follow (as I have just shown) that God is not supremely perfect. For if things had been produced in a different way, we would have to attribute another nature to God, different from that which we have been compelled to attribute to him from consideration of most perfect being.

I have no doubt that many people will completely reject this opinion as absurd, and refuse to force themselves to think about it, simply because they have always attributed to God a different freedom – that is, an absolute will – which is very unlike the freedom we proposed (*in def7*). But I have no doubt either that if they were willing to think about the matter and reflect carefully with themselves on our series of proofs, they would completely reject such freedom as they now attribute to God not only as worthless but as a great obstacle to knowledge [scientia]. There is no need to repeat here what I said in p17s.

However in order to help them, I will further show that even if we concede that will belongs to God's essence, it still follows from his perfection that things could not have been created by God in any other way or in any other order. This will be easy to show if we first consider a point they concede themselves, that it depends only upon the decree and will of God that each thing is what it is. Otherwise God would not be the cause of all things. Then, that all God's decrees were ordained by God himself from eternity. Otherwise he would be guilty of imperfection and capriciousness. But since in eternity there is neither *when, before* or *after*, it follows solely from the perfection of God that God can never decree anything different, and that he never could have, *or* that God was not before his decrees and could not be without them.

But they will say that even if it were supposed that God had made the universe different or that from eternity he had decreed otherwise about nature and its order, no imperfection in God would follow from that. However if they say this, they will be conceding at the same time that God can alter his own decree. For if God had decreed about nature and its order otherwise than as he did decree, i.e. if he had willed and conceived something different about nature, he would necessarily have had a different intellect than he now has and a different will than he now has. And if we are allowed to attribute to God a different intellect and a different will without any change of his essence and his perfection, what

is the reason that he cannot now change his own decrees about created things and still remain equally perfect? For however the relation of his intellect and will with respect to created things and their order is conceived in relation to his essence and perfection, it makes no difference. Then, all the philosophers I have seen concede that there is no potential intellect in God but only actual intellect.<sup>25</sup> Now since neither his intellect nor his will are distinguished from his essence, as all of them also concede, it follows from this too that if God had had a different actual intellect and a different will, his essence too would necessarily be different. Accordingly (as I concluded at the beginning) if things had been produced by God otherwise than they now are, God's intellect and his will, i.e. (as is conceded) his essence, would have to be different; and this is absurd.

32

Things therefore could not have been produced by God in a different way or order, and the truth of this follows from the supreme perfection of God. Therefore there is obviously no good reason to persuade us that God was unwilling to create everything that was in his intellect with the same perfection with which he understands them.

But they will say that there is no perfection or imperfection in things, but that which is in them that makes them perfect or imperfect and called good or bad depends solely on the will of God. Therefore if God had so wished, he could have brought it about that what is now perfection was supreme imperfection and *vice versa*. But this is simply to assert plainly that God, who necessarily understands what he wishes, can by his own will bring it about that he understands things otherwise than as he does understand them, and this (as I have just shown) is a great absurdity.

And so I can retort the argument upon them in this way. Everything depends upon the abilities of God. In order for things to be different than they are, the will of God would necessarily have to be different. But the will of God cannot be different (as we have just demonstrated very clearly from God's perfection). Neither therefore can things be different.

I admit that this belief that makes all things subject to a sort of indifferent will of God and holds that all things depend upon his good pleasure is less far from the truth than the belief of those who hold that

<sup>25</sup> For example, see Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I. q. 3, a. 1; Descartes, Third Meditation, in *Œuvres de Descartes*, Adam and Tannery (hence forth AT), VII, 47.

God acts always with regard for the good.<sup>26</sup> For these people seem to be positing something outside of God, not dependent upon God, which God looks to as an exemplar in his operations, or which he keeps his eye on as on a sort of target. Surely this is simply subjecting God to fate, and nothing more absurd can be said about God, whom we have shown to be the first and only free cause of both the essence and the existence of all things. There is no reason to waste time refuting this absurdity.

Proposition 34

*God's power is his very essence.*

33 Proof

It follows simply from the necessity of God's essence that God is cause of himself (*by p111*) and of all things (*by p16 and its corollary*). Therefore God's power, by which he and all things are and act, is the very essence of him. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 35

*Whatever we conceive to be within the abilities of God necessarily is.*

Proof

Whatever is within the abilities of God must (*by the previous proposition*) be so included in his essence that it necessarily follows from it, and therefore necessarily is. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 36

*Nothing exists from whose nature some effect does not follow.*

Proof

Anything that exists expresses the nature *or* essence of God in a specific and determinate way (*by p25c*), i.e. (*by p34*) anything that exists

<sup>26</sup> The view that God has an indifferent will was held by the Ashariya, a sect of Muslim theologians. Their views are described and criticized by Maimonides in *The Guide for the Perplexed* III, 25–6. Spinoza's targets also likely include Descartes, who held that even eternal truths depend on God's will. See Descartes's famous letter to Mersenne (AT I, 152) and the Sixth Replies (AT VII, 436).

expresses the power of God, which is the cause of all things, in a specific and determinate way, and therefore (*by p16*) some effect must follow from it. *Q. E. D.*

## Appendix

With this I have explained the nature of God and his properties: that he necessarily exists; that he is unique; that he is and acts solely from the necessity of his own nature; that he is the free cause of all things and how this is so; that all things are in God and so depend upon him that without him they can neither be nor be conceived; and finally that all things have been predetermined by God, not however by his freedom of will *or* at his absolute pleasure but by God's absolute nature *or* infinite power.

Furthermore, whenever the opportunity arose, I have taken pains to eliminate the prejudices that could prevent my proofs from being grasped. But there are still quite a few prejudices left to deal with that have also been extremely effective in the past, and still are effective, in preventing people from being able to accept the connection of things in the way I have explained it. And so I think it is worthwhile here to subject them to the scrutiny of reason.

34

Now all the prejudices that I undertake to expose here depend upon a single one: that human beings commonly suppose that, like themselves, all natural things act for a purpose. In fact they take it as certain that God directs all things for some specific purpose. For they say that God made all things for the sake of man, and that he made man to worship him. I will therefore begin by considering this single prejudice, by asking *first* what is the cause that most people accept this prejudice and are all so ready by nature to embrace it. *Then* I will prove the falsity of it. *Finally* I will show how prejudices have arisen from it about *good* and *bad*, *merit* and *sin*, *praise* and *blame*, *order* and *confusion*, *beauty* and *ugliness* and other things of this kind.

This is not the place to deduce these prejudices from the nature of the human mind. It will be enough here if I take as my foundation something that everyone must acknowledge – namely that all human beings are born ignorant of the causes of things and all have an appetite to pursue what is useful for themselves and are conscious of the fact. For it follows from this, *first*, that human beings believe they are free because they are conscious of their own volitions and their own appetite, and never think,

even in their dreams, about the causes which dispose them to want and to will, because they are ignorant of them. It follows, *secondly*, that human beings act always for a purpose, i.e. for the sake of something useful that they want. Because of this they require to know only the final causes of past events; once they have learned these they are satisfied, clearly because they have no cause to have any more doubts about them. But if they can't learn these causes from anyone else, they can only turn back on themselves and think of the purposes by which they themselves are normally determined to do similar things, and so they necessarily judge of another person's character by their own.

Moreover they find in themselves and outside of themselves a good many instruments that help them to obtain something useful for themselves, such as eyes to see with, teeth to chew with, plants and animals for food, the sun to give light and the sea to sustain fish. Because of this they have come to consider all natural things as instruments designed to be useful to themselves. They know that they found these instruments in place and did not make them, and this gave them cause to believe that there is someone else who made these things for them to use. For after 35 they had come to consider the things as instruments, they could not believe that the things made themselves, but from the instruments which they regularly made for themselves, they had to conclude that there was a governor or governors of nature, endowed with human freedom, who provided everything for them and made it all for their use. But they had not heard anything about the character of these governors, and so they were obliged to conjecture it from their own. This is how they decided that the Gods direct all things for human use in order to form a bond with human beings and receive great kudos from them. This is how it came about that they each invented different ways of worshipping God based on their own character so that God would love them more than other people and direct the whole of nature to the service of their blind desire and insatiable avarice. This is how this prejudice turned into a superstition and put down deep roots in their minds, and this is the reason why they have each made the most strenuous endeavor to understand and explain the final causes of all things.

But in striving to prove that nature never acts in vain (i.e. not for the use of human beings), they seem to have proved only that nature and the Gods are as deluded as human beings. I mean, look how things have turned out! Among the many advantages of nature they were bound to

find quite a few disadvantages, such as storms, earthquakes, diseases and so on. They decided that these things happened because the Gods were angry about the offenses that human beings had committed against them *or* the sins they had perpetrated in their ritual. Despite the daily evidence of experience to the contrary, which proves by any number of examples that advantages and disadvantages indiscriminately befall the pious and the impious alike, they did not abandon their inveterate prejudice. It was easier for them to add this to all the other unknown things whose use they did not know, and so maintain the existing state of ignorance they were born in rather than overthrow the whole structure and think out a new one.

So they took it for certain that the judgments of the Gods far surpass human understanding. And this alone would have caused the truth to be hidden from the human race forever, if mathematics, which is not concerned with purposes but only with the essences and properties of figures, had not disclosed a different criterion of truth to human beings. Besides mathematics we could mention other causes (which we don't need to go into here) that have enabled human beings eventually to become critically aware of these common prejudices and to find their way to a true cognition of things.

36

With this I have adequately explained the first point I proposed. The *second* point – that nature has no purpose laid down for it and that all final causes are nothing but human fancies – requires little argument. For I think this is already quite obvious from the foundation and causes that I have shown were the origin of this prejudice, by *p16* and *p32c*, and by all the arguments by which I have shown that everything in nature proceeds by a certain eternal necessity and with supreme perfection.

But I do want to add that this doctrine of purpose subverts nature completely; then, that it considers something which is in truth a cause as an effect and *vice versa*, and also treats that which by nature is prior as posterior; and finally that it renders most imperfect that which is supreme and most perfect. For (omitting the first two reasons because they are self-evident) it is clear from *p21*, *p22* and *p23* that an effect which is produced immediately by God is most perfect, and that the more intermediate causes anything needs for its production, the more imperfect it is. But if things produced immediately by God were made in order that God might fulfil his purpose, then necessarily it would be the final things for the sake of which the prior ones were made that would



be the most excellent of all. Then, this doctrine takes away the perfection of God. For if God acts for the sake of a purpose, he is necessarily seeking something that he lacks. Although theologians and metaphysicians distinguish between a purpose of need and a purpose of assimilation,<sup>27</sup> they still admit that God did all things for his own sake and not for the sake of the things he was to create, because they cannot suggest anything before creation besides God for the sake of which God would act. They are therefore necessarily forced to admit that God lacked the things for the sake of which he willed to prepare the means, and that he desired them, as is self-evident.

We must not overlook here the fact that the advocates of this doctrine, wanting to display their own ingenuity in assigning purposes to things, have brought to the proof of this doctrine a new mode of argument: not reduction to impossible but reduction to ignorance.<sup>28</sup> This shows that there was no other way to argue for this doctrine. If for example a stone fell from a roof onto someone's head and killed him, this sort of argument would prove that the stone fell in order to kill the man. For if it did not fall for this purpose in accordance with God's will, how could so many circumstances (for there are often many simultaneously) coincide by chance? Perhaps you will reply that it happened because the wind blew and the person was walking along that way. But they will press: why did the wind blow at that time? Why was the person going that way at that very time? If you counter that the wind sprang up at that time because the day before, though the weather had been calm, the sea began to be get rough and the person had been invited by a friend, they will press again, because there is no end to asking questions: why was the sea getting rough? Why had the person been invited at that time? And so on and so on, and they will not stop asking for causes of causes until you take refuge in the will of God, which is the refuge of ignorance.

Similarly they are amazed when they view the structure of the human body, and because they are ignorant of the causes of this great work of art, they conclude that it was made not by mechanical but by divine or supernatural art and has been constructed in this fashion so that its parts

<sup>27</sup> Spinoza's formulation of the distinction here comes from Heereboord, *Meletemata Philosophica* II, 24.

<sup>28</sup> The argument Spinoza describes in this paragraph is offered by the Asharians and described by Maimonides in *The Guide for the Perplexed* III, 17. See also Heereboord's discussion of God's concurrence and intervention in *Meletemata Philosophica* I, 7–12.

will not hurt each other.<sup>29</sup> This is also why anyone who searches for the true causes of miracles and makes a serious intellectual effort to understand natural things and not to wonder at them like an idiot, is treated everywhere as a wicked heretic, and is denounced as such by those whom the public adores as interpreters of nature and the Gods. For they know that once ignorance is eliminated, the bewilderment that is the only means they have of upholding and protecting their authority, is also eliminated. But I leave this question now and turn to what I proposed to discuss here as my *third* point.

After human beings had convinced themselves that everything that happens, happens for their own sakes, they were bound to believe that the most important thing in everything was what was most useful to themselves and to put the very highest value on all those things that affected them most favorably. Hence in order to explain the natures of things, they found themselves obliged to form the notions of *good, bad, order, confusion, hot, cold, beauty* and *ugliness*. Also, because they believe themselves to be free, the following notions arose: *praise* and *blame, sin* and *merit*. I will explain the latter set of terms below<sup>30</sup> after I have given an account of human nature, but the former set I will explain briefly now.

Everything that contributes to health and the worship of God they called *good*, and everything contrary to it they called *bad*. Those who do not understand the nature of things but only imagine them have nothing to say about things and take imagination for intellect; that is why they believe firmly that there is an order in things, though they know nothing about them or about their own nature. For we say that things are well ordered *or* ordered when they are arranged in such a way that we can easily imagine them and therefore easily recall them when they are represented to us through our senses, but if they are not so arranged, we say that they are badly ordered *or* confused. Because it is things that we can easily imagine that please us most, we prefer order to confusion as if order were something in nature unrelated to our imagination. People also say that God created all things in order, and in this way they ignorantly attribute imagination to God, unless they are trying to say

38

<sup>29</sup> This argument can be found among other places in Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed* II, 57.

<sup>30</sup> Spinoza explains praise and blame in 3p29s; he explains sin and merit in 4p37s2.

perhaps that God was indulging the human imagination and arranged all things in the way that people could most easily imagine them. Perhaps it will not trouble them to reflect that there are an infinite number of things that far surpass our imagination and very many which confound it because it is so weak. But enough of this.

Then, all other notions are nothing but modes of imagining by which the imagination is affected in different ways, and yet they are considered by ignorant people to be salient attributes of things because, as we have already said, they believe that all things were made for their own sakes, and they call a thing's nature good or bad, healthy or diseased and corrupt, depending on how it affects them. For example, if a motion that the nerves receive from objects represented through the eyes is good for their health, the objects that cause the motion are said to be beautiful and those that cause the contrary motion are called ugly. Then, things that reach the senses through the nostrils are called fragrant or smelly, those that come by way of the tongue are called sweet or bitter, tasty or tasteless, etc., those that come by touch are called hard or soft, rough or smooth, etc. Finally those that affect the ears are said to produce noise or sound or harmony; the last of these so bewitched people that they came to believe that even God is pleased with harmony. There are even philosophers who have persuaded themselves that the motions of the heavens give forth a harmony.

39 All these things are good evidence that everyone has made judgments about things according to the disposition of his brain, or rather has taken the affections of his imagination for things. It is not therefore surprising (to mention this in passing) that we have seen so many controversies arise, the result of which in the end has been scepticism. For although human bodies agree in many ways, they do still differ in a host of ways, and therefore what seems good to one person seems bad to another; what one person finds orderly is confused for another; what pleases one person displeases another. This is true of all sorts of other things, but I pass them over here because this is not the place for a proper discussion of these issues and because we have all experienced it for ourselves. We all know the old tags: *there are as many opinions as there are persons*,<sup>31</sup> *everyone has his own take on things*,<sup>32</sup> and *people's brains are as different as*

<sup>31</sup> See Terence, *Phormio*, 454.

<sup>32</sup> See Romans, 14:5; see also Gassendi's closing remarks to the Fifth Replies to Descartes's *Meditations* (AT VII, 346).

*their palates.* These phrases show well enough that people make their judgments about things in accordance with the disposition of their brains, and imagine things rather than understand them. For if they had understood things, they would at least be convinced by them, as mathematics witnesses, even if they did not find them attractive.

We see therefore that the notions by which ordinary people habitually explain nature are only modes of imagining and that they do not indicate the nature of any thing but only the state of a person's imagination; and because they have names as if of beings that exist outside of the imagination, I have called them beings of the imagination and not of reason. For many people like to argue as follows. If all things follow from the necessity of God's most perfect nature, what is the source of all the many imperfections in nature? They instance things so decayed as to be completely putrid, things so terribly deformed as to make one ill, confusion, evil, sin, etc. But as I said just now, they are easily refuted. For the perfection of things is to be judged solely from their own nature and power, and therefore things are not more or less perfect because they please or offend human senses or because they are favorable or inimical to human nature. To those who ask why God did not create all men to be governed by the guidance of reason alone, I simply answer that he had no lack of material for creating all things from the highest degree of perfection to the lowest; or more properly speaking, because the laws of nature itself were so ample that they sufficed to produce everything that can be conceived by an infinite intellect, as I proved in p16.

These are the prejudices that I promised to discuss here. If any more prejudices of this sort still remain, anyone will be able to correct them with a little thought.

*End of the first part*



## Second Part of the Ethics

40

### OF THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE MIND

*I pass on now to explain the things that must necessarily have followed from the essence of God or of the eternal and infinite being. But not all of them; for I have proved, by 1p16, that infinite things in infinite ways must follow from it. I will explain only those that can lead us directly to cognition of the human mind and of its highest blessedness.*

#### Definitions

1. By body I mean the mode which expresses the essence of God in a specific and determinate manner insofar as he is considered as an extended thing; see 1p25c.

2. I say that to the essence of any thing belongs that which being given, the thing is necessarily posited, and being taken away, the thing is necessarily taken away; or something without which the thing cannot be or be conceived, and *vice versa* something which cannot be or be conceived without the thing.

3. By an idea I mean a conception of the mind which the mind forms because it is a thinking thing.

#### Explanation

*I say conception rather than perception, because the term perception seems to imply that the mind is acted on by an object. But 'conception' seems to express an action of the mind.*

41

4. By an adequate idea I mean an idea which, insofar as it is considered in itself without relation to an object, has all the properties *or* intrinsic characteristics of a true idea.

**Explanation**

*I say intrinsic in order to exclude that extrinsic characteristic which is the agreement of an idea with its object.*

5. Duration is indefinite continuation of existence.

**Explanation**

*I say indefinite because it can in no way be determined through the nature of the existing thing itself nor by its efficient cause, i.e. by the cause which necessarily posits the existence of the thing and does not take it away.*

6. By reality and perfection I mean the same thing.

7. By particular things I mean things that are finite and have a determinate existence, but if several individual things combine in one action so that all of them together are the cause of one effect, I consider them all as to that extent a single particular thing.

**Axioms**

1. The essence of a human being does not involve necessary existence, i.e. in the order of nature it may happen both that this or that human being exists and that he does not exist.

2. Human beings think.

42 3. Modes of thinking such as love, desire or any other modes that are identified by name as affects of the spirit do not occur without the occurrence in the same individual of an idea of the thing which is loved, longed for, etc. But an idea may occur without any other mode of thinking.

4. We sense a certain body being affected in many ways.

5. We do not sense any particular things except bodies and modes of thinking, nor do we perceive them.

*See the postulates following 2p13.*

**Proposition 1**

*Thought is an attribute of God, or God is a thinking thing.*

Proof

Particular thoughts, *or* this or that thought, are modes which express the nature of God in a specific and determinate way (*by 1p25c*). Therefore the attribute of which all particular thoughts involve a concept and through which they are conceived belongs (*by 1def5*) to God. Therefore thought is one of the infinite attributes of God which expresses the eternal and infinite essence of God (*see 1def6*), *or* God is a thinking thing. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This proposition is also evident from the fact that we can conceive of an infinite thinking being. For the more things a thinking being can think, the more reality *or* perfection, we conceive, it contains. Therefore a being which can think infinite things in infinite ways is necessarily infinite by virtue of its thinking. Therefore since we conceive infinite being by focusing on thinking alone, thought is necessarily (*by 1def4 and 1def6*) one of the infinite attributes of God, as we proposed.

Proposition 2

*Extension is an attribute of God, or God is an extended thing.*

Proof

43

The proof of this proposition proceeds in the same way as the proof of 2p1.

Proposition 3

*There is in God, necessarily, an idea both of his essence and of everything that necessarily follows from his essence.*

Proof

God can (*by 2p1*) think infinite things in infinite ways, *or* (*which is the same thing by 1p16*) he can form an idea of his own essence and of everything that necessarily follows from it. But everything that is within God's abilities necessarily is (*by 1p35*). Therefore there necessarily is such an idea, and (*by 1p15*) it is only in God. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

By God's power ordinary people understand God's free will and his right over all things that are and that is why they are commonly



considered as contingent. They say that God has the ability to destroy all things and to reduce them to nothing. And they frequently compare God's power to the power of kings. But we have refuted this in 1p32c1 and 1p32c2, and we have shown in 1p16 that God acts by the same necessity as that by which he understands himself. That is, just as it follows from the necessity of the divine nature (as everyone everywhere agrees) that God understands himself, so by the same necessity it also follows that God performs infinite actions in infinite ways. Then, by 1p34 we have shown that God's power is simply the active essence of God, and therefore it is as impossible for us to conceive that God does not act as to conceive that God is not.

44 If I wanted to take this further, I could also show here that the power that ordinary people commonly attribute to God is not only human (which shows that God is conceived by ordinary people as a human being or like a human being), but also involves lack of power. But I don't want to keep repeating the same argument. I just ask the reader again and again to reflect on what I said on this subject in part 1 from p16 to the end. No one will be able to really grasp what I want him to grasp unless he is very careful not to confuse God's power with the human power or right of kings.

#### Proposition 4

*The idea of God from which infinite things follow in infinite ways must be unique.*

#### Proof

Infinite intellect comprehends nothing but the attributes of God and his affections (by 1p30). But God is unique (by 1p14c1). Therefore the idea of God from which infinite things follow in infinite ways must be unique.  
*Q. E. D.*

#### Proposition 5

*The formal being of ideas recognizes God as cause, insofar only as he is considered as a thinking thing and not insofar as he is explained by any other attribute. That is, neither the ideas of the attributes of God nor those of particular things recognize objects of ideas themselves or things perceived as their efficient cause but God himself insofar as he is a thinking thing.*

Proof

This is already evident from 2p3. For there we inferred solely from the fact that God is a thinking thing (and not from his being the object of his own idea), that he can form an idea of his own essence and of everything that necessarily follows from it. Therefore the formal being of ideas recognizes God as cause insofar as he is a thinking thing. But there is another proof as follows. The formal being of ideas is a mode of thinking (*as is self-evident*), i.e. (*by 1p25c*) the mode which expresses in a specific way the nature of God insofar as he is a thinking thing. Therefore (*by 1p10*) it does not involve the concept of any other attribute of God. Consequently (*by 1a4*) it is the effect of no other attribute but thought. Therefore the formal being of ideas recognizes God as cause insofar only as he is considered as a thinking thing, etc. *Q. E. D.* 45

Proposition 6

*The modes of any attribute have God as their cause only insofar as he is considered under that attribute of which they are modes and not under any other.*

Proof

Every attribute is conceived through itself apart from any other (*by 1p10*). Therefore the modes of each attribute involve the concept of their own attribute and not of any other. Therefore (*by 1a4*) they have God as their cause insofar only as he is considered under that attribute of which they are modes and not under any other. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that the formal being of things that are not modes of thinking does not follow from God's nature because he had prior knowledge of them. Rather things that are the objects of ideas follow from and are deduced from their own attributes in the same way and by the same necessity as we have shown that ideas follow from the attribute of thought.

Proposition 7

*The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things.*

Proof

This is evident from 1a4. For the idea of anything that is caused depends upon cognition of the cause of which it is the effect.

Corollary

It follows from this that God's power of thought is equal to his actual power of action. That is, everything that follows formally from the infinite nature of God follows objectively in God from the idea of God in the same order and with the same connection.

46 Scholium

Before I go any further, I must recall here something I showed above, namely that all that can be grasped by an infinite intellect as constituting the essence of substance belongs wholly to a unique substance only; and consequently that thinking substance and extended substance are one and the same substance, which is comprehended sometimes under the one and sometimes under the other attribute. So too the mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing but expressed in two ways. Some of the Hebrews seem to have obscurely discerned this; I mean those who take the position that God, God's intellect and the things God understands are one and the same thing.<sup>33</sup> For example, a circle existing in nature and the idea, which is also in God, of an existing circle, is one and the same thing explained through different attributes. Therefore whether we conceive nature under the attribute of extension or under the attribute of thought or under any other attribute, we will find one and the same order *or* one and the same connection of causes, i.e. we will find that the same things follow one another. When I said that God is the cause of the idea of the circle, for example, only insofar as he is a thinking thing and of the circle only insofar as he is an extended thing, my reason was that the formal being of the idea of the circle can be perceived only through another mode of thinking as its proximate cause and that again through another and so on *ad infinitum*. Consequently, so long as things are considered as modes of thinking, we must explain the order of the whole of nature, *or* the connection of causes, only through the attribute of thought, and insofar

<sup>33</sup> Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed* I, 68.

as they are considered as modes of extension, the order of the whole of nature must be explained through the attribute of extension only; and I understand the same of other attributes. Therefore God is in truth the cause of things as they are in themselves insofar as he consists of infinite attributes. For the present I cannot explain these things more clearly.

Proposition 8

*Ideas of particular things or modes that do not exist must be comprehended in the infinite idea of God just as the formal essences of particular things or modes are contained in the attributes of God.*

Proof

47

This proposition is evident from the previous one but is understood more clearly from the previous scholium.

Corollary

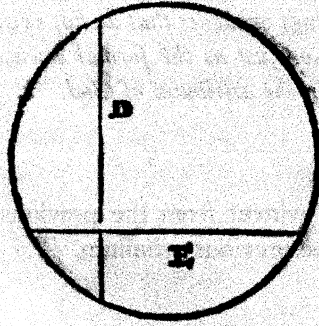
It follows from this that as long as particular things do exist only insofar as they are comprehended in God's attributes, their objective being *or* ideas of them exist only insofar as the infinite idea of God exists. And when particular things are said to exist not only insofar as they are comprehended in God's attributes but also insofar as they are said to have duration, ideas of them will also involve existence by which they are said to have duration.

Scholium

If anyone would like an example in order to have a better explanation of this, I won't be able to give one which adequately explains the thing I am talking about here, since it is unique, but I will endeavor to illustrate it as best I can. The nature of a circle is such that the rectangles formed by the segments of all the intersecting straight lines within it are equal to each other.<sup>34</sup> Therefore an infinite number of equal rectangles is contained within a circle. But none of them can be said to exist except insofar as the circle exists, nor can the idea of any of these rectangles be

<sup>34</sup> See Euclid's *Elements*, Book III, theorem 35.

said to exist except insofar as it is comprehended in the idea of the circle. Conceive now that only two of that infinite number of rectangles exist, namely E and D. Certainly the ideas of them also now exist not only insofar as they are comprehended in the idea of the circle but also insofar as they involve the existence of those rectangles, and that is how they are distinguished from the other ideas of the other rectangles.



Proposition 9

48 *The idea of an actually existing particular thing has God for its cause, not insofar as he is infinite but insofar as he is considered as affected by another idea of an actually existing particular thing, and God is the cause of that too insofar as he is affected by another third idea, and so on ad infinitum.*

Proof

The idea of an actually existing particular thing is a mode of thinking that is particular and distinct from all others (*by 2p8c and 2p8s*), and therefore (*by 2p6*) has God for its cause insofar only as he is a thinking thing. But not (*by 1p28*) insofar as he is absolutely a thinking thing, but insofar as he is considered to be affected by another mode of thinking, of which God is also the cause insofar as he has been affected by another, and so on *ad infinitum*. But the order and connection of ideas (*by 2p7*) is the same as the order and connection of causes. Therefore the cause of one particular idea is another idea, or God insofar as he is considered to have been affected by another idea, and as being the cause of this idea also insofar as he has been affected by another idea, and so on *ad infinitum*. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

There is cognition in God of anything that occurs in the particular object of each idea only insofar as he has an idea of the same object.

Proof

There is cognition in God of anything that occurs in the particular object of each and every idea (*by 3p3*), not insofar as he is infinite, but insofar as he is considered to be affected by another idea of a particular thing (*by 2p9*). But (*by 2p7*) the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. Therefore there will be cognition in God of anything occurring in any particular object only insofar as he has an idea of the same object. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 10

*The being of substance does not belong to the essence of a human being, or substance does not constitute the form of a human being.*

Proof

The being of substance involves necessary existence (*by 1p7*). Therefore if the being of substance belonged to the essence of a human being, it would follow that, given substance, there would necessarily be a human being (*by 2def2*). Consequently the human being would necessarily exist. 49  
And this (*by 2a1*) is absurd. Therefore etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This proposition is also proved from 1p5, which says that there are not two substances of the same nature. Since more than one human being can exist, it follows that what constitutes the form of a human being is not the being of substance. This proposition is also evident from the other properties of substance – substance is by its own nature infinite, immutable, indivisible, etc., as anyone can easily see.

Corollary

It follows from this that the essence of a human being is constituted by specific modifications of the attributes of God. For (*by 2p10*) the being of substance does not belong to the essence of a human being. Therefore

(*by 1p15*) the essence of a human being is something which is in God and which can neither be nor be conceived without God, *or (by 1p25c)* it is an affection *or* mode which expresses the nature of God in a specific and determinate way.

Scholium

Everyone must surely admit that nothing can be or be conceived without God. For everyone allows that God is the unique cause of all things, both of their essence and of their existence, i.e. God is the cause of things not only with regard to their coming into being, as they put it, but also with regard to their being. But at the same time many say that that without which a thing cannot be or be conceived belongs to the essence of it.<sup>35</sup> They therefore believe either that the nature of God belongs to the essence of created things, or that created things can either be or be conceived without God; or, more likely, they contradict themselves. I believe that the cause of this has been that they have not kept to the order of philosophical thinking. For they thought that God's nature, which they should have studied first of all because it is prior both in cognition and in nature, was last in the order of cognition, and that the so-called objects of the senses are prior to everything. The result of this was that as they studied natural things, they gave almost no thought at all to God's nature. When they subsequently brought themselves to think  
50 about God's nature, they found that they could make no use at all of the fancies on which they had built their cognition of natural things, since those fancies could not help them toward cognition of God's nature; so it is no wonder they contradicted themselves all along. But I will leave this aside. For all I wanted to do here was to give the reason why I have not said that something without which a thing cannot be or be conceived belongs to its essence. It is because particular things cannot be or be conceived without God, and yet God does not belong to their essence. But I have said that what necessarily constitutes the essence of a thing is that given which a thing is posited and if it is taken away the thing is taken away; or that without which the thing can neither be nor be conceived and *vice versa* that which cannot be or be conceived without the thing.

<sup>35</sup> This appears to be Descartes's view in the Fifth Meditation (AT VII, 66).

Proposition 11

*The first thing that constitutes the actual being of a human mind is simply the idea of an actually existing particular thing.*

Proof

The essence of a human being (*by the corollary to 2p10c*) consists of specific modes of God's attributes, namely (*by 2a2*) modes of thinking. The idea is prior in nature to all of them (*by 2a3*), and given the idea, the other modes (i.e. the modes to which the idea is prior by nature) must be in the same individual (*by 2a3*). Therefore an idea is the first thing that constitutes the being of a human mind. But not an idea of something that does not exist. For in that case (*by 2p8c*) the idea itself cannot be said to exist. Therefore it will be an idea of something that actually exists. But not of an infinite thing. For an infinite thing (*by 1p21 and 1p22*) must always necessarily exist; but this (*by 2a1*) is absurd. Therefore the first thing that constitutes the actual being of a human mind is the idea of an actually existing particular thing. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that a human mind is a part of the infinite intellect of God, and accordingly when we say that a human mind perceives this or that, we are simply saying that God has this or that idea, not insofar as he is infinite but insofar as he is explained through the nature of a human mind *or* insofar as he constitutes the essence of a human mind. And when we say that God has this or that idea not only insofar as he constitutes the nature of a human mind but insofar as he also has an idea of something else together with a human mind, then we are saying that a human mind is perceiving something partially *or* inadequately.

51

Scholium

Without doubt readers will find this problematic, and will come up with many objections. For this reason I ask them to stay with me and not make a judgment about it until they have read through everything.

Proposition 12

*Anything that occurs in the object of the idea that constitutes a human mind must be perceived by the human mind, or the idea of the thing will necessarily be there in*



*the mind. That is, if the object of the idea that constitutes a human mind is a body, nothing will be able to occur in that body which is not perceived by the mind.*

Proof

There is necessarily cognition in God of anything that occurs in the object of any idea (*by 2p9c*) insofar as he is considered as affected by the idea of that object, i.e. (*by 2p11*) insofar as he constitutes the mind of something. Therefore there necessarily is in God cognition of anything that occurs in the object of the idea that constitutes a human mind insofar as he constitutes the nature of a human mind, i.e. (*by 2p11c*) cognition of the thing will necessarily be in the mind, *or* the mind perceives it. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This proposition is also evident and is more clearly understood from 2p7s, which you should look at.

52 Proposition 13

*The object of the idea that constitutes a human mind is a body, or a specific actually existing mode of extension, and nothing else.*

Proof

If a body were not the object of a human mind, ideas of the affections of the body would not be in God (*by 2p9c*) insofar as he constituted our minds but insofar as he constituted the mind of something else, i.e. (*by 2p11c*) there would be no ideas of the affections of the body in our mind. But (*by 2a4*) we do have ideas of the affections of the body. Therefore the object of the idea which constitutes the human mind is a body, and a body (*by 2p11*) that actually exists. Then, suppose there were also some other object of the mind apart from the body. Since (*by 1p36*) nothing exists from which some effect does not follow, there would necessarily have to be (*by 2p12*) an idea in our mind of some effect of it. But (*by 2a5*) there is no idea of it. Therefore the object of our mind is an existing body and nothing else. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that a human being consists of mind and body, and that the human body exists as we sense it.

Scholium

From all this we not only understand that the human mind is united with the body; we also see what must be understood by the union of mind and body. But no one will be able to understand it adequately *or* distinctly unless he first knows adequately the nature of our body. For what we have proved so far is very general and pertains no more particularly to human beings than to other individual things, all of which are animate albeit in different degrees. For of every single thing there necessarily is in God an idea of which God is the cause in the same way as he is the cause of the idea of the human body. Therefore whatever we have said about the idea of the human body, we must necessarily say about the idea of any thing. But we also cannot deny that ideas differ from each other as objects themselves do, and that one is superior to another and contains more reality according as the object of one is superior to the object of the other and contains more reality. Accordingly, in order to determine how the human mind differs from other things and how it is superior to them, we must, as we have said, know the nature of its object, i.e. the nature of the human body. I cannot explain this nature here and it is not essential for the point I want to prove. But I will say in general that the more capable a body is than other bodies to act or undergo more things at one and the same time, the more capable its mind is than other minds to perceive more things at one and the same time; and the more the actions of a single body depend upon itself alone, and the less other bodies assist in its action, the more capable its mind is to understand distinctly. From this we recognize the superiority of one mind over others; and we also understand the reason why we have no more than a very confused cognition of our body, as well as several other things that I will deduce from it in what follows. I think therefore it is worthwhile to explain and prove these points in greater detail; in order to do so we must first say a few things about the nature of bodies.

53

Axiom 1'

All bodies are either in motion or at rest.

Axiom 2'

Every body sometimes moves more slowly, sometimes more swiftly.

Lemma 1

*Bodies are distinguished from each other in respect of motion and rest, of swiftness and slowness, but not in respect of substance.*

Proof

I suppose that the first part of this is self-evident. That bodies are not distinguished in respect of substance, is evident from 1p5 and 1p8, but it is more clearly made out from what we said in 1p15s.

54 Lemma 2

*All bodies agree in certain things.*

Proof

All bodies agree in the following: they involve the concept of one and the same attribute (*by 3def1*); then, they can sometimes move more slowly, sometimes more swiftly, and absolutely they can sometimes move and sometimes be at rest.

Lemma 3

*A body in motion or at rest must have been determined to motion or to rest by another body, which also has been determined to motion or to rest by another body, and that one again by another, and so on ad infinitum.*

Proof

Bodies (*by 2def1*) are particular things, which (*by 2L1*) are distinguished from each other in respect of motion and rest. Therefore (*by 1p28*) each thing must necessarily have been determined to motion or to rest by another particular thing, i.e. (*by 2p6*) by another body which (*by a1'*) is also either in motion or at rest. But this body too (for the same reason) could not be in motion or at rest unless it had been determined to motion or to rest by another body, and this other one again (*for the same reason*) by another, and so on *ad infinitum*. Q. E. D.

Corollary

It follows from this that a body that has been set in motion continues to move until it is determined to rest by another body; and a body at rest also

continues to be at rest until it is determined to motion by another body. This too is self-evident. For when I suppose that a body, for example A, is at rest and I pay no attention to other bodies in motion, all I can say about body A is that it is at rest. But if it later happens that body A is in motion, this obviously could not have resulted from its being at rest; for all that could follow from that was that body A was at rest. If on the other hand we suppose that A is in motion, as long as we pay attention only to A, all we can say about it is that it is in motion. But if it later happens that A is at rest, this obviously could not have resulted from the motion that it formerly had; for all that could follow from motion was that A was in motion. It results therefore from something that was not in A, namely from an external cause by which it had been determined to be at rest.

55

*Axiom 1''*

All the modes by which a body is affected by another body follow from the nature of the body affected and at the same time from the nature of the body that affects it. Consequently one and the same body is moved in different ways owing to the different natures of the bodies moving it; and conversely different bodies are moved in different ways by one and the same body.

*Axiom 2''*

When a body in motion strikes another body which is at rest and which it is unable to shift, it is deflected back so that it continues to move, and the angle made by the line of its deflected movement and the plane of the body at rest which it struck, will be equal to the angle which the line of the motion of incidence makes with the same surface.



So much for the simplest bodies, i.e. those which are distinguished from each other only by motion and rest, by swiftness and slowness; now let us advance to composite bodies.

Definition

56 *When a number of bodies of the same or different sizes are restrained by other bodies so that they press upon each other, or if they move with the same or different degrees of speed so that they communicate their movements to each other in some fixed ratio, we will say that those bodies are united with each other, and all of them together compose just one body or one individual thing which is distinguished from others by this union of bodies.*

Axiom 3''

The larger or smaller the surface areas over which the parts of an individual or composite body press upon each other, the more or less difficult it is to compel them to change their positions, and consequently the more or less difficult it is to give a different shape to the individual thing. Hence bodies whose parts press upon each other over large surface areas are *hard*, whereas those with small surface areas, are *soft*, and lastly, those whose parts move through each other, I call *fluid*.

Lemma 4

*If some bodies belonging to a body or to an individual thing which is composed of several bodies are separated off, and if at the same time the same number of other bodies of the same nature take their place, the individual thing will retain its nature as before without any change of form.*

Proof

Bodies (*by 2L1*) are not distinguished in respect of substance; what constitutes the form of the individual thing consists in the union of bodies (*by the previous definition*). But (*by hypothesis*) this is retained despite a constant change of bodies. Therefore the individual thing will keep the nature it had before both in respect of substance and in respect of mode. *Q. E. D.*

Lemma 5

57 *If parts composing an individual thing become bigger or smaller, but in such proportions that they all keep the same ratio of motion and rest with respect to*

*each other as they had before, the individual thing likewise will retain the nature it had before without any change of form.*

Proof

The proof of this is the same as the proof of the previous lemma.

Lemma 6

*If some of the bodies composing an individual thing are compelled to direct the movement which they have in relation to one part toward another part, but in such a way that they can continue their motions and communicate them to each other in the same ratio as they did before, the individual thing too will retain its own nature without any change of form.*

Proof

This is evident. For everything is assumed to retain what we said in its definition constitutes its form.

Lemma 7

*Moreover such a composite individual thing retains its nature, whether it moves as a whole or remains at rest, or moves in this direction or in that, provided that each individual part retains its own motion and communicates it to the rest as before.*

Proof

This is evident from the definition of it, which you may see above at 2L4.

Scholium

By all this then we see how an individual composite thing can be affected in many ways, while still keeping its own nature. So far we have been conceiving an individual thing composed of nothing but bodies distinguished from each other only by motion and rest, swiftness and slowness, i.e. a thing composed of the simplest bodies. But if we now conceive of another thing which is composed of several individual things of different natures, we shall find that it can be affected in quite a few other ways while still retaining its own nature. For as each part of it is composed

58

of several bodies, each part of it will be able (*by 2L7*) to move more swiftly or more slowly without any change of its nature itself, and consequently it will be able to communicate its movements to other things more swiftly or more slowly. If we conceive further of a third kind of individual thing which is composed of individual things of this second kind, we shall find that it can be affected in many other ways without any change of its form. And if we continue like this *ad infinitum*, we shall easily conceive that the whole of nature is one individual thing, whose parts, i.e. all bodies, vary in an infinite number of ways without any change to the whole individual. If I was planning to offer a formal discussion of body, I would have had to explain and prove these things more extensively. But as I said just now, I have a different aim, and I only introduce these things because I can easily deduce from them the things I plan to prove.

#### Postulates

1. The human body is composed of a very large number of individual things (of different natures), and every one of them is highly composite.
2. Some of the individual things that compose the human body are fluid, some are soft and some are hard.
3. The individual things that compose the human body, and consequently the human body itself, are affected by external bodies in very many ways.
4. For its preservation the human body needs very many other bodies by which it is continuously (we might say) regenerated.
- 59 5. When a fluid part of the human body is determined by an external body to impact another soft part frequently, it changes the surface of that part and leaves on it what one might call traces of the impelling external body.
6. The human body can move external bodies in very many ways and can dispose them in very many ways.

#### Proposition 14

*The human mind is capable of perceiving very many things, and it is the more capable of doing so, the more ways its body can be disposed.*

#### Proof

The human body (*by 2post3 and 2post6*) is affected by external bodies in very many ways, and is disposed to affect external bodies in very many

ways. But the human mind must perceive everything that happens in a human body (*by 2p12*). Therefore the human mind is capable of perceiving very many things, and it is the more capable, etc. *Q. E. D.*

**Proposition 15**

*The idea which constitutes the formal being of a human mind is not simple, but is composed of very many ideas.*

**Proof**

The idea which constitutes the formal being of a human mind is the idea of a body (*by 2p13*), and this (*by 2post1*) is composed of very many highly composite individual things. But the idea of any individual thing composing a body is necessarily given in God (*by 2p8c*). Therefore (*by 2p7*) the idea of a human body is composed of these very many ideas of the parts composing it. *Q. E. D.*

**Proposition 16**

*The idea of any mode in which the human body is affected by external bodies must involve the nature of the human body and the nature of the external body together.*

**Proof**

60

All the modes in which a body is affected follow from the nature of the affected body and at the same time from the nature of the body affecting it (*by 2a1''*). For this reason (*by 1a4*) the idea of them will necessarily involve the nature of both bodies, and therefore the idea of any mode in which the human body is affected by an external body involves the nature of the human body and at the same time the nature of the external body. *Q. E. D.*

**Corollary 1**

It follows from this, first, that the human mind perceives the nature of very many bodies together with the nature of its own body.

**Corollary 2**

It follows, secondly, that the ideas that we have of external bodies indicate the constitution of our own body more than the nature of the external bodies, as I explained in 1app with many examples.



Proposition 17

*If a human body is affected with a mode that involves the nature of an external body, the human mind will regard that external body as actually existing or as present to itself until the body is affected by an emotion which excludes the existence or presence of that body.*

Proof

This is evident. As long as a human body is thus affected, the human mind (*by 2p12*) will for that period of time be regarding this affection of the body. That is (*by 2p16*), it will have an idea of an actually existing mode, an idea which involves the nature of the external body, i.e. an idea which does not exclude the existence or presence of the nature of the external body but posits it. Therefore (*by 2p16c1*) the mind will regard the external body as actually existing or as present, until it is affected etc. *Q. E. D.*

61 Corollary

The mind will be able to regard the external bodies by which a human body has once been affected as still present, even though they do not exist and are not present.

Proof

Whenever external bodies determine the fluid parts of a human body so that they frequently strike the softer parts, they change the surfaces of them (*by 2post5*). As a result (*see 2a2''*) the fluid parts rebound from the surfaces of the softer parts differently than before; and subsequently as they make contact with these new surfaces by their own spontaneous motion, they rebound in the same way as when they were driven by the external bodies against those surfaces. Consequently, as they continue to move after thus rebounding, they affect the human body in the same way. And (*by 2p12*) the mind will notice it again, i.e. (*by 2p17*) the mind will again regard the external body as present. And it will do this as often as the fluid parts of the human body make contact with those surfaces by their own spontaneous motion. Therefore even though the external bodies by which the human body was formerly affected do not exist, the mind will still regard them as present as often as this bodily action is repeated. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

We see therefore how it can happen that we regard things that are not present as if they were present. This is a common occurrence. It may also happen from other causes, but it is enough for now to have demonstrated one cause through which I can explain the thing as well as if I had demonstrated it through the true cause. But I don't believe that I am far from the true cause, since the postulates I have assumed contain hardly anything inconsistent with experience, and we can have no doubts about experience now that we have shown that the human body exists just as we sense it (*see 2p13c*).

Moreover (*from 2p17c and 2p16c2*) we clearly understand the difference between, for example, the idea of Peter which constitutes the essence of Peter's mind and the idea of Peter himself which is in another man, e.g. in Paul. For the former idea directly explains the essence of Peter's body and involves his existence only so long as Peter exists. The latter idea however indicates the constitution of Paul's body rather than the nature of Peter, and therefore while the constitution of Paul's body lasts, Paul's mind will still regard Peter as being present to him, even though Peter does not exist. Furthermore, in order to keep to commonly used expressions, the term we will use for affections of the human body whose ideas represent external bodies as present to us is images of things, even though they do not reproduce the shapes of the things. And when the mind regards bodies in this manner, we will say that it imagines them.

62

And now in order to begin to show what error is, I want you to realize that imaginations of the mind, considered in themselves, contain no error *or* that the mind does not fall into error as a result of imagining, but only insofar as it is considered to lack the idea which excludes the existence of the things it imagines to be present. For if the mind, as it imagines non-existent things as being present to itself, also knew at the same time that those things do not in truth exist, it would certainly value this power of imagining as a virtue not as a fault of its nature, especially if this faculty of imagining depended solely on its own nature, i.e. (*by 1def7*) if the mind's faculty of imagining were free.

Proposition 18

*If a human body has once been affected by two or more bodies simultaneously, when the mind afterward imagines any one of them it will immediately recall the others.*

Proof

The mind (*by 2p17c*) imagines some body because the human body is affected and disposed by lingering traces of an external body in the same way as it was affected when some parts of it were impacted by the external body itself. But (*by hypothesis*) at that time the body was so influenced that the mind imagined two bodies simultaneously. Therefore at this time too it will imagine two bodies simultaneously, and when the mind imagines either one of them, it will immediately recall the other one as well. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

- 63 From this we see clearly what memory is. It is simply a certain connection of ideas involving the nature of things outside the human body, a connection made in the mind in accordance with the order and connection of the affections of the human body. I stress, *first*, that it is merely a connection of ideas involving the nature of things outside the human body, not of ideas that explain the nature of those things. For (*by 2p16*) they are in truth ideas of affections of the human body which involve the nature both of itself and of external bodies. I say, *secondly*, that this connection is made in accordance with the order and connection of the affections of the human body, because I want to distinguish it from the connection of ideas which is made in accordance with the order of the intellect, by which the mind perceives things through their first causes and which is the same in all human beings.

We also understand clearly from this why the mind instantly leaps from the thought of one thing to the thought of another thing that has no similarity with the previous thing. For example, from the thought of the word *pomum* a Roman immediately leaps to the thought of a fruit which has no similarity with the sound articulated and nothing in common with it except that the body of the same person has often been affected by both of them, i.e. he has often heard the word *pomum* while looking at the fruit itself. Thus everyone will leap from one thought to another, depending on how habit has ordered the images of things in his body. When a soldier, for example, sees the footsteps of a horse in the sand, he will move directly from the thought of a horse to the thought of a horseman, and from there to thoughts of war, etc. But a countryman will move from the thought of a horse to the thought of a plough, a field,

etc. And so everyone will move from one thought to this or that other thought, depending on how he has been in the habit of combining and connecting images of things in this way or that.

Proposition 19

*The human mind does not know the human body itself, and it only knows that it exists through the ideas of the affections by which the body is affected.*

Proof

64

The human mind is the idea itself *or* the cognition of the human body (*by 2p13*), and this idea (*by 2p9*) is indeed in God insofar as he is considered as affected by another idea of a particular thing. Or, this idea will be in God insofar as he is considered to be affected by ideas of very many particular things, because (*by 2post4*) the human body needs very many bodies by which it is constantly as it were being regenerated, and (*by 2p7*) the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of causes. God therefore has the idea of the human body, *or* knows the human body, insofar as he is affected by very many other ideas and not insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human mind, i.e. (*by 2p11c*) the human mind does not know the human body. But ideas of the affections of the body are in God insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human mind, *or* the human mind perceives the same affections (*by 2p12*) and thus (*by 2p16*) perceives the human body itself and (*by 2p17*) perceives it as actually existing, and consequently the human mind perceives the human body only to this extent. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 20

*There is also in God the idea or cognition of the human mind; and it follows in God and is related to God in the same way as the idea or cognition of the human body.*

Proof

Thought is an attribute of God (*by 2p1*), and therefore (*by 2p3*) there must necessarily be in God the idea both of it and of all its affections; and consequently (*by 2p11*) the idea of the human mind must also be in God. Then, this idea *or* cognition of the mind does not follow as being in God

insofar as he is infinite but insofar as he is affected by another idea of a particular thing (*by 2p9*). But the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of causes (*by 2p7*). Therefore it follows that this idea *or* cognition of the mind is in God and is related to God in the same way as the idea *or* cognition of the body is. *Q. E. D.*

65 Proposition 21

*This idea of the mind is united with the mind in the same way as the mind itself is united with the body.*

Proof

We have shown that the mind is united with the body from the fact that the body is an object of the mind (*see 2p12 and 2p13*). And therefore by the same reasoning the idea of the mind must be united with its object, i.e. with the mind itself, in the same way as the mind itself is united with the body. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This proposition will be understood much more clearly from what we said in 2p7s. We showed there that the body and the idea of the body, i.e. (*by 2p13*) body and mind, are one and the same individual thing, which is conceived sometimes under the attribute of thought and sometimes under the attribute of extension. Therefore the idea of the mind and the mind itself are one and the same thing, which is conceived under one and the same attribute, that of thought. The idea of the mind, I say, and the mind itself follow as being in God by the same necessity from the same power of thought. For in truth the idea of the mind, i.e. the idea of the idea, is simply the form of the idea insofar as it is considered as a mode of thinking without relation to its object. For as soon as anyone knows anything, by that very fact he knows that he knows it, and at the same time he knows that he knows what he knows, and so on *ad infinitum*. But I will discuss this later.

Proposition 22

*The human mind perceives not only the affections of the body but also the ideas of these affections.*

Proof

Ideas of ideas of affections follow in God in the same way and are related to God in the same way as the ideas of the affections themselves; this is proved in the same way as 2p20. But ideas of the affections of the body are in the human mind (*by 2p12*), i.e. (*by 2p11c*) they are in God insofar as he constitutes the essence of the human mind. Therefore ideas of these ideas will be in God insofar as he has a cognition *or* idea of the human mind, i.e. (*by 2p21*) they will be in the human mind itself. The human mind therefore perceives not only affections of the body but also the ideas of them. *Q. E. D.*

66

Proposition 23

*The mind does not know itself, except insofar as it perceives ideas of affections of the body.*

Proof

The idea *or* cognition of the mind (*by 2p20*) follows in God in the same way and is related to God in the same way as the idea *or* cognition of the body. But (*by 2p19*) the human mind does not know the human body itself, i.e. (*by 2p11c*) cognition of the human body is not related to God insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human mind. Therefore cognition of the mind also is not related to God insofar as he constitutes the essence of the human mind; and therefore (*by the same 2p11c*) the human mind to that extent does not know itself. Then, ideas of the affections which affect the body involve the nature of the human body itself (*by 2p16*), i.e. (*by 2p13*) they agree with the nature of the mind. Therefore cognition of these ideas will necessarily involve cognition of the mind. But (*by 2p22*) cognition of these ideas is in the human mind itself. Therefore the human mind knows itself only to that extent. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 24

*The human mind does not involve adequate cognition of the parts composing the human body.*

Proof

The parts composing the human body do not belong to the essence of the body itself, except insofar as they communicate their motions to each

67 other in a consistent manner (*see the definition following 2L3c*), and not insofar as they can be considered as individual things without relation to the human body. For the parts of the human body (*by 2post1*) are highly composite individual things whose parts (*by 2L4*) can be separated from the human body while its nature and form are completely preserved, and they can communicate their motions (*see 2a1'' after 2L3*) to other bodies in a different manner. Therefore (*by 2p3*) the idea *or* cognition of any part will be in God, and (*by 2p9*) it will be in God insofar as he is considered to be affected by another idea of a particular thing, and this particular thing is prior in the order of nature to the part itself (*by 2p7*). The same must equally be said of any part of an individual component of the human body. Therefore cognition of any part composing the human body is in God, insofar as he has been affected by a great many ideas of things and not insofar as he only has the idea of the human body, i.e. (*by 2p13*) the idea which constitutes the nature of the human mind. Therefore (*by 2p11c*) the human mind does not involve adequate cognition of the parts composing the human body. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 25

*The idea of any affection of the human body does not involve adequate cognition of an external body.*

Proof

We have shown that the idea of an affection of the human body involves the nature of an external body to the extent (*see 2p16*) that the external body itself determines the human body in a specific manner. But insofar as the external body is an individual thing not related to the human body, the idea *or* cognition of it is in God (*by 2p9*) insofar as God is considered as affected by the idea of the other thing which (*by 2p7*) is prior in nature to the external body itself. Therefore there is no adequate cognition of the external body in God insofar as he has an idea of the affection of the human body, *or* the idea of an affection of the human body does not involve adequate cognition of an external body. *Q. E. D.*

68 Proposition 26

*The human mind does not perceive any external body as actually existing except through ideas of affections of its own body.*

Proof

If a human body has not been in any way affected by any external body, it follows (*by 2p7*) that the idea of the human body has not been affected either, i.e. (*by 2p13*) it follows that the human mind has also not been affected in any way by the idea of the existence of that body *or* does not perceive the existence of that external body in any way. But insofar as a human body has been affected in any way by some external body, to that extent it perceives the external body (*by 2p16 and 2p16c1*). *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Insofar as a human mind imagines an external body, it does not have adequate cognition of it.

Proof

When the human mind views external bodies through ideas of the affections of its own body, we say that it is then imagining them (*see 2p17s*); and this is the only means by which the mind can imagine external bodies as actually existing (*by 2p26*). Therefore (*by 2p25*) insofar as the mind imagines external bodies, it does not have adequate cognition of them. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 27

*The idea of any affection of the human body does not involve adequate cognition of the human body itself.*

Proof

The idea of any affection of the human body involves the nature of the human body insofar as the human body itself is considered to be affected in a certain way (*see 2p16*). But insofar as the human body is an individual thing that can be affected in many other ways, the idea of it, etc. *See the proof to 2p25.* 69

Proposition 28

*Ideas of affections of the human body, insofar as they are related only to the human mind, are not clear and distinct but confused.*



Proof

Ideas of affections of the human body involve the nature both of external bodies and of the human body itself (*by 2p16*), and must involve not only the nature of the human body but also of its parts; for affections are the means (*by 2post3*) by which parts of the human body, and consequently the whole body, are affected. But (*by 2p24 and 25*) there is adequate cognition of external bodies or of the parts composing the human body in God not insofar as he is considered as affected by the human mind but insofar as he is considered to be affected by other ideas. Therefore these ideas of affections insofar as they are related to the human mind alone, are like consequences without premises, i.e. (*self-evidently*) they are confused ideas. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

In the same way the idea that constitutes the nature of the human mind is proved not to be clear and distinct when it is considered in itself alone. It is the same with the idea of the human mind as well as ideas of ideas of affections of the human body insofar as they are related to the human mind alone, as anyone can easily see.

Proposition 29

*The idea of the idea of any affection of the human body does not involve adequate cognition of the human mind.*

Proof

70 The idea of an affection of the human body (*by 2p27*) does not involve adequate cognition of the body itself, *or* does not adequately express the nature of the body, i.e. (*by 2p13*) it does not adequately agree with the nature of the mind. Therefore (*by 1a6*) the idea of this idea does not adequately express the nature of the human mind *or* does not involve an adequate cognition of it. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that every time a human mind perceives things in the common order of nature, it does not have adequate cognition either of itself or of its body or of external things but only a confused and

mutilated cognition. For the mind does not know itself except insofar as it perceives ideas of affections of the body (*by 2p23*). And it does not perceive its own body (*by 2p19*) except through the ideas themselves of the affections through which alone (*by 2p26*) it perceives external bodies. Therefore insofar as it has them, it does not have adequate cognition either of itself (*by 2p29*) or of its own body (*by 2p27*) or of external bodies (*by 2p25*) but only (*by 2p28 with its scholium*) mutilated and confused cognition. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

I say deliberately that the mind does not have adequate cognition either of itself or of its body or of external bodies but only a confused cognition when it perceives things in the common order of nature, i.e. when it is externally determined by the fortuitous contact of things to regard this or the other thing. But this is not the case when it is internally determined, i.e. when, as a result of observing several things together at the same time, it is determined to understand the agreements, differences and oppositions between them. For when it is internally disposed in this or any other way, then it observes things clearly and distinctly, as I shall show below.

### Proposition 30

*We can have only a very inadequate cognition of our body's duration.*

### Proof

The duration of our body does not depend upon its essence (*by 2a1*) nor on the absolute nature of God either (*by 1p21*). But (*by 1p28*) its existence and its operation are determined by causes which are also determined by other causes to exist and to operate in a specific and determinate manner, and these again by others, and so *ad infinitum*. The duration of our body therefore depends upon the common order of nature and the constitution of things. But there is in God adequate cognition of the manner in which things are constituted, insofar as he has ideas of all these things and not merely insofar as he has the idea of the human body (*by 2p9c*). Therefore God's cognition of the duration of our body is very inadequate insofar as he is considered as constituting 71

only the nature of the human mind, i.e. (*by 2p11c*) this cognition is very inadequate in our own minds. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 31

*We can have only a very inadequate cognition of the duration of particular things which are outside us.*

Proof

Every particular thing, such as a human body, must be determined by another particular thing to exist and to operate in a specific and determinate fashion, and this thing in turn by another one, and so *ad infinitum* (*by 1p28*). In the previous proposition we proved from this common property of particular things that we have only a very inadequate cognition of the duration of our body. It follows that we must reach the same conclusion about the duration of particular things, namely that we can have only a very inadequate cognition of it. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that all particular things are contingent and corruptible. For (*by 2p31*) we cannot have adequate cognition of their duration, and this is precisely what we should understand by the contingency of things and the possibility of their corruption (*see 1p33s1*). For (*by 1p29*) there is no contingency but this.

Proposition 32

*All ideas are true insofar as they are related to God.*

Proof

All ideas that are in God agree entirely with their objects (*by 2p7c*), and therefore (*by 1a6*) all of them are true. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 33

*There is nothing positive in ideas on account of which they are said to be false.*

Proof

If you deny this, conceive, if you can, a positive mode of thinking which constitutes a form of error *or* falsity. This mode of thinking cannot be in God (*by the previous proposition*), and nothing can be or be conceived outside of God (*by 1p15*). Therefore there can be nothing positive in ideas on account of which they are said to be false. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 34

*Every idea in us which is absolute, or adequate and perfect, is true.*

Proof

When we say that there is an adequate and perfect idea in us, we are simply saying (*by 2p11c*) that there is an adequate and perfect idea in God insofar as he constitutes the essence of our mind. Consequently (*by 2p32*) we are saying simply that such an idea is true. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 35

*Falsity consists in the privation of cognition which inadequate or mutilated and confused ideas involve.*

Proof

73

There is nothing positive in ideas which constitutes a form of falsity (*by 2p33*). But falsity cannot consist in absolute privation (for it is minds not bodies that are said to err and be mistaken) or in absolute ignorance; for there is a difference between not knowing and erring. Therefore it consists in the privation of cognition which inadequate cognition of things *or* inadequate and confused ideas involve. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

In 2p17s I explained how error consists in privation of cognition. But to provide a fuller explanation of this, I will give an example: namely that human beings are mistaken in thinking they are free. This belief consists simply of their being conscious of their actions but ignorant of the causes by which they are determined. Their idea of their freedom therefore is not knowing any cause for their actions. For the assertion that human

actions depend on the will are words with no idea attached. This is because people do not know what the will is and how it moves the body, and all who claim otherwise and invent a seat and habitation for the soul usually encounter derision or disgust.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly when we look at the sun, we imagine it is about two hundred feet away from us, and our error does not consist only in this imagination, but in the fact that while we imagine it like this, we are ignorant of its true distance and of the cause of this imagination. For even when we learn later that it is more than 600 diameters of the earth away from us, we will still imagine it to be near. It is not because we do not know its true distance that we imagine the sun to be so near, but because an affection of our body involves the essence of the sun insofar as the body itself is affected by it.

Proposition 36

*Inadequate and confused ideas follow by the same necessity as adequate, or clear and distinct, ideas.*

74 Proof

All ideas are in God (*by 1p15*), and insofar as they are related to God they are true (*by 2p32*) and adequate (*by 2p7c*). Therefore there are no inadequate or confused ideas except insofar as they are related to someone's particular mind (*see on this 2p24 and 2p28*). Therefore all ideas, both adequate and inadequate, follow by the same necessity (*by 2p6c*).  
*Q. E. D.*

Proposition 37

*Anything that is common to all things (see 2L2 above on this) and that is equally in the part and in the whole does not constitute the essence of any particular thing.*

Proof

If you deny this, conceive, if you can, that it does constitute the essence of any particular thing, let's say the essence of B. It follows (*by 2def2*)

<sup>36</sup> Spinoza is likely referring to Descartes's view that the pineal gland is the principal seat of the soul. See *Passions of the Soul*, article 32.

that it cannot be or be conceived without B. But this is contrary to the hypothesis. Therefore it does not belong to the essence of B, and it does not constitute the essence of any other particular thing. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 38

*Things that are common to all things and that are equally in the part and in the whole can only be conceived adequately.*

Proof

Let A be something that is common to all bodies and that is equally in the part of each body and in the whole. I say that A can only be conceived adequately. For (*by 2p7c*) the idea of it will necessarily be adequate in God, both insofar as he has the idea of the human body and insofar as he has ideas of its affections, which (*by 2p16, 2p25 and 2p27*) partly involve both the nature of the human body and of external bodies. That is (*by 2p12 and 13*) this idea will necessarily be adequate in God insofar as he constitutes the human mind *or* insofar as he has ideas which are in the human mind. Therefore (*by 2p11c*) the mind necessarily perceives A adequately, and it does so both insofar as it perceives itself and insofar as it perceives its own or any external body, and A cannot be conceived in any other way. *Q. E. D.*

75

Corollary

It follows from this that there are certain ideas *or* notions that are common to all human beings. For (*by 2L2*) all bodies agree in certain things which (*by 2p38*) must be adequately, *or* clearly and distinctly, perceived by all human beings.

Proposition 39

*The idea of that which is common and proper to the human body and to certain external things by which the human body is habitually affected, and which is in the parts as well as in the whole of each one of these latter, will also be adequate in the mind.*

Proof

Let A be that which is common and proper to the human body and to certain external bodies and which is equally in the human body and in

those external bodies and which is also equally in the parts and in the whole of each external body. There will be an adequate idea of A itself in God (*by 2p7c*) both insofar as he possesses the idea of the human body and insofar as he has ideas of the external bodies we have supposed. Now if we suppose that a human body is affected by an external body through something it has in common with it, i.e. by A, the idea of the affection of it will involve the property A (*by 2p16*). Therefore also (*by the same 2p7c*) the idea of this affection, insofar as it involves property A, will be adequate in God insofar as he is affected by the idea of the human body, i.e. (*by 2p13*) insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human mind. Therefore (*by 2p11c*) this idea is also adequate in the human mind. *Q. E. D.*

#### Corollary

76 It follows from this that a mind is the more capable of perceiving more things adequately, the more things a body has in common with other bodies.

#### Proposition 40

*All ideas that follow in the mind from ideas that are adequate in it are also adequate.*

#### Proof

This is obvious. For when we say that an idea follows in the human mind from ideas which are adequate in it, we are simply saying (*by 2p11c*) that in the divine intellect itself there is an idea of which God is the cause, not insofar as he is infinite nor insofar as he has been affected by ideas of very many particular things, but only insofar as he constitutes the essence of the human mind.

#### Scholium 1

With this I have explained the cause of the so-called *common* notions, which are the foundations of our reasoning. But there are other causes of certain axioms *or* notions that it would be helpful to explain here by our own method. For these would establish which notions are more useful than others and which ones are hardly useful at all; which ones are common, and which ones are clear and distinct only for people who do

not suffer from prejudices; and which ones finally are poorly based. Then, it would establish the origin of the notions that they call *second notions* and consequently of the axioms founded upon them, and other things I have sometimes pondered in relation to all this.<sup>37</sup> But I've decided to pass them all over here because I am keeping them for another treatise, and I don't want to bore the reader by giving them a too extensive treatment.

However I don't want to omit any such points as need to be known, so I will briefly discuss the causes from which the terms called *transcendental* originated, such as *being, thing, something*. These terms arise from the fact that, given the limits of the human body, it only has the capacity to form a certain number of images distinctly in itself at the same time (*I explained what an image is in 2p17s*), and if the number is exceeded, these images will begin to be confused. And if the number of images which the body has the capacity to form distinctly in itself at the same time is greatly exceeded, all of them will be completely confused with each other. This being so, it is evident from 2p17c and 2p18 that the human mind will be able to imagine distinctly at one and the same time as many bodies as the images that can be formed at one and the same time in its body. But when images are completely confused in a body, the mind too will imagine all bodies confusedly, without any distinction, and will comprehend them all under one attribute, which is the attribute of *being, thing*, etc. This can also be deduced from the fact that images are not all equally vivid and from other analogous causes which I don't need to explain here; for our present purpose we need only consider one of them. For they all come down to the fact that these terms signify ideas which are confused in the highest degree. Then, so-called *universal* notions – such as *man, horse, dog* etc. – arose from similar causes. For example, so many images of human beings are formed in the human body at the same time that they overwhelm the capacity of the imagination – not completely but insofar as the mind cannot imagine the small differences of particular human beings (the color, size, etc. of each one) and the determinate number of them, and imagines distinctly only that in which they all agree, so far as the body is affected by them. For this is what the body has been most affected by in each particular one; and it expresses this under the term *human being*, and applies this

77

<sup>37</sup> The scholastic theory of second notions is explained by Giacomo Zabarella in *De Natura Logicae* I, 3.



term to an infinite number of particular ones. For as we said, it cannot imagine a determinate number of particular ones. But we should note that these notions are not formed by everybody in the same way; they vary from person to person, and this depends upon what the body has been most often affected by and how easily the mind imagines it or recalls it. For example, a person who has often viewed with wonder the stature of human beings will understand by the term *human being* an animal of upright stature; but he who has tended to notice something else will form a different general image of a human being, for example that a human being is an animal that laughs, a two-legged animal, an animal without feathers, a rational animal. Similarly for all other things, everyone will form universal images of them in accordance with the disposition of his own body. So it is not surprising that so many disputes have arisen among philosophers who wished to explain natural things merely through images of things.

78 Scholium 2

It is clear from everything we have said above that we perceive many things and form universal notions:

First, from particular things represented through our senses to our intellect in a mutilated and confused fashion without any order (*see 2p29c*); and this is why I have always called such perceptions cognition from random experience.

Secondly, from signs, for example from the fact that we recall things on hearing or reading certain words and we form certain ideas of them similar to those through which we imagine the things (*see 2p18s*).

From now on I will call both these ways of thinking about things cognition of the first kind, opinion, or imagination.

Thirdly and finally, from the fact that we have common notions and adequate ideas of the properties of things (*see 2p38c, 2p39 with its corollary and 2p40*); and this I will call reason and cognition of the second kind.

In addition to these two kinds of cognition, there is, as I shall show in what follows, another, third, kind, which we shall call intuitive knowledge [*scientia*]. This kind of knowing proceeds from an adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God to an adequate knowledge of the essence of things.

I will explain all these with a single example. Three numbers are given for the purpose of finding a fourth which is to be to the third as the second is to the first. Business people have no difficulty multiplying the second by the third and dividing the product by the first, either because they have never forgotten what they heard from a teacher without any proof, or because they have often tried it on very simple numbers, or as a result of the proof of proposition 19 in Book 7 of Euclid,<sup>38</sup> i.e. from the common property of proportionals. But none of these is necessary in very simple numbers. For example, given the numbers 1, 2 and 3, everyone sees that the fourth proportional number is 6, and we see this much more clearly because we infer the fourth from the ratio which we see by a single intuition that the first bears to the second.

**Proposition 41**

*Cognition of the first kind is the unique cause of falsity, whereas cognition of the second and third kind is necessarily true.*

**Proof**

79

We have said in the previous scholium that all ideas that are inadequate and confused belong to cognition of the first kind; and therefore (*by 2p35*) this cognition is the unique cause of falsity. Then, we said that ideas that are adequate belong to cognition of the second and third kinds, and therefore (*by 2p34*) they are necessarily true. *Q. E. D.*

**Proposition 42**

*Cognition of the second and third kinds, though not cognition of the first kind, teaches us to distinguish the true from the false.*

**Proof**

This proposition is self-evident. Anyone who knows how to distinguish between true and false must have an adequate idea of the true and false, i.e. (*by 2p40s2*) he must know the true and false by the second or third kind of cognition.

<sup>38</sup> Euclid's *Elements*.

Proposition 43

*Anyone who has a true idea knows at the same time that he has a true idea and cannot have doubts about the truth of the thing.*

Proof

A true idea in us is an idea which is adequate in God insofar as he is explained through the nature of the human mind (*by 2p11c*). Suppose then that there is in God, insofar as he is explained through the nature of the human mind, an adequate idea A. There must necessarily also be in God an idea of this idea, and that idea is related to God in the same way as idea A (*by 2p20, the proof of which is universal*). But the supposition is that idea A is related to God insofar as he is explained through the nature of the human mind. Therefore the idea of idea A must also be related to God in the same way, i.e. (*by 2p11c*) this adequate idea of idea A will be in the very mind that has adequate idea A. Therefore anyone who has an adequate idea, *or* (*by 2p34*) anyone who truly knows a thing must at the same time have an adequate idea *or* true cognition of his cognition, i.e. (self-evidently) he must at the same time be certain. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

In 2p21s I explained what an idea of an idea is; but we should note that 2p43 is obvious enough by itself. For anyone who has a true idea knows that a true idea involves the highest certainty. To have a true idea simply means to know a thing perfectly *or* optimally. Surely no one can have any doubts about this thing, unless he thinks that an idea is something mute like a picture on a canvas and not a mode of thinking, in fact understanding itself; and I ask: who can know that he understands something without first understanding it? That is, who can know that he is certain of anything without first being certain about it? Then, what norm of truth can there be that is clearer and more certain than a true idea? Surely just as light reveals both itself and darkness, so truth is the norm both of itself and of what is false.

With these words, I think, I have replied to the following questions, namely: if a true idea is distinguished from a false idea only insofar as it is said to agree with its object, does a true idea therefore have no more reality or perfection than a false idea (since they are distinguished only

by an extrinsic characteristic), and consequently does a person who has true ideas have no more reality or perfection than one who has only false ideas? Then, how does it happen that people have false ideas? Finally, how can anyone certainly know that he has ideas which agree with their objects?

To these questions, I say, I think I have already replied. For concerning the difference between a true idea and a false idea, 2p35 establishes that the former is related to the latter as being to non-being. The causes of falsity I have shown very clearly from 2p19 to 2p35 together with its scholium; it is also clear from those propositions how a person who has true ideas differs from a person who has nothing but false ideas. And on the final point – how a person can know that he has an idea which agrees with its own object – I have just shown, more than adequately, that this arises solely from his having an idea which agrees with its own object, *or* that truth is the norm of itself. In addition, our mind, insofar as it truly perceives things, is a part of the infinite intellect of God (*by 2p11c*); and therefore it is as necessary that clear and distinct ideas of the mind are true as that God's ideas are true.

81

#### Proposition 44

*It is of the nature of reason to regard things not as contingent but as necessary.*

#### Proof

It is of the nature of reason to perceive things truly (*by 2p41*), namely (*by 1a6*) as they are in themselves, i.e. (*by 2p29*) not as contingent but as necessary. *Q. E. D.*

#### Corollary 1

It follows from this that it is solely owing to the imagination that we regard things as contingent both with regard to the past and to the future.

#### Scholium

I will explain briefly how this comes about. We have shown above (*2p17 and 2p17c*) that the mind imagines things as always present to itself even if they do not exist, unless there are causes that exclude their present existence. Then, we have shown (*2p18*) that if a human body has once

82 been affected by two external bodies at the same time, when later the mind imagines either one of them, it will immediately call to mind the other one too, i.e. it will regard both as being present to itself, unless causes occur that exclude their present existence. Besides no one doubts that we also imagine time because we imagine some bodies as moving more slowly or more swiftly or as swiftly as others. Suppose a boy saw Peter yesterday for the first time in the morning, and in the afternoon he saw Paul, and in the evening he saw Simon, and today he saw Peter for the second time in the morning. It is evident from 2p18 that as soon as he sees the morning light, he will immediately imagine the sun passing through the same part of the sky as when he saw it the day before, *or* he will imagine the whole day, and together with the morning he will imagine Peter, with the midday Paul and with the evening Simon, i.e. he will imagine Paul and Simon's existence in relation to future time. If on the other hand he sees Simon in the evening, he will relate Paul and Peter to past time, i.e. by imagining them together with past time; and he will do this more consistently, the more often he sees them in this same order. But if at some time it happens that on a certain other evening he sees James instead of Simon, then on the following day at evening he will sometimes imagine Simon and sometimes James but not both of them simultaneously. For the supposition is that in the evening he saw only one or the other and not both of them at the same time. His imagination therefore will waver back and forth, and when he imagines future evenings, he will sometimes imagine one of them and sometimes the other, i.e. he will regard neither of them as certainly, but both as contingently, going to be. This wavering of the imagination will be the same, whether it is imagination of things which we think about in the same way in connection with past time or with present time, and consequently we will imagine things related to present and past time as well as those related to future time as contingent.

#### Corollary 2

It is of the nature of reason to perceive things from a certain vantage of eternity.

#### Proof

It is of the nature of reason to regard things as necessary and not as contingent (*by 2p44*). And (*by 2p41*) it perceives this necessity of things

truly, i.e. (*by 1a6*) as it is in itself. But (*by 1p16*) this necessity of things is the eternal necessity itself of the nature of God. Therefore it is of the nature of reason to regard things from this vantage of eternity. Moreover the foundations of reason are notions (*by 2p38*) that explain things that are common to all human beings and (*by 2p37*) do not explain the essence of any particular thing; they must therefore be conceived without any reference to time from a certain vantage of eternity. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 45

83

*Every idea of any body or any actually existing particular thing necessarily involves the eternal and infinite essence of God.*

Proof

The idea of an actually existing particular thing necessarily involves both the essence and the existence of the thing (*by 2p8c*). But particular things (*by 1p15*) cannot be conceived without God. However because (*by 2p6*) they have God as their cause, insofar as he is considered under an attribute of which the things themselves are modes, ideas of them must necessarily (*by 1a4*) involve a conception of their attributes, i.e. (*by 1def6*) the eternal and infinite essence of God. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

By existence here I do not mean duration, i.e. existence conceived in abstraction and as a species of quantity. I mean the very nature of existence which is attributed to particular things because infinite things in infinite ways follow from the internal necessity of God's nature (*see 1p16*). I am speaking, I stress, about the very existence of particular things insofar as they are in God. For although each one is determined to exist in a specific way by another particular thing, the force by which each thing perseveres in existing still follows from the eternal necessity of God's nature. On this, see 1p24c.

Proposition 46

*Cognition of the eternal and infinite essence of God, which each and every idea involves, is adequate and perfect.*

Proof

84 The proof of the previous proposition is universal, and whether a thing is considered as a part or as a whole, the idea of it, whether it is an idea of the whole or of the part, will (*by the previous proposition*) involve the eternal and infinite essence of God. Therefore that which gives cognition of the eternal and infinite essence of God is common to all things and is equally in the part and in the whole, and therefore (*by 2p38*) this knowledge will be adequate. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 47

*The human mind has adequate cognition of the eternal and infinite essence of God.*

Proof

The human mind has ideas (*by 2p22*) from which (*by 2p23*) it perceives itself and its body (*by 2p19*) and (*by 2p16c1 and 2p17*) external bodies as actually existing. Therefore (*by 2p45 and 2p46*) it has adequate cognition of the internal and infinite essence of God. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

We see from this that the infinite essence of God and his eternity are known to all. And since all things are in God and are conceived through God, it follows that we can deduce from this cognition most of the things that we know adequately, and that we can form from it that third kind of cognition which we mentioned in 2p40s2, whose excellence and usefulness we will discuss in its proper place in part 5. And the fact that human beings do not have an equally clear cognition of God and of common notions is because they are unable to imagine God as we imagine bodies and they have attached the term *God* to images of things which they are used to seeing. They can hardly avoid doing this because they are constantly being affected by external bodies. It is certainly the case that most errors consist solely in our not applying terms to things correctly. When someone says that the lines which go from the center of a circle to its circumference are unequal, he evidently understands a circle, at least in this instance, as something other than what mathematicians mean. So when people make errors in

calculation, they have different numbers in their minds than the numbers on the page. Therefore if you look only at their minds, they are of course not making an error. They only seem to be making an error, because we think they have the very numbers in mind which are on the page. If this were not so, we would not believe that they were making an error. Not long ago I heard someone shouting that his porch had flown into his neighbor's hen! I did not believe he was in error because of course what he had in mind seemed to me to be quite obvious. Very many controversies arise like this because people do not explain their own minds properly or because they make a bad job of interpreting the other person's mind. For in truth when they contradict each other most flagrantly, they are either thinking the same things or they are thinking of different things, so that what they think are errors or absurdities in the other person are not.

85

Proposition 48

*There is no absolute or free will in the mind; but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause, which also is determined by another cause, and this in turn by another, and so on ad infinitum.*

Proof

The mind is a specific and determinate mode of thinking (*by 2p11*). Therefore (*by 1p17c2*) it cannot be the free cause of its own actions, or it cannot have an absolute faculty of willing and not willing, but must be determined to will either this thing or that thing (*by 1p28*) by a cause, which also is determined by another cause, and this in turn by another, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

There is a similar proof that there is no absolute faculty in the mind of understanding, desiring, loving etc. It follows that these faculties and others like them are either completely fictitious or nothing but metaphysical beings or universals which we are accustomed to form from particulars. Consequently intellect and will are related to this or that idea or to this or that volition in the same way as rockiness is related to this or that rock, or as human being is related to Peter or Paul. We



explained in the appendix to part 1 the reason why human beings think they are free.

86 But before I go on, I should stress that by the will I mean the faculty of affirming and denying; I do not mean desire. What I mean is the faculty by which the mind affirms or denies what is true or false, and not the desire by which the mind wants things or is averse to them.

But now that we have proved that these faculties are universal notions that are not distinct from the particular things from which we form them, we must now inquire whether volitions themselves are anything apart from the very ideas of things. We must inquire, I mean, whether there is in the mind another affirmation or denial beyond the one which the idea involves insofar as it is an idea. On this question see the following proposition as well as 2def3 to prevent our thinking from falling back upon pictures. For by ideas I do not mean images formed at the back of the eye or if you like in the middle of the brain; I mean concepts of thought.<sup>39</sup>

Proposition 49

*There is no volition, or affirmation and negation, in the mind, except that which an idea, insofar as it is an idea, involves.*

Proof

There is no absolute faculty in the mind of willing and not willing (*by the previous proposition*) but only particular volitions, i.e. this or that affirmation and this or that negation. Conceive therefore of some particular volition, let us say the mode of thinking by which the mind affirms that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. This affirmation involves the concept *or* idea of a triangle, i.e. without the idea of a triangle it cannot be conceived. To say that A must involve the concept B is the same as saying that A cannot be conceived without B. Then, (*by 2a3*) this affirmation also cannot be without the idea of a triangle. Therefore this affirmation can neither be nor be conceived without the idea of a triangle. Furthermore this idea of a triangle must involve the

<sup>39</sup> Spinoza is likely referring to Descartes's view that mind and body interact through the pineal gland. See *Passions of the Soul*, article 31.

same affirmation, namely that its three angles are equal to two right angles. *Vice versa* the idea of a triangle cannot be or be conceived without this affirmation, and therefore (*by 2def2*) this affirmation belongs to the essence of the idea of a triangle and is nothing but it. What we have said of this volition (which we took at random) must also be said about any volition, namely that it is nothing but an idea. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

87

The will and the intellect are one and the same thing.

Proof

Will and intellect are nothing but the particular volitions and ideas themselves (*by 2p48 and 2p48s*). But a particular volition and a particular idea (*by 2p49*) are one and the same thing. Therefore will and intellect are one and the same thing. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

With this we have removed what is commonly taken to be the cause of error.<sup>40</sup> And we showed above that falsity consists solely in the privation involved in mutilated and confused ideas. It follows that insofar as a false idea is false, it does not involve certainty. Therefore though we say that a person acquiesces in things that are false and does not have any doubts about them, we do not on that account say that he is certain but only that he has no doubts, or that he acquiesces in things that are false because there is nothing to cause his imagination to waver. On this see 2p44s. However strongly therefore a person is supposed to stand by things that are false, we shall still never say that he is certain. For by certainty we mean something positive (*see 2p43 and 2p43s*), not a privation of doubt. But by privation of certainty we mean falsity.

But I still need to bring out certain points in order to give a fuller explanation of 2p49. Then, I need to reply to objections that can be brought against this doctrine of ours. Finally, in order to remove every scruple, I thought it would be worth my while to indicate some of the

<sup>40</sup> Spinoza is likely referring to Descartes's view of error as arising because the scope of the will exceeds the scope of the intellect. See the Fourth Meditation (AT VII, 56–8).

uses of this doctrine. I say some of them; for the most important of them will be better understood from what we shall say in the fifth part.

88 I begin therefore with the first point, and I remind readers to distinguish carefully between an idea *or* conception of the mind and the images of things which we imagine. Then, it is necessary to distinguish between ideas and the words by which we signify things. For many people almost completely confuse these three: images, words and ideas; or do not distinguish them with sufficient precision or care. This is why they have been completely ignorant of this doctrine about the will, which it is altogether necessary to know both for theoretical reasons and for the wise conduct of life. For those who think that ideas consist of images formed in us by the collision of bodies have convinced themselves that ideas of things of which we are not able to form any similar image are not ideas but only fancies which we make up by a free decision of our will. Thus they regard ideas as silent pictures on a canvas. Being captivated by this prejudice, they do not see that an idea, insofar as it is an idea, involves an affirmation or a negation. Then, those who confuse words with the idea or with the affirmation itself which the idea involves, believe that they can will something contrary to what they sense when they affirm or deny something in words alone which is contrary to what they sense.<sup>41</sup> But anyone will easily be able to discard these prejudices if he pays attention to the nature of thought, which does not involve the concept of extension. He will understand clearly that an idea (since it is a mode of thinking) does not consist either in the image of something or in words. For the essence of words and images is constituted solely by corporeal motions, which do not involve the concept of thought.

These few admonitions about these things should be enough, and so I move on to the objections mentioned above. The first is that they regard it as established fact that the will extends more widely than the intellect, and is therefore different from it. The reason why they think the will extends more widely than the intellect is because they say that they find by experience that they do not need a greater faculty of assenting *or* affirming and denying than we already have in order to assent to infinitely more things than we perceive, but we do need a

<sup>41</sup> Spinoza may be responding here to the second part of Hobbes's thirteenth objection to Descartes's *Meditations* in the Third Objections (AT VII, 192).

greater faculty of understanding. Will is therefore distinguished from intellect in that the intellect is finite but the will is infinite.

The second objection that may be brought against us is that experience seems to show us with complete clarity that we can suspend our judgment in order to withhold assent from things we perceive. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that no one is said to be deceived insofar as he perceives something but only insofar as he assents or dissents to it. For example, no one who surmises a winged horse thereby admits that there is such a thing as a winged horse. Therefore he is not deceived, unless he admits at the same time that there is such a thing as a winged horse. Experience therefore seems to show with complete clarity that the will *or* faculty of assenting is free and distinct from the faculty of understanding.

89

Thirdly, it may be objected that one affirmation does not seem to contain more reality than another, i.e. we do not seem to need greater power in order to affirm that something is true which is true than to affirm that something which is false is true. But we do perceive that one idea has more reality *or* perfection than another idea. For just as some objects are more excellent than other objects, so also with the ideas of them: some ideas are more perfect than others. By these arguments a difference between will and intellect seems to be established.

The fourth possible objection is as follows. If a person does not operate from freedom of the will, what will happen if he is in equilibrium like Buridan's ass? Will he perish of hunger and thirst? If I admit this, I would seem to be conceiving of an ass or a statue of a human being and not a human being. But if I deny it, it follows that he determines himself, and therefore has a faculty of moving and of doing whatever he wills.

There are other objections that might be devised. But I am not obliged to demolish every objection anyone dreams up, so I will only trouble to respond to the objections I have outlined, and I can do it briefly.

In response to the first objection, I concede that the will extends more widely than the intellect, if by intellect they merely mean clear and distinct ideas, but I deny that the will extends more widely than perceptions *or* the faculty of conceiving. And I certainly do not see why the faculty of willing is to be said to be infinite more than the faculty of sensing. For just as we can affirm infinite things (though one after the other; for we cannot affirm infinite things simultaneously) by the same faculty of willing, so too we can sense *or* perceive infinite bodies (one

after the other) with the same faculty of sensing. And if they say that there are an infinite number of things that we cannot perceive, I counter that we cannot reach them by any amount of thinking and consequently by any faculty of willing. But they say if God wanted to enable us to perceive those things also, he would have to give us a greater faculty of perception but not a greater faculty of willing than he has given us. This is the same as if they said that if God wanted to enable us to understand  
90 infinite other beings, it would indeed be necessary for him to give us a greater intellect in order to take in these infinite beings, but not a more universal idea of being than he has given. For we have shown that the will is a universal being, *or* the idea by which we explain all particular volitions, i.e. that which is common to all of them. Therefore since they believe that this common *or* universal idea of all volitions is a faculty, it is not surprising if they say that this faculty extends beyond the limits of the intellect to infinity. For a universal is said equally of one and several and infinite individuals.

I reply to the second objection by denying that we have the free ability to suspend judgment. For when we say that someone is suspending judgment, we simply mean that he realizes that he is not perceiving a thing adequately. Suspension of judgment therefore is in truth perception and not free will. To understand this clearly, think of a boy imagining a horse and not perceiving anything else. Since this imagination of a horse involves existence (*by 2p17c*) and the boy does not perceive anything which takes away the existence of the horse, he will necessarily be thinking of the horse as present; and he will not be able to doubt its existence, even though he is not certain about it. We have this experience every day in dreams, and I do not believe that anyone thinks that while he is dreaming, he has a free ability to suspend judgment about the things he's dreaming of and to bring it about that he does not dream what he dreams he sees. Even so, it happens that we suspend judgment even in dreams, namely, when we dream that we are dreaming. Moreover I concede that no one is deceived insofar as he perceives, i.e. I concede that imaginations of the mind, considered in themselves, involve no error (*see 2p17s*). But I do deny that a person affirms nothing insofar as he perceives. For what else is it to perceive a winged horse than to affirm wings of a horse? For if the mind perceived nothing other than a winged horse, it would regard it as present to itself, and would have no cause to doubt its existence, and would have no faculty of

dissenting, if the imagination of the winged horse were not combined with an idea which takes away the existence of the same horse or perceives that the idea of the winged horse which it has is inadequate; in that case it will necessarily deny the existence of this horse or will necessarily have doubts about it.

By these arguments I think I've also answered the third objection by showing that the will is something universal predicated of all ideas, and that it signifies merely what is common to all ideas, namely affirmation. This is the reason why the adequate essence of the will, insofar as it is abstractly conceived like this, must be in each and every idea, and in this respect alone is the same in all of them. Not however insofar as it is considered to constitute the essence of an idea. For to that extent particular affirmations differ from each other as much as ideas themselves. For example, the affirmation involved in the idea of a circle differs from that involved in the idea of a triangle as much as the idea of a circle differs from the idea of a triangle. Then, I absolutely deny that we need an equal power of thought in order to affirm that something which is true is true as to affirm that something which is false is true. For if you look at the mind these two affirmations are to each other as being is to not-being; for there is nothing positive in ideas which constitutes a form of falsity (*see 2p35 with its scholium and 2p47s*). Therefore the main thing to notice here is how easily we are deceived when we confuse universals with particulars, and beings of reason and abstract things with real things.

Finally, to the fourth objection I say that I completely agree that a person set in such an equilibrium (i.e. a person who perceives nothing but thirst and hunger and food and drink that are equidistant from him) will perish of hunger and thirst. If they ask me whether such a person should not be regarded as an ass rather than a human being, I say I do not know, as I also do not know what to make of someone who hangs himself or what to make of children, fools, lunatics, etc.<sup>42</sup>

It remains finally to show how useful cognition of this doctrine is to our lives, and we shall easily see this from the following.

<sup>42</sup> These latter three are also the examples that Maimonides gives of unintelligent people who are taught God's incorporeality only as a matter of tradition, not because they can be expected to understand it. See *The Guide for the Perplexed* I, 35.

92 First it is useful insofar as it teaches that we act solely at the behest of God and that we share in the divine nature, and that we do so more and more, the more perfect our actions are and the more we understand God. Apart therefore from giving peace to the spirit in every way, this doctrine also has the advantage of teaching us what our highest happiness *or* blessedness consists in; it consists solely in the cognition of God, which leads us to do only those things that love and piety urge us to do. We see clearly from this how far people are from a true valuing of virtue if they expect God to requite them with the greatest rewards for their virtue and excellent actions as though a return for extreme servitude, as if virtue itself and servitude to God were not in themselves happiness and the highest freedom.

Secondly, it is useful insofar as it teaches us how we ought to conduct ourselves in the face of fortune *or* things that are not within our abilities, i.e. in the face of things that do not follow from our nature. It teaches us to expect and to bear both faces of fortune with equanimity, because of course all things follow from the eternal decree of God by the same necessity as it follows from the essence of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles.

Thirdly, this doctrine contributes to social life, insofar as it teaches us not to hate anyone nor to despise or ridicule them or get angry with them or envy them. Further, insofar as it teaches that each one of us is to be content with what he has and to help his neighbor, not from womanish compassion, partiality or superstition, but by the guidance of reason alone as time and circumstances require, as I shall show in the fourth part.

Fourthly and finally, this doctrine also makes a great contribution to the common society, insofar as it teaches us how citizens should be governed and led, not to be slaves, but to do freely the actions that are best.

With this I have completed what I set out to do in this scholium, and with it I come to the end of this my second Part, in which I think I have clearly explained the nature of the human mind and its properties extensively enough as far as the difficulty of the subject allows; and I believe that many noble things can be deduced from what I have said which are useful in the highest degree and very much need to be known. This will become clear in part from what follows.

*End of the second part*

## Third Part of the Ethics

93

### OF THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE EMOTIONS

#### Preface

*Most of those who have written about the emotions and about the manner of living of human beings give the impression that they are discussing things that are outside of nature rather than natural things that follow the common laws of nature. In fact, they seem to conceive of man in nature as an empire within an empire.<sup>43</sup> This is because they believe that human beings disrupt rather than follow the order of nature and that they have absolute power over their actions and are wholly self-determining. They then attribute the cause of the powerlessness and inconstancy of human beings not to the common power of nature but to some sort of fault in human nature. As a result they deplore, despise and ridicule human nature, and very often condemn it; and anyone who shows superior eloquence or ingenuity in denouncing the powerlessness of the human mind is regarded as a prophet.*

*But there have also been some outstanding authors (to whose labor and industry we admit that we owe a great deal), who have written many fine things about the right manner of living and have given advice full of prudence. However, no one has determined, so far as I know, the nature*

<sup>43</sup> The common Latin phrase 'imperium in imperio' traditionally refers to a political situation where some entity within a state, such as a church, functions as an independent state, exercising its own laws. Spinoza also uses the phrase to refer to human beings within nature in the *Political Treatise*, Chapter 2, paragraph 6.



94 *and strength of the emotions and what the mind in its turn can do to govern them. I am aware that the celebrated Descartes, despite his belief that the mind has absolute power over its actions, still strove to explain human emotions by their first causes and at the same time to point out a path by which the mind could have absolute sovereignty over the emotions. But in my opinion anyway all that he proved was the brilliance of his own genius, as I shall show in the appropriate place. For the time being I would like to return to those who prefer to abuse or ridicule human emotions and actions rather than understand them. They will certainly find it strange that I attempt to treat human faults and follies in geometrical fashion and that I should wish to prove by certain demonstrative reasoning these things which they constantly say defy reason and are foolish, absurd and abhorrent.*

*Here is my reasoning.<sup>44</sup> Nothing happens in nature which can be regarded as nature's fault. Nature is always the same, and everywhere there is one and the same virtue in it, one and the same power of action. That is, the laws and rules of nature by which all things happen and change from one form to another are always and everywhere the same, and therefore there must also be one and the same method of reasoning for understanding the nature of anything whatsoever, namely through the universal laws and rules of nature. Therefore the emotions of hatred, anger, envy, etc., considered in themselves, follow from the same necessity and virtue of nature as do other particular things. Accordingly they have specific causes by which they are to be understood, and they have specific properties which are as well worth studying as the properties of any other thing that we take pleasure in observing. I will therefore discuss the nature and strength of the emotions and the power of the mind over them using the same method I followed in the previous Parts in discussing God and the mind; I will consider human actions and appetites exactly as if I were studying lines, planes or bodies.*

## 95 Definitions

1. I call a cause adequate if its effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived through it, and I call a cause whose effect cannot be understood through itself alone an inadequate *or* partial cause.

2. I say that we act [*agere*] when something takes place within us or outside of us of which we are the adequate cause, i.e. (*by the previous*

<sup>44</sup> Spinoza uses the same phrase at 4p45c2s. See Terence, *Adelphi*, 68.

*definition*) when something follows from our nature, within us or outside of us, which can be clearly and distinctly understood through it alone. Conversely, I say that we are acted on [*pati*] when something takes place within us or something follows from our nature of which we are only a partial cause.

3. By emotion [*affectus*] I mean affections of the body by which the body's power of action is augmented or diminished, assisted or restrained, and at the same time the ideas of these affections.

*Thus by an emotion I mean an action if we can be the adequate cause of any of these affections; if not I mean a passion.*

#### Postulates

1. The human body can be affected in many ways by which its power of action is augmented or diminished, as well as in other ways which do not make its power of action either greater or lesser.

*This postulate or axiom rests upon post1 and on L5 and L7 after 2p13.*

2. The human body may undergo many changes and still retain impressions or traces of objects (*on which see 2post5*) and consequently the same images of things (*for the definition of which see 2p17s*). 96

#### Proposition 1

*Our mind sometimes acts and is sometimes acted on. Insofar as it has adequate ideas, it necessarily acts; and insofar as it has inadequate ideas, it necessarily is acted on.*

#### Proof

Some ideas in any human mind are adequate, while others are mutilated and confused (*by 2p40s*). Ideas which are adequate in anyone's mind are adequate in God, insofar as he constitutes the essence of that mind (*by 2p11c*); and ideas then that are inadequate in the mind are also adequate in God (*by the same corollary*), not insofar as he contains the essence only of that mind but insofar as he contains in himself also at the same time the minds of other things. Then, from any given idea some effect must necessarily follow (*by 1p36*), and God is the adequate cause of this effect (*see 3def1*), not insofar as he is infinite but insofar as he is considered as affected by the given idea (*see 2p9*). But a mind is the adequate cause of

an effect of which God is the cause insofar as he is affected by an idea which is adequate in that same mind (*by 2p11c*). Therefore (*by 3def2*) insofar as our mind has adequate ideas, it necessarily acts. This is the first point. Then, the mind is not an adequate but a partial cause of anything that follows necessarily from an idea which is adequate in God, not insofar as he has in himself the mind of one person only, but insofar as he has in himself the minds of other things simultaneously with that person's mind (*by the same 2p11c*). Accordingly (*by 3def2*), insofar as the mind has inadequate ideas, it necessarily is acted on. This is the second point. Therefore our mind, etc. *Q. E. D.*

97 Corollary

It follows from this that the more inadequate ideas a mind has, the more passions it is subject to, and conversely the more adequate ideas it has, the more it acts.

Proposition 2

*The body cannot determine the mind to think, nor can the mind determine the body to motion or to rest or to anything else (if there is anything else).*

Proof

All modes of thinking have God as their cause insofar as he is a thinking thing and not insofar as he is explained by any other attribute (*by 2p6*). Therefore what determines the mind to think is a mode of thinking and not a mode of extension, i.e. (*by 2def1*) it is not body; that is the first point. Then, motion and rest in a body must arise from another body, which has also been determined to motion or to rest by another body, and, absolutely, anything that arises in a body must have had its origin in God, insofar as he is considered to be affected by some mode of extension and not insofar as he is considered to be affected by some mode of thinking (*by the same 2p6*). That is, it cannot arise from the mind, which (*by 2p11*) is a mode of thinking; and that is the second point. Therefore the body cannot determine the mind etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

These things will be understood more clearly from what we said in 2p7s, namely that mind and body are one and the same thing which is conceived

sometimes under the attribute of thought and sometimes under the attribute of extension. This is why the order *or* connection of things is one whether nature is conceived under the one attribute or the other, and consequently that the order of our body's actions and passions is simultaneous in nature with the order of the actions and passions of the mind. This is also evident from the way in which we proved 2p12.

But although this is how things are and there remains no reason to doubt it, still I hardly believe that people can be brought to think about these things with a fair mind if I do not confirm the matter by experience, so firmly are people convinced that it is solely at the mind's behest that the body is sometimes in motion and sometimes at rest and does all sorts of actions that depend solely upon the will of the mind and its skill in thinking. For no one has yet determined what actions the body can do, i.e. experience has not yet taught anyone what actions the body can and cannot do without being determined by the mind simply on the basis of the laws of nature insofar as nature is viewed solely as corporeal. For no one has yet achieved such an accurate knowledge of the body's structure that he could explain all its functions, not to mention that we observe quite a few things in animals that far surpass human skills, and that sleepwalkers do many actions in their sleep which they would not dare do while awake. This is all good evidence that merely by the laws of its own nature a body can do many things by itself that strike the mind with wonder.

98

Then, no one knows the manner or mechanism by which the mind moves the body, nor how many degrees of motion it can give the body and how fast it can make it move. It follows from this that when people say that one or another of a body's actions originates in the mind which governs the body, they do not know what they are talking about. They are merely admitting in plausible words that they are ignorant of the true cause of that action without wondering at it.

But they will argue that whether they do or do not know by what means the mind moves the body, they are nevertheless aware by experience that if the human mind were not capable of thinking, the body would be inert. Then they claim to know by experience that it is within the abilities of the mind alone to speak or be silent, and a host of other things which they believe to depend similarly on a decision by the mind. But on the first point, I ask them whether experience does not also teach them the contrary – that if the body is inert, the mind too at the same

time is incapable of thinking. For when the body is at rest and asleep, the mind remains asleep with it at the same time and does not have the ability to think that it has when it is awake. Then, I believe that everyone has experienced that the mind is not always equally capable of thinking about the same object, but the more capable the body is to have an image of this or that object aroused in it, the more capable the mind is of thinking about this or that object.

99 But they will argue that it is impossible for the causes of buildings, pictures and such things, which are made by human art alone, to be deduced solely from the laws of nature insofar as nature is considered as merely corporeal; and the human body would not be able to build, say, a great temple unless it were determined and guided by a mind. But I have already shown that they do not know what the body can do or what can be deduced from merely studying its nature. Also they themselves experience that a whole host of things happen simply by the laws of nature which they would never believe could happen without direction by a mind, such as a sleepwalker's actions in his sleep which even he wonders at when he wakes up. I would also mention the fabric of the human body itself which far surpasses in craftsmanship any structure ever made by human art, to say nothing of the point I proved above that infinite things follow from nature under whatever attribute it is considered.

Now on the second point, human affairs would certainly get along better, if it were as much within the abilities of a human being to be silent as to speak. But experience abundantly shows that human beings have nothing less within their control than their tongues, and there is nothing people are so bad at as governing their appetites. This is why many believe that we do freely only those actions that we pursue tepidly, because the appetite for those things can easily be countered by remembering some other thing that we frequently recall, but not those things that we pursue with a great emotion that cannot be calmed by recalling some other thing. But nothing would stop them from believing that we do all things freely, if they had not experienced that we do quite a lot of things that we later repent; for example, when we are assailed by contrary emotions, we often see the better and follow the worse.<sup>45</sup> Similarly an infant believes he wants milk freely, an angry boy thinks

<sup>45</sup> Spinoza here is quoting Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7, 20: *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*. This phrase is also quoted, slightly differently, in 4pref, and in 4p17s.

he tries to get vengeance freely and a timid person thinks that he tries to run away freely. Then, a drunken person believes that it is from a free decision of his mind that he says things which later when he is sober he will wish he had not said. Similarly a delirious person, a chattering woman, a child, and lots of people of this sort believe they are speaking by the free decision of their minds, whereas the truth is they can't contain their impulse to talk. Thus experience and reason alike clearly show us that people believe they are free merely because they are conscious of their actions but are ignorant of the causes by which they are determined. They also show us that the mind's decisions are nothing but the appetites themselves, which vary as the disposition of the body varies. For every person governs everything by his emotions; and those who are assailed by contrary emotions do not know what they want. Those who are not moved by any emotion are driven this way and that by the slightest of influences.<sup>46</sup>

100

Surely this all clearly shows that the decision and appetite of the mind and the determination of the body are simultaneous in nature, or rather they are one and the same thing. When it is considered under the attribute of thought and explained through that, we call it a decision, and when it is considered under the attribute of extension and deduced from the laws of motion and rest, we call it determination. This will become clearer later from what we have still to say.

But there is another thing which I would like to stress above all. It is that we can do no action by a decision of the mind unless we recall it. For example, we cannot speak a word unless we recall it. Then, it is not within the free abilities of the mind to recall something or to forget it. So the only thing that is believed to be within the abilities of the mind is, by the sole decision of the mind, to be silent or to speak about a thing which we recall.

But when we dream that we are speaking, we believe that we are speaking by a free decision of the mind. However we are not speaking, or if we are, it is happening as a result of a spontaneous motion of the body. Then we dream that we are hiding certain things from people and that we are doing this by the same decision of the mind by which, when awake, we keep quiet about things that we know. We dream finally that

<sup>46</sup> This line is adapted from Terence, *Andria*, 266.

we are doing certain actions as a result of a decision of the mind which we don't dare to do when we are awake. Thus I would very much like to know whether there are two kinds of mental decision, one of dream things and the other of free things?

But if we are unwilling to stray so far into nonsense, we must necessarily admit that this decision of the mind which is believed to be free is not distinguished from imagination itself *or* from memory, and that it is nothing but the affirmation which an idea, insofar as it is an idea, necessarily involves (*see 2p49*). Therefore these mental decisions arise in the mind by the same necessity as ideas of things that actually exist. Therefore those who believe that they speak or keep silent or do anything whatsoever as a result of a free mental decision are fantasizing.

### Proposition 3

*Actions of the mind arise only from adequate ideas; but passions depend solely upon inadequate ideas.*

#### 101 Proof

The first thing that constitutes the essence of a mind is simply the idea of an actually existing body (*by 2p11 and 2p13*). This idea (*by 2p15*) is composed of many others, some of which (*by 2p38c*) are adequate and some inadequate (*by 2p29c*). Therefore anything that follows from the nature of the mind and of which the mind is the proximate cause through which it has to be understood, must follow necessarily from an adequate or an inadequate idea. But insofar as the mind (*by 3p1*) has inadequate ideas, to that extent it is acted on. Therefore actions of the mind follow from adequate ideas alone, and for this reason the mind is acted on only because it has inadequate ideas. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

We see therefore that passions are only attributed to the mind insofar as it contains something which involves negation, *or* insofar as it is considered as a part of nature which by itself, apart from other things, cannot be clearly and distinctly perceived. I could also show in a similar manner that the passions are attributed to particular things in the same way as to the mind and cannot be perceived in any other manner. But my design is to discuss only the human mind.

Proposition 4

*No thing can be destroyed except by an external cause.*

Proof

This proposition is self-evident. For the definition of anything affirms the essence of the thing itself and does not negate it, *or* it posits the thing's essence and does not take it away. So long therefore as we focus only on the thing itself and not on external causes, we will not be able to find anything in it which can destroy it. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 5

*Insofar as a thing can destroy another thing, to that extent they are of contrary natures, i.e. to that extent they cannot be in the same subject.*

Proof

If they could agree with each other or be at the same time in the same subject, there could possibly be something in that subject which could destroy it; and this is absurd (*by the previous proposition*). Therefore insofar as a thing, etc. *Q. E. D.*

102

Proposition 6

*Every single thing endeavors as far as it lies in itself<sup>47</sup> to persevere in its own being.*

Proof

Particular things are modes by which God's attributes are expressed in a specific and determinate way (*by 1p25c*), i.e. (*by 1p34*) they are things that express in a specific and determinate way the power of God by which God is and acts, and no thing has anything in itself by which it may be destroyed *or* which may take away its existence (*by 3p4*). To the

<sup>47</sup> Spinoza's phrase '*quantum in se est*' is a Latin idiom that generally means 'insofar as it can.' Spinoza also employs the phrase in 4p18s. Descartes used this phrase to articulate the principle of inertia (*Principles of Philosophy* II, 37), which likely influenced Newton's formulation of the principle of inertia. In this context, the phrase refers more specifically to motions that follow from the nature of a body without external influence.



contrary, it is opposed to everything that can take away its existence (*by the previous proposition*). Therefore, it endeavors as far as lies in itself, to persevere in its own being. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 7

*The endeavor [conatus] by which each thing endeavors to persevere in its own being is simply the actual essence of the thing itself.*

Proof

Certain things necessarily follow from the given essence of anything whatsoever (*by 1p36*), and things can only do what necessarily follows from their determinate nature (*by 1p29*). Therefore each thing's power *or* endeavor, by which it acts or endeavors to do any action, either alone or in combination with other things, i.e. (*by 3p6*) the power *or* endeavor by which it endeavors to persevere in its own being, is simply the given *or* actual essence of the thing itself. *Q. E. D.*

103 Proposition 8

*The endeavor by which each thing endeavors to persevere in its own being, involves not a finite time but an indefinite time.*

Proof

If it involved a limited time which determined the thing's duration, it would follow merely from the power itself by which the thing exists, that the thing would be unable to exist after that limited time and that it must be destroyed; and this (*by 3p4*) is absurd. Therefore the endeavor by which a thing exists does not involve a defined time. To the contrary (*by the same 3p4*), unless it is destroyed by an external cause, it will continue to exist for ever by the same power by which it now exists. Therefore this endeavor involves an indefinite time. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 9

*Both insofar as it has clear and distinct ideas and insofar as it has confused ideas, the mind endeavors to persevere in its own being for an indefinite duration, and is conscious of this endeavor it possesses.*

Proof

The essence of the mind consists of adequate and inadequate ideas (*as we showed in 3p3*), and therefore (*by 3p7*) it endeavors to persevere in its own being both insofar as it has the latter and insofar as it has the former, and (*by 3p8*) for an indefinite duration. And since (*by 2p23*) the mind is necessarily conscious of itself through ideas of the affections of the body, it is therefore (*by 3p7*) conscious of its own endeavor. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

When this endeavor is related to the mind alone, it is called will. But when it is related to mind and body simultaneously, it is called appetite, which accordingly is nothing but a human being's very essence, and things that serve his preservation necessarily follow from its nature, and therefore a person is determined to do those things. Then, there is no difference between appetite and desire except that desire is very often attributed to people insofar as they are conscious of their appetite, and therefore it can be defined as follows: *desire is appetite together with consciousness of it*. From all this therefore it is clear that we do not endeavor anything, we do not will anything, we do not seek or desire anything, because we judge it to be good; on the contrary, we judge a thing to be good because we endeavor it, will it, seek it and desire it.

104

Proposition 10

*An idea that excludes the existence of our body cannot be in our mind, but is contrary to it.*

Proof

Nothing that can destroy our body can be in it (*by 3p5*). Therefore the idea of that thing cannot be in God either, insofar as he has the idea of our body (*by 2p9c*), i.e. (*by 2p11 and 2p13*) the idea of that thing cannot be in our minds. To the contrary, since (*by 2p11 and 2p13*) the first thing that constitutes the essence of a mind is the idea of an actually existing body, the first and most important element of our mind is the endeavor (*by 3p7*) to affirm the existence of our body. Therefore an idea that excludes the existence of our body is contrary to our mind, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 11

*The idea of anything that augments or diminishes, assists or restrains our body's power of action, also augments or diminishes, assists or restrains the mind's power of thought.*

Proof

This proposition is evident from 2p7; also from 2p14.

Scholium

105 We see therefore that the mind can undergo great changes. Sometimes it passes to greater perfection and sometimes to lesser perfection. These passions provide us with an explanation of the emotions of joy and sadness. By *joy* therefore in what follows I shall mean *the passion by which the mind passes to greater perfection*. By *sadness* I shall mean *the passion by which it passes to lesser perfection*. Also *when the emotion of joy is related to mind and body simultaneously*, I call it *delight* or *cheerfulness*. *When the emotion of sadness is related to mind and body simultaneously* I call it *distress* or *melancholy*. But note that delight and distress are attributed to a person when one part of him is more affected than the rest; cheerfulness and melancholy are attributed to him when all parts are equally affected. Then, I explained what desire is in 3p9s. These three are the only primary emotions I recognize; in what follows I will show how all the other emotions arise from them. But before I go further, I should like to explain 3p10 more fully; I want to give a better understanding of how one idea may be contrary to another idea.

In 2p17s I showed that the idea that constitutes the essence of mind involves the existence of body for so long as the body itself exists. Then, it follows from what we proved in 2p8c and its scholium that the present existence of our mind depends solely upon the fact that a mind involves the actual existence of a body. Finally, I showed that the power by which the mind imagines and recalls things also depends on this (*see 2p17 and 2p18 with its scholium*), because it involves the actual existence of a body. From these things it follows that the present existence of a mind and its power of imagining are taken away as soon as the mind ceases to affirm the present existence of a body.

But the reason why a mind ceases to affirm this existence of a body cannot be the mind itself (*by 3p4*), nor can it be that the body ceases to be. For (*by 2p6*) the reason why a mind affirms the existence of a body is not because the body has begun to exist. Therefore by the same reasoning, neither does it cease to affirm the existence of the body itself because the body ceases to be. It arises (*by 2p8*) from another idea which excludes the present existence of our body and consequently the present existence of our mind and which therefore is contrary to the idea which constitutes the essence of our mind.

Proposition 12

106

*So far as it can, the mind endeavors to imagine things which augment or assist the body's power of action.*

Proof

So long as the human body is affected in a way that involves the nature of an external body, the human mind will regard that body as present (*by 2p17*). Consequently (*by 2p7*) as long as a human mind regards any external body as present, i.e. (*by the scholium to the same p17*) as long as the mind imagines it, the human body is affected in a way that involves the nature of that external body. Therefore as long as the mind is imagining things that augment or assist our body's power of action, for so long the body is affected in ways that augment or assist its power of action (*see 3post1*), and consequently (*by 3p11*) for so long the mind's power of thought is augmented or assisted. Accordingly (*by 3p6 or 3p9*), so far as it can, the mind endeavors to imagine those things. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 13

*When the mind imagines things which diminish or restrain the body's power of action, it endeavors, so far as it can, to recall things that exclude the existence of those things.*

Proof

As long as the mind imagines such a thing, the power of mind and body is diminished or restrained (*as we proved in the previous proposition*). But

it will still imagine it, until it imagines something else which excludes the present existence of the thing (*by 2p17*). That is (as we have just shown) the power of both mind and body continues to be diminished or restrained until the mind imagines something else which excludes the existence of that thing. Therefore (*by 3p9*) the mind will endeavor to imagine or recall that other thing so far as it can. *Q. E. D.*

107 Corollary

It follows from this that the mind is averse to imagining things that diminish or restrain its own and the body's power.

Scholium

From all this we see clearly what love and hatred are. *Love is simply joy accompanied by the idea of an external cause and hatred is simply sadness accompanied by the idea of an external cause.* Then we see that a person who loves necessarily endeavors to have the presence of the thing that he loves and to preserve it. Conversely a person who hates endeavors to get rid of the thing that he hates and to destroy it. But we will discuss all these topics more extensively later.

Proposition 14

*If the mind has at some time been affected by two emotions simultaneously, when it is later affected by one of them, it will also be affected by the other.*

Proof

If a human body has at some time been affected by two bodies at the same time, when the mind later imagines one of them, it will also immediately recall the other one (*by 2p18*). But our mind's imaginings indicate the emotions of our body more than the nature of the external bodies (*by 2p16c2*). Therefore if the body, and consequently the mind (*see 3def3*), has at some time been affected by two emotions, when it is affected at a later time by one of them, it will also be affected by the other. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 15

*Anything whatever can accidentally be a cause of joy, sadness or desire.*

Proof

Suppose that the mind is affected by two emotions at the same time. One of them neither augments nor diminishes its power of action; the other does either augment or diminish it (*see 3post1*). The previous proposition established that when a mind is affected at a later time with the first emotion, the true cause, which (*by hypothesis*) through itself neither augments nor diminishes the mind's power of thought, it will immediately also be affected by this other emotion, which does augment or diminish its power of thought, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) it will be affected by joy or by sadness. Therefore that thing will be the cause of joy or of sadness not through itself but accidentally. It can easily be shown in the same fashion that a thing can accidentally be a cause of desire. *Q. E. D.*

108

Corollary

We can love or hate a thing for the sole reason that we have regarded it with an emotion of joy or sadness, though it is not itself the efficient cause of either.

Proof

This is the sole reason (*by 3p14*) why the mind is affected by an emotion of joy or sadness when it imagines this thing later, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) why the power of the mind and body is augmented or diminished etc., and consequently (*by 3p12*) it is the sole reason why the mind desires to imagine the thing or (*by 3p13c*) is averse to doing so, i.e. (*by 3p13s*), why it loves it or hates it. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

We see from this how it can happen that we love or hate certain things for no cause known to us – merely (as they say) from sympathy and antipathy. We must also include here objects that affect us with joy or sadness simply because they are quite similar to objects that habitually affect us with the same emotions, as I show in the next proposition. I know of course that the writers who first introduced these terms sympathy and antipathy meant them to signify certain occult qualities of things; despite this, I believe we may also understand them to refer to evident or observable qualities.

Proposition 16

109 *We shall love or hate a thing simply because we imagine that it has some similarity to an object which habitually affects our minds with joy or sadness, even if the point of similarity with the object is not the efficient cause of these emotions.*

Proof

We have regarded with an emotion of joy or sadness the point of similarity to the object in the object itself (*by the hypothesis*). Therefore (*by 3p14*) the mind will immediately also be affected by one or other of these emotions when it is affected by an image of it. Consequently the thing which we perceive to have this point of similarity will (*by 3p15*) be a cause of joy or sadness accidentally. Therefore (*by 3p15c*) although the point of similarity that it possesses to the object is not the efficient cause of these emotions, we shall nevertheless love it or hate it. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 17

*If we imagine that a thing which habitually affects us with an emotion of sadness has some similarity to another thing which habitually affects us with an equally great emotion of joy, we will hate it at the same time as we love it.*

Proof

This thing is (*by hypothesis*) a cause of sadness through itself, and (*by 3p13s*) insofar as we imagine it with this emotion, we hate it. But insofar as we imagine that it has some similarity to another thing that habitually affects us with an equally great emotion of joy, we shall love it with an equally great burst of joy (*by the previous proposition*). Therefore we shall hate it at the same time as we love it. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

*This state of mind that arises from two contrary emotions is called wavering of spirit.* Accordingly it is related to emotion as doubt is related to imagination (*see 2p44s*); and wavering of spirit and doubt differ from each other only in degree.

But note that in 3p16 I deduced these waverings of spirit from causes which in the case of one emotion was the cause through itself of that

emotion and in the case of the other emotion was the cause accidentally of it. I did this because in that way I could more easily deduce them from previous propositions, not because I deny that waverings of spirit very often arise from an object which is the efficient cause of both emotions. For (*by 2p11*) the human body is composed of a very large number of individual things of diverse nature and therefore (*by a1'' after L3 which you will find following 2p13*) can be affected in very many different ways by one and the same body. Conversely, as one and the same thing can be affected in many ways, it will also be able to affect one and the same part of the body in many different ways. From all this we can easily conceive that one and the same object may be the cause of many contrary emotions.

110

Proposition 18

*A person is affected by the same emotion of joy and sadness from the image of something in the past or something in the future as from the image of something in the present.*

Proof

As long as a person is affected by the image of something, he will regard the thing as present even if it does not exist (*by 2p17 with its corollary*); and he does not imagine it as past or as future, except insofar as its image is combined with an image of past or future time (*see 2p44s*). Therefore a thing's image, considered in itself alone, is the same whether it is related to future time or past time or present time. That is (*by 2p16c2*), the bodily constitution *or* emotion, is the same whether the image is of something in the past, the future or the present. Therefore the emotion of joy and sadness is the same, whether the image is of something in the past, the future or the present. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium 1

Here I call a thing past or future insofar as we have been affected by it or will be affected by it. For example, insofar as we have seen it or will see it, insofar as it has made us better or will do so, has hurt us or will do so, and so on. For insofar as we imagine it, we affirm its existence, i.e. our body is unaffected by any emotion which excludes the existence of the thing. Therefore (*by 2p17*) the body is affected by the image of the thing



III in the same way as if the thing itself were present. However, since it often happens that those who have experienced several things waver as long as they regard a thing as future or past and are seriously in doubt about the outcome of it (*see 2p44s*), the emotions which arise from similar images of things are not all equally consistent but are frequently disturbed by images of other things so long as people are uncertain about the outcome of a thing.

Scholium 2

From what we have just said we see what hope, fear, assurance, despair, relief and remorse are. *Hope is simply an inconstant joy arising from the image of something in the future or in the past about whose outcome we are in doubt.* Conversely fear is an inconstant sadness which also arises from an image of something that is in doubt. Once the doubt is taken away from these emotions, hope turns into *assurance* and fear into *despair*, i.e. into *the joy or sadness arising from the image of the thing we either feared or hoped for.* Then, *relief is joy arising from the image of a thing in the past of whose outcome we had been in doubt.* And *remorse is the sadness that is the opposite of relief.*

Proposition 19

*Anyone who imagines that something he loves is destroyed will be sad; but if he imagines that it is preserved, he will be joyful.*

Proof

So far as it can, the mind endeavors to imagine things that augment or assist the body's power of action (*by 3p12*), i.e. (*by 3p13s*) things that it loves. But the imagination is assisted by anything that posits the existence of the thing and conversely is restrained by anything that excludes the existence of the thing (*by 2p17*). Therefore images of things that posit the existence of the thing it loves assist the endeavor of the mind by which it endeavors to imagine the beloved thing, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) they affect the mind with joy. Conversely things that exclude the existence of the beloved thing, restrain this endeavor of the mind, i.e. (*by the same scholium*) they affect the mind with sadness. Anyone therefore who imagines that something he loves is destroyed will be sad, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 20

112

*Anyone who imagines that something he hates is destroyed will be joyful.*

Proof

The mind (*by 3p13*) endeavors to imagine things that exclude the existence of anything by which the body's power of action is diminished or restrained, i.e. (*by 3p13s*) it endeavors to imagine things that exclude the existence of anything that it hates. Therefore an image of a thing that excludes the existence of something the mind hates, assists this endeavor of the mind, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) it affects the mind with joy. Therefore anyone who imagines that something he hates is destroyed will be joyful. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 21

*Anyone who imagines something he loves as affected by joy or sadness, will also be affected by joy or sadness; and both these emotions will be greater or lesser in the lover, according as they are greater or lesser in the beloved thing.*

Proof

Images of things (*as we proved in 3p19*) that posit the existence of a thing one loves assist the endeavor of the mind by which it endeavors to imagine the very thing that one loves. But joy posits the existence of a joyful thing, and the greater the emotion of joy is, the more it does so; for (*by 3p11s*) it is a passage to greater perfection. Therefore a lover's image of the joy of the beloved thing assists his mind's endeavor, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) it affects the lover with joy, and with all the more joy, the greater this affect is in the beloved thing. That is the first point. Then, insofar as a thing is affected by some sadness, it is to that extent destroyed, and all the more, the greater the sadness that affects it (*by the same 3p11s*). Therefore (*by 3p19*) anyone who imagines that something he loves is affected by sadness will also be affected by sadness, and with all the greater sadness, the greater this emotion is in the beloved thing. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 22

113

*If we imagine someone affecting a thing we love with joy, we will be affected by love for him. Conversely if we imagine him affecting that thing with sadness, we too on the contrary will be affected by hatred for him.*

Proof

Anyone who affects a thing we love with joy or sadness, also affects us with joy or sadness when we imagine the beloved thing as affected by that joy or sadness (*by the previous proposition*). But the supposition is that this joy or sadness is accompanied in us by the idea of an external cause. Therefore (*by 3p13s*) if we imagine that someone is affecting a thing we love with joy or sadness, we shall be affected by love or hatred for him. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Proposition 21 explains for us what *pity* is; we may define it as *a sadness arising from injury to another person*. I don't know what term we should use for the joy that arises from another person's success. Then *love for someone who has done good to another person* we shall call *approval*, and *hatred for someone who has treated another person badly*, we shall call *indignation*. Finally, note that we feel pity not only for a thing we have loved (*as shown in p21*), but also for a thing that we had not previously felt any emotion for, provided we judge that it is similar to us (as I shall show below).<sup>48</sup> Consequently, we approve of someone who has done good to someone similar to ourselves, and conversely we are indignant with a person who has caused injury to someone similar to us.

Proposition 23

*Anyone who imagines that something he hates is affected by sadness will be joyful; if conversely he imagines it as affected by joy, he will be sad; and both these emotions will be greater or lesser as the contrary emotion is greater or lesser in the thing he hates.*

114 Proof

Insofar as something we hate is affected by sadness, it is to that extent destroyed, the more so, the greater the sadness by which it is affected (*by 3p11s*). Therefore (*by 3p20*) anyone who imagines a thing he hates as affected by sadness, will in contrast be affected by joy, and the greater the sadness with which he imagines the thing he hates to be affected, the

<sup>48</sup> See 3p27.

greater his joy will be. That is the first point. Then, joy posits the existence of that which is joyful (*by the same 3p11s*), and all the more so, the greater the joy is conceived to be. If anyone imagines a person he hates to be affected by joy, this imagination (*by 3p13*) will restrain his endeavor, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) the one who hates him will be affected with sadness, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This joy can scarcely be unmitigated and without any conflict of spirit. For (as I shall show just below in 3p27) insofar as he imagines a thing that is similar to himself as affected by an emotion of sadness, to that extent he must be sad; and the contrary, if he imagines the same thing to be affected by joy. But here we are dealing only with hatred.

Proposition 24

*If we imagine someone as affecting with joy a thing that we hate, we will be affected by hatred for him too. If conversely we imagine him affecting the same thing with sadness, we will be affected by love for him.*

Proof

This proposition is proved in the same way as 3p22; please consult.

Scholium

These and similar emotions of hatred are related to *envy*, which therefore is simply *hatred itself*, insofar as *hatred is considered as disposing a person to enjoy harm to another person and to be saddened by his success.*

Proposition 25

115

*We endeavor to affirm of ourselves and of anything we love all that we imagine affects us or the beloved thing with joy; conversely we endeavor to deny all that we imagine affects us or the beloved thing with sadness.*

Proof

What we imagine affects the beloved thing with joy or sadness, affects us with joy or sadness (*by 3p21*). But (*by 3p12*) the mind endeavors to imagine, so far as it can, things that affect us with joy, i.e. (*by 2p17 and its*

*corollary*) it regards them as present; and conversely (*by 3p13*), it endeavors to exclude the existence of things that affect us with sadness. Therefore we endeavor to affirm of ourselves and of the beloved thing everything that we imagine affects us or the beloved thing with joy, and the contrary. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 26

*We endeavor to affirm about a thing that we hate everything that we imagine affects it with sadness and conversely to deny what we imagine affects it with joy.*

Proof

This proposition follows from 3p23 as 3p25 follows from 3p21.

Scholium

We see from all this that it easily happens that a person thinks too well of himself and of a beloved thing and conversely thinks too poorly of a thing that he hates. When this imagination concerns a person who thinks too well of himself, it is called pride. Pride is a species of madness because the person fantasizes that he can actually do everything that he achieves only in his imagination, and therefore regards his imaginary successes as realities and exults in them as long as he cannot imagine things that exclude their existence and determine his power of action. *Pride then is joy arising from a person's thinking too well of himself. Then, 116 the joy that arises from his thinking too well of another person is called adulation. Finally the joy that arises from thinking too poorly of another person is called disdain.*

Proposition 27

*Our imagining that something that is similar to us, for which we have had no emotion, is affected by some emotion causes us to be affected by a similar emotion.*

Proof

Images of things are affections of the human body, and ideas of them represent external bodies as present to us (*by 2p17s*). That is (*by 2p16*),

the ideas we have of them involve the nature of our body and the nature of the external body as present at the same time. If the external body's nature is similar to our body's nature, the idea of the external body that we imagine will involve an affection of our body similar to the external body's affection. Consequently, if we imagine something similar to us being affected by some emotion, this imagination will express an affection of our body similar to that emotion. Therefore from our imagining that something similar to us has been affected by some emotion, we are affected by a similar emotion. But if we hate a thing that is similar to us, we will to that extent (*by 3p23*) be affected by a contrary emotion and not by a similar one. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

When this imitation of emotions is related to sadness, it is called *pity* (*on pity see 3p22s*). When it is related to desire, it is called *emulation*; accordingly *emulation* is simply *a desire for a thing arising in us from our imagining others who are similar to us having the same desire*.

#### Corollary 1

If we imagine that someone for whom we have felt no emotion affects a thing that is similar to us with joy, we will be affected with love for him. If on the other hand we imagine him affecting the same thing with sadness, we will be affected with hatred for him.

#### Proof

117

This is proved from the last proposition in the same way as 3p22 from 3p21.

#### Corollary 2

We cannot hate a thing that we pity from the fact that its misery affects us with sadness.

#### Proof

If we could hate a thing because of this, then (*by 3p23*) we would be made joyful because of its sadness, which is contrary to the hypothesis.

Corollary 3

We will endeavor to relieve the misery of anything we pity as far as we can.

Proof

A thing that affects something we pity with sadness affects us also with a similar sadness (*by 3p27*). Therefore (*by 3p13*) we will endeavor to think up everything that takes away the existence of that thing *or* destroys it, i.e. (*by 3p9s*) we will want to destroy it *or* we will be determined to destroy it; and therefore we will endeavor to relieve the misery of anything we pity. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This will *or* appetite to confer a benefit, which arises from our pity for the thing we want to benefit, is called *benevolence*; benevolence accordingly is simply *the desire that arises from pity*. But see 3p22s on love and hatred for a person who has treated well or badly something that we imagine to be similar to us.

Proposition 28

*We endeavor to bring about everything that we imagine contributes to joy; but we endeavor to get rid of or destroy all that we imagine to be contrary to joy or which we imagine contributes to sadness.*

118 Proof

We endeavor to imagine, so far as we can, whatever we imagine contributes to joy (*by 3p12*), i.e. (*by 2p17*) we shall endeavor, so far as we can, to regard it as present *or* actually existing. But the mind's endeavor, *or* its power in thought, is equal and simultaneous in nature with the endeavor of the body *or* its power in action (*as clearly follows from 2p7c and 2p11c*). Therefore we absolutely endeavor to make it exist *or* (*and this is the same thing by 3p9s*) we want to make it exist and we exert ourselves. That is my first point. Then, if we imagine that a thing we believe to be a cause of sadness, i.e. (*by 3p13s*) a thing we hate, is destroyed, we will be joyful (*by 3p20*). Therefore we will endeavor to destroy it (*by the first part of this*

*proposition*), or (*by 3p13*) to be rid of it, so that we may not see it as present. That is the second point. Therefore we endeavor to make everything happen that we imagine contributes to joy, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 29

*We shall also endeavor to do whatever actions we imagine people view with joy, and conversely we shall be averse to doing actions that we imagine people are averse to.*<sup>49</sup>

Proof

From our imagining that people love something or hate it, we too will love it or hate it (*by 3p27*), i.e. (*by 3p13s*) we shall be made joyful or sad by the mere presence of that thing; and therefore (*by the previous proposition*) we shall endeavor to do whatever actions we imagine people love or view with joy, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This endeavor to do actions and also to omit doing them simply in order to please people is called ambition, especially when we make such an immense endeavor to please the crowd that as a result we do or omit to do actions to our own or someone else's detriment; otherwise it is usually called human kindness. Then, I apply the term praise to the joy with which we imagine an action by another person by which he has endeavored to please us; conversely the sadness with which we are averse to an action of his, I call blame.

119

Proposition 30

*If anyone has done some action that he imagines affects other people with joy, he will be affected by a joy which is accompanied by the idea of himself as the cause of it; or he will look upon himself with joy. Conversely if he has done some action that he imagines affects other people with sadness, he will look upon himself with sadness.*

<sup>49</sup> Spinoza's footnote: 'N. B. understand here and in what follows, people for whom we have entertained no emotion.'



Proof

Anyone who imagines that he is affecting other people with joy or sadness, will, simply because of that, be affected by joy or sadness himself (*by 3p27*). And (*by 2p19 and 2p23*) since a person is conscious of himself through the affections which determine his actions, anyone who has done some action which he imagines affects other people with joy, will be affected by joy himself and will be conscious of being its cause, *or* he will look upon himself with joy, and *vice versa*. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Love (*by 3p13s*) is joy accompanied by the idea of an external cause, and hatred is a sadness which is also accompanied by the idea of an external cause, and therefore this joy and this sadness will be species of love and hatred. But because the love and hatred are directed toward external objects, we will give these emotions other names, as follows. Joy accompanied by the idea of an internal cause, we shall call glory, and the sadness which is contrary to this, we shall call shame – I mean when the joy or sadness arises from a person’s believing that he is being praised or blamed; otherwise joy accompanied by the idea of an internal cause, I will call self-contentment, and the sadness contrary to it I will call repentance. Then, because (*by 2p17c*) it may happen that the joy with which someone imagines he affects other people is merely imaginary, and (*by 3p25*) everyone endeavors to imagine about himself everything  
120 that he imagines will affect him with joy, it can therefore easily happen that a person who is vainglorious is proud and imagines that he is pleasing everybody when he is being very irksome.

Proposition 31

*If we imagine that someone loves or desires or hates something that we ourselves love or desire or hate, we shall love it more firmly simply because of that, etc. But if we imagine that someone is averse to a thing we love, or vice versa, then we shall undergo a wavering of spirit.*

Proof

Simply because we imagine that someone loves something, by that very fact we shall love the same thing too (*by 3p27*). But the supposition is

that we love it even without that; so there is a new cause of love coming in which feeds ours; and therefore we will love what we love more firmly just because of this. Then, simply because we imagine someone is averse to something, we shall be averse to it too (*by the same proposition*). But if we suppose that at the same time we love the thing, we shall both love and be averse to the same thing at the same time, or (*see 3p17s*) we shall undergo a wavering of spirit. *Q. E. D.*

### Corollary

For this reason and because of 3p28, it follows that each person, so far as he can, endeavors to have everyone love what he himself loves, and to hate what he himself hates. Hence the poet's couplet:

*Let us as lovers have the same hopes and the same fears;  
one who loves what the other ignores is made of iron.*<sup>50</sup>

### Scholium

This endeavor to make everyone approve of what one loves or hates oneself is in truth ambition (*see 3p29s*). And thus we see that everyone by nature wants other people to live in conformance with his own character. But as they all want this equally, they are all a hindrance to one another. And as everybody wants to be praised or loved by everybody else, they end up hating each other.

### Proposition 32

121

*If we imagine that someone enjoys something that only one person can possess, we shall endeavor to ensure that he shall not possess it.*

### Proof

By simply imagining that someone enjoys something (*by 3p27 with 3p27c1*) we shall love that thing ourselves and desire to enjoy it. But (*by hypothesis*) we imagine that his enjoying it obstructs this joy. Therefore (*by 3p28*) we shall endeavor to ensure that he does not possess it. *Q. E. D.*

<sup>50</sup> This is a reference to Ovid, *Amores* 2, 19, 4–5, although Spinoza misquotes Ovid by transposing the lines. In Ovid the 'other' is the husband who 'ignores' his wife's infidelity; Spinoza appears to understand it of one of the partners in the loving relationship. The translation here reflects the way Spinoza appears to understand the quote.

Scholium

We see therefore that it is largely the natural tendency of human beings to pity those who are doing badly and to envy those who are doing well, and (*by 3p32*) to hate them all the more, the more they love the thing they imagine the other person possessing. Then, from the same property of human nature from which it follows that people are compassionate, we see that it also follows that they are envious and ambitious. And finally if we care to consult experience itself, we shall find it teaching the same thing, especially if we focus on the earlier years of life. We shall see that because children's bodies are always as it were in equilibrium, they laugh or cry merely because they see others laughing or crying; they instantly desire to imitate anything they see others doing; and they desire to have for themselves everything they imagine others are pleased with. This is because images of things, as we have said, are the very affections of the human body *or* the modes by which the human body is affected by external causes and disposed to do one thing or another.

Proposition 33

*When we love a thing that is similar to ourselves, we endeavor, so far as we can, to have it love us in return.*

Proof

122 Above all other things we endeavor to imagine, as far as we can, the thing that we love (*by 3p12*). Therefore if the thing is similar to ourselves, we shall endeavor to affect it with joy in preference to others (*by 3p29*), *or* we shall endeavor, so far as we can, to ensure that it is affected by a joy which is accompanied by an idea of ourselves, i.e. (*by 3p13s*) we shall endeavor to have it love us in return. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 34

*The greater the emotion that a beloved thing has for us, in our imagining, the more we shall glory in it.*

Proof

We endeavor, so far as we can (*by the previous proposition*) to have a beloved thing love us in return, i.e. (*by 3p13s*) to have the beloved thing

be affected by a joy that is accompanied by an idea of ourselves. Therefore the greater the joy with which we imagine the beloved thing is affected because of us, the more this endeavor is assisted, i.e. (*by 3p11 with its scholium*) the greater the joy with which we are affected. But when we are joyful because we have affected someone who is similar to ourselves with joy, then we look upon ourselves with joy (*by 3p30*). Therefore the greater the emotion that a beloved thing has for us, the greater the joy with which we shall look upon ourselves, *or* (*by 3p30s*) the more we shall glory. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 35

*If anyone imagines that a beloved thing unites another to itself with a similar or even a closer bond of friendship than that with which he alone possessed it, he will be affected by hatred for the beloved thing itself, and he will envy the other.*

Proof

The greater the love with which he imagines that the beloved thing is affected for himself, the more (*by the previous proposition*) he will glory, i.e. (*by 3p30s*) the more joy he will be affected with. Therefore (*by 3p28*) he will endeavor, so far as he can, to imagine that the beloved thing is bound to him by the closest ties, and this endeavor *or* appetite is intensified if he imagines that another person desires the same thing as himself (*by 3p31*). But the supposition is that this endeavor *or* appetite is restrained by the image of the beloved thing itself accompanied by an image of the person whom the beloved thing joins to himself. Therefore (*by 3p11s*) simply because of this he will be affected by a sadness which is accompanied by the idea of the beloved thing as its cause and at the same time by an image of the other person. That is (*by 3p13s*) he will be affected by hatred for the beloved thing and simultaneously (*by 3p15c*) for the other person, whom he will envy precisely because (*by 3p23*) he takes pleasure in the beloved thing. *Q. E. D.*

123

Scholium

This hatred of the beloved thing, when combined with envy, is called jealousy. Accordingly, jealousy is nothing but a wavering of spirit arising from simultaneous love and hatred, accompanied by the idea of the other

person, the envied one. Furthermore this hatred of the beloved thing will be greater in proportion to the joy which the jealous person used to derive from the reciprocated love of the beloved thing and also in proportion to the emotion with which he was affected toward the person whom he imagines as uniting with the beloved thing. For if he hated him, he will hate the beloved thing just for that (*by 3p24*), because he imagines that the beloved thing affects something he hates with joy, and also because (*by 3p15c*) he is compelled to associate the image of the beloved thing with an image of someone he hates. This plays a very large part in the case of love for a woman. A man who imagines a woman he loves making love to another man will not only be saddened because his own appetite is restrained, but he will also be averse to thinking about her because he is compelled to associate the image of the beloved with the genitals and emissions of the other man. And finally the jealous man is not welcomed with the same smile as the beloved used to give him, and this is another reason why the lover is saddened, as I shall now show.

Proposition 36

*A person who calls to mind a thing which once gave him pleasure desires to possess it with the same circumstances as when he first took pleasure in it.*

Proof

124 Everything that a person once saw simultaneously with the thing that gave him pleasure will (*by 3p15*) accidentally be a cause of joy. Therefore (*by 3p28*) he will desire to possess it all simultaneously with the thing that gave him pleasure, *or* he will desire to possess the thing with all the same circumstances as when he first found pleasure in it. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

If therefore he finds one of the circumstances lacking, the lover will be saddened.

Proof

For insofar as he finds some circumstance lacking, to that extent he imagines something that excludes its existence. But (*by 3p36*) he desires that thing *or* circumstance out of love, and therefore (*by 3p19*) insofar as he imagines it as lacking, he will be saddened. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Insofar as this sadness concerns the absence of the thing that we love, it is called longing.

Proposition 37

*A desire that arises out of sadness or joy and out of hatred or love is greater, the greater the emotion is.*

Proof

Sadness (*by 3p11s*) diminishes or restrains a person's power of action, i.e. (*by 3p7*) it diminishes or restrains the endeavor by which a person endeavors to persevere in his own being. Therefore (*by 3p5*) it is contrary to this endeavor; and whatever a person affected by sadness endeavors to do, he does it to be rid of the sadness. But (*by the definition of sadness*) the greater the sadness, the greater the amount of a person's power of action that is needed to oppose it. Therefore the greater the sadness, the greater the power of action a person will put into the endeavor to be rid of the sadness, i.e. (*by 3p9s*) the greater the desire *or* appetite he will put into getting rid of the sadness. Then, since (*by 3p11s*) a person augments or assists his power of action through joy, it is easy to prove in the same manner that a person who is affected by joy desires only to preserve it, and the greater the joy, the greater the desire will be. Finally, as hatred and love are themselves emotions of sadness or joy, it follows in the same way that the endeavor, appetite *or* desire that arises from hatred or love will be greater in proportion to the hatred and the love. *Q. E. D.*

125

Proposition 38

*If anyone has begun to hate a beloved thing so much that love is completely destroyed, he will, all other things being equal, pursue it with greater hatred than if he had never loved it, and the greater his previous love, the greater his hatred.*

Proof

If anyone begins to hate a thing he loves, more of his appetites are restrained than if he had not loved it. For love is joy (*by 3p13s*), and

(by 3p28) a person endeavors to preserve joy as much as he can. He does so (by the same scholium) by regarding the beloved thing as present and by affecting it (by 3p21) with joy as much as he can. Now (by 3p37) the greater his love is, the greater his endeavor to do so, and the greater his endeavor to have the beloved thing return his love (see 3p33). But these endeavors are restrained by his hatred of the beloved thing (by 3p13c and by 3p23). Therefore (by 3p11s) the lover will be affected by sadness because of this too, and his sadness will be all the greater, the greater his love had been. That is, in addition to the sadness that was the cause of his hatred, a further sadness arises from his having loved the thing; and consequently, he will regard the beloved thing with a greater emotion of sadness. That is (by 3p13s) he will pursue it with greater hatred than if he had never loved it, and the greater his previous love, the greater his hatred. *Q. E. D.*

#### Proposition 39

*Anyone who hates someone will endeavor to do something bad to him, unless he is afraid that something worse will happen to himself as a result; conversely anyone who loves someone will, by the same rule, endeavor to benefit him.*

#### 126 Proof

To hate someone is (by 3p13s) to imagine him as a cause of sadness; and thus (by 3p28) anyone who hates someone will endeavor to get rid of him or destroy him. But if he fears the outcome will be something sadder, *or* (which is the same thing) something worse, for himself, and if he believes that he can avoid it by not inflicting on the person he hates the bad things he was meditating, he will want to refrain from inflicting it (by the same 3p28); and (by 3p37) this endeavor will be greater than the endeavor to inflict it, and will therefore prevail, as we proposed. The proof of the second part proceeds in the same way. Therefore anyone who hates someone, etc. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

By good here I mean every kind of joy and anything that contributes to it, especially anything that satisfies a longing, whatever that longing may be. By bad I mean every kind of sadness, and especially that which

frustrates a longing. For we showed above (*in 3p9s*) that we do not desire a thing because we judge it to be good, but on the contrary what we desire we call good; and consequently what we are averse to, we call bad. Therefore it is by his own emotions that every person judges *or* estimates what is good or bad, what is better or worse, and what is the best or the worst.

For example, an avaricious person judges a pile of money to be the best thing and a lack of it to be the worst thing. An ambitious person desires nothing so much as glory and fears nothing so much as shame. Then to an envious person nothing is more pleasing than another person's unhappiness and nothing more irksome than someone else's happiness. Thus each of them is judging by his own emotion whether a thing is good or bad, useful or useless.

In addition, the emotion by which a person is of a disposition to refuse what he wants and to accept what he does not want is called *timidity*. Timidity thus is merely *fear insofar as a person is ready through fear to avoid something bad which he foresees in the future by means of a lesser evil* (*see 3p28*). But if the bad thing he fears is shame, then timidity is called modesty. Finally if the desire of avoiding a future evil is restrained by timidity in the face of another bad thing, so that he does not know which he would rather have, then the fear is called consternation, especially if both of the bad things he fears are very serious.

127

#### Proposition 40

*Anyone who imagines that he is hated by another person and doesn't believe he has given any cause for hatred will hate that person in return.*

#### Proof

Anyone who imagines that someone is affected by hatred, will also, simply because of that, be affected by hatred (*by 3p27*), i.e. (*by 3p13s*) by a sadness which is accompanied by the idea of an external cause. But (*by hypothesis*) he imagines no other cause of this sadness than the person who hates him. Therefore as a result of imagining that he is hated by someone, he will be affected by a sadness which is accompanied by the idea of the person who hates him, *or (by the same scholium)* he will hate him. *Q. E. D.*



Scholium

But if he imagines that he has given just cause for hatred, in that case (*by 3p30 and its scholium*) he will be affected by shame. But (*by 3p25*) this rarely happens. Besides, such reciprocation of hatred can also arise from the fact that hatred is succeeded by an endeavor to do something bad to the hated person (*by 3p39*). Therefore anyone who imagines that he is hated by someone will imagine the same person as the cause of some bad thing *or* of sadness. Thus he will be affected by a sadness *or* fear which is accompanied by the idea of the person who hates him as its cause, i.e. he will be affected by hatred in return, as above.

Corollary 1

Anyone who imagines that someone he loves is affected by hatred for him will be assailed by hatred and by love at the same time. Insofar as he imagines that he is hated by the person, he is determined (*by 3p40*) to hate him in return. But (*by hypothesis*) he still loves him. Therefore he will be assailed by love and by hatred at the same time.

128 Corollary 2

If anyone imagines that some harm has been done to him out of hatred by someone for whom previously he had no emotion, he will immediately endeavor to inflict the same harm back on him.

Proof

Anyone who imagines that someone is affected by hatred for him will hate him in return (*by 3p40*), and (*by 3p26*) he will endeavor to devise anything that can affect him with sadness and will do his best to inflict it on him (*by 3p39*). But (*by hypothesis*) the first such thing he imagines is the harm inflicted on himself. Therefore he will endeavor to inflict the same harm back on him. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

The endeavor to inflict harm on someone we hate is called anger; and the endeavor to return the harm inflicted on us is called vengeance.

Proposition 41

*Anyone who imagines that he is loved by another person and does not believe that he has given any cause for it (which, by 3p15c and by 3p16, can happen) will return their love.*

Proof

This proposition is proved in the same way as 3p40. See also its scholium.

Scholium

But if he believes he has given good cause for love, he will glory in it (*by 3p30 with its scholium*), and this (*by 3p25*) happens quite often. We have also said that the contrary to it happens, when a person imagines himself to be hated by someone (*see 3p40s*). Further, this reciprocal love and (*by 3p39*) the consequent endeavor to benefit a person who loves us and who (*by the same 3p39*) endeavors to benefit us, is called gratefulness or gratitude. And thus it appears that human beings are far more inclined to vengeance than to returning a benefit.

Corollary

129

Anyone who imagines that he is loved by someone he hates will be assailed by love and by hatred at the same time. This is demonstrated in the same way as 3p40c1.

Scholium

But if hatred prevails, he will endeavor to do harm to the person who loves him, and this emotion is called cruelty, especially if it is believed that the one who loves has given no obvious cause for hatred.

Proposition 42

*Anyone who has conferred a benefit on someone, motivated by love or by a hope of glory, will be saddened, if he sees that the benefit is received in an ungrateful spirit.*

Proof

Anyone who loves a thing that is similar to himself endeavors, so far as he can, to have them love him in return (*by 3p33*). Therefore anyone who has conferred a benefit on someone out of love did so because of the longing which possesses him to be loved in return, i.e. (*by 3p34*) in hope of glory *or* (*by 3p30s*) joy; and therefore (*by 3p12*) he will endeavor, as much as he can, to imagine this cause of glory *or* to see it as actually existing. But (*by hypothesis*) he is imagining another thing too which excludes the existence of that cause. Therefore (*by 3p19*) precisely because of that he will be saddened. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 43

*Hatred is augmented by reciprocal hatred and conversely can be eradicated by love.*

Proof

When anyone imagines that someone he hates is affected by hatred for him in return, by that very fact a new hatred (*by 3p40*) arises while the original hatred still continues (*by hypothesis*). Conversely if he imagines that the person is affected by love toward him, he regards himself with joy insofar as (*by 3p30*) he imagines this. To that extent also (*by 3p29*) he will endeavor to please him, i.e. (*by 3p41*) to that extent he endeavors not to hate him and not to affect him with sadness. This endeavor (*by 3p37*) will be greater or lesser in proportion to the emotion from which it arises. Therefore if it turns out to be greater than the emotion arising from his hatred, which makes him endeavor to affect the thing he hates with sadness (*by 3p26*), it will prevail over it, and will eradicate the hatred from his spirit. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 44

*A hatred which is completely overcome by love passes into love, and the love is greater than if the hatred had not been there before.*

Proof

This proof proceeds in the same way as the proof of 3p38. Anyone who begins to love something that he used to hate, *or* that he used to regard

with sadness, is joyful simply because he loves. And apart from this joy which love involves (*see its definition in 3p13s*), there is an additional source of joy in the boost this gives to his endeavor to rid himself of the sadness involved in that hatred, accompanied as it was by the idea of the hated person as its cause (*as we showed in 3p37*).

#### Scholium

Despite this, no one will endeavor to hate something or be affected with sadness in order to enjoy this greater joy. That is, no one will desire to have an injury inflicted on him in the hope of recovering from the injury; and no one will long to be sick in the hope of getting better. For everyone will always endeavor to preserve his own being and to rid himself of sadness as much as he can. If to the contrary it could be conceived that a person could desire to hate someone in order to show greater love to him later, then he will always long to hate him. For the greater the hatred that has been, the greater the love that will be, and therefore he will always long for the hatred to be more and more augmented. For the same cause a person will endeavor to get more and more sick, in order to have a greater joy later from the restoration of his health; and therefore he will always endeavor to be sick, which (*by 3p6*) is absurd.

#### Proposition 45

131

*If anyone imagines someone similar to himself being affected by hatred for a thing similar to himself which he loves, he will hate him.*

#### Proof

The beloved thing returns the hatred of the person that hates it (*by 3p40*). Therefore the lover who imagines that someone hates the beloved thing, by that very fact imagines the beloved thing as affected by hatred, i.e. (*by 3p13s*) as affected by sadness, and consequently (*by 3p21*) he is saddened, and his sadness is accompanied by the idea of the person who hates the beloved thing as the cause, i.e. (*by 3p13s*) he will hate him. *Q. E. D.*

#### Proposition 46

*If anyone has been affected by joy or sadness by someone of a class or nation different from his own, and his joy or sadness is accompanied by the idea of*

*him as a representative of that universal class or nation as the cause, he will love or hate not only him but everyone who belongs to that class or nation.*

Proof

The proof of this is evident from 3p16.

Proposition 47

*The joy arising from our imagining that something that we hate is destroyed or afflicted with some other harm does not arise without some sadness of spirit.*

Proof

The proof is evident from 3p27. Insofar as we imagine that a thing that is similar to ourselves is affected with sadness, to that extent we are saddened.

Scholium

132 This proposition can also be proved from 2p17c. Whenever we recall something, even if it does not actually exist, we still see it as present, and the body is affected in the same way. Therefore insofar as the memory of the thing is vivid, to that extent the person is determined to regard it with sadness. While the image of the thing lasts, this determination is of course restrained by the memory of the things that exclude its existence, but it is not taken away. Therefore the person is joyful insofar as this determination is restrained.

This is also why this joy, arising from the harm done to a thing we hate, comes back whenever we recall the thing. For as we have said, when an image of the thing is aroused, the image, because it involves the existence of the thing itself, determines the person to regard the thing with the same sadness with which he used always to see it when it existed. But because he has combined the image of this thing with other images that exclude its existence, this determination toward sadness is immediately restrained, and the person is joyful again. This happens whenever this is repeated.

It is for the same cause that people take joy in recalling some bad incident from the past, and why they are relieved to tell of the dangers they escaped from. When they imagine a danger, they see it as being still in the future and are determined to fear it, but this determination is

restrained once again by the idea of the freedom which they combined with the idea of danger once they had escaped from it. This makes them feel safe all over again, and thus once again they have joy.

Proposition 48

*Love and hatred, e.g. for Peter, is destroyed if the sadness that hatred involves and the joy that love involves are combined with the idea of a different cause; and both are diminished, insofar as we imagine that Peter was not the only cause of either one.*

Proof

This is evident solely from the definitions of love and hatred, for which see 3p13s. For the joy is called love for Peter, and the sadness is called hatred for Peter simply because Peter is considered to be the cause of both emotions. Therefore when this consideration is completely or partly taken away, the emotion toward Peter is also completely or partly diminished. *Q. E. D.*

133

Proposition 49

*Both love and hatred for a thing that we imagine to be free must be greater than for a necessary thing, all other things being equal.*

Proof

A thing that we imagine to be free must (*by 1 def7*) be perceived by itself apart from other things. Therefore if we imagine such a thing to be a cause of joy or of sadness, we shall (*by 3p13s*) love it or hate it simply for that, and we shall do so (*by the previous proposition*) with the greatest love or hatred that can be inspired by either emotion. But if we imagine the thing that is the cause of the same emotion as necessary, then (*by the same 1 def7*) we shall imagine it not as the sole cause of that emotion but as one among others, and therefore (*by the previous proposition*) our love and hatred for it will be less. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

It follows from this that because human beings assume that they are free, they bestow greater love or hatred upon each other than upon other

things. Imitation of emotions is also a relevant factor, on which see 3p27, 3p34, 3p40 and 3p43.

Proposition 50

*Anything at all may accidentally be a cause of hope or fear.*

Proof

This proposition is proved in the same manner as 3p15; compare it with 3p18s2.

Scholium

134 Things that are accidentally a cause of hope or fear are called good or bad omens. Then, insofar as these same omens are a cause of hope or fear, they are (*by the definitions of hope and fear, which can be seen in 3p18s2*) to that extent a cause of joy or sadness, and consequently (*by 3p15c*) we love them or hate them to that extent. And (*by 3p28*) we endeavor to use them as means to realize our hopes or to dismiss them as obstacles to them or causes of our fear. It also follows from 3p25 that we are so constituted by nature that we easily believe the things we hope and are reluctant to believe the things we fear, and we think too well of the one and too poorly of the other. This is the origin of the superstitions which assail human beings all over the world. But I don't think that it is worthwhile here to portray the waverings of spirit that arise from hope and fear. For it follows simply from the definition of these emotions that there is no hope without fear nor fear without hope (as we shall explain more fully at the appropriate point).<sup>51</sup> Besides insofar as we hope for anything or fear it, to that extent we love it or hate it; and thus everyone will easily be able to apply to hope and fear what we have said about love and hatred.

Proposition 51

*Different people may be differently affected by one and the same object, and one and the same person may be differently affected at different times by one and the same object.*

<sup>51</sup> See DOE13ex.

Proof

The human body (by 2post3) is affected by external bodies in very many ways. Two people may therefore be differently affected at the same time, and therefore (*by 2a1" after L3 which you will find following 2p13*) may be differently affected by one and the same object. Then (*by the same postulate*) a human body may be affected sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, and consequently (*by the same axiom*) may be differently affected at different times by one and the same object. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

We see therefore that it may happen that one person may hate what another person loves; and that one person may fear what another does not; and that one and the same person now loves what he previously hated and now dares to do what he was afraid to do before, etc.

Then, because everyone judges by his own emotion what is good and what is bad and what is better and what is worse (*see 3p39s*), it follows that people can vary<sup>52</sup> as much in judgment as in emotion. This is why when we compare different people, we distinguish them solely by difference of emotions. We call some people intrepid, others timid, and we have different terms for other people. For example, I will call a person intrepid who makes light of something bad that I am inclined to be afraid of. If I also notice that his desire to do harm to someone he hates and to benefit someone he loves is not restrained by fear of something bad which would tend to hold me back, I will call him courageous. Then, a person who is afraid of something bad that I habitually make light of will seem timid to me. If on top of that I notice that his desire is restrained by fear of some bad thing that cannot deter me, I will say that he is cowardly. Thus each one of us will make his own judgment.

Finally, from this inconstancy of human nature and human judgment, it follows that human beings often make judgments of things purely by emotion, and that the things are often purely imaginary that people believe make for joy or sadness and which (*by 3p28*) they therefore endeavor to bring about or to get rid of, to say nothing of the other points we made in part 2 about the uncertainty of things. As a result, we

135

<sup>52</sup> Spinoza's footnote: 'we showed in 2p13s that this can happen despite the fact that the human mind is a part of the divine intellect.'



easily conceive that a person can often be the cause of his own sadness as much as of his own joy, *or* of his being as much affected by sadness as by joy accompanied by the idea of himself as the cause of them. And thus we easily understand what repentance is and what self-contentment is. For *repentance is a sadness that is accompanied by the idea of himself as its cause, and self-contentment is a joy that is accompanied by the idea of himself as its cause.* And these emotions are very vehement because human beings believe they are free (*see 3p49*).

Proposition 52

*An object which we have seen before simultaneously with other objects, or which we imagine has nothing about it that is not common to several other things, we will not regard for as long as one that we imagine has something special about it.*

136 Proof

As soon as we imagine an object that we have seen along with other objects, we immediately also recall the others (*by 2p18; see also the scholium there*), and therefore we immediately pass from regarding one thing to regarding another. It is the same with reasoning about an object which we imagine has nothing about it that is not common to several objects. For we simply suppose that we see nothing in it that we have not seen before in the others. But when we suppose that we imagine in some object something special that we have never seen before, we are simply saying that while the mind is regarding that object, it has nothing else in it that would lead it to regard a different one. And thus the mind is determined to regard that object alone. Therefore an object, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This affection of the mind, *or* the imagination of a special thing insofar as it is in the mind all by itself, is called wonder, and if it is aroused by an object that we fear, it is called consternation, because wonder at something bad keeps a person so fixated on it that he becomes incapable of thinking about other things which might enable him to avoid it. But if what we wonder at is a person's wisdom or industry or something of that sort, then our wonder is called veneration, because we immediately see the person as far superior to ourselves. Conversely, if what we wonder at

is a person's anger, envy, etc., it is called horror. Then, if we wonder at the wisdom, industry etc. of a person we love, our love (*by 3p12*) will be greater just because of that; love combined with wonder *or* veneration we call devotion. In this way we can also conceive of hatred, hope, assurance and other emotions in combination with wonder; and thus we will be able to deduce more emotions than the ones that are normally singled out in our usual vocabulary. It appears from this that the terms for the emotions have developed more from common usage than from an accurate knowledge of them.

Disdain is opposed to wonder. But its cause is largely our being determined to wonder at, love, fear etc. something because we see someone else wondering at it, or loving or fearing it etc., or because at first glance something looks similar to things we wonder at, love, fear etc. (*by 3p15 with its corollary and 3p27*). But if we are forced by the presence of the thing itself or by a more careful scrutiny of it to deny everything about it that can be a cause of wonder, love, fear, etc., then the mind remains determined by the very presence of the object to think more about what is not in the object than about what is, whereas in the presence of an object the mind normally thinks about what is in it. Further, just as devotion arises from wonder at a thing that we love, so derision arises from disdain for a thing that we hate or fear, and scorn arises from disdain for stupidity just as veneration arises from wonder at wisdom. Finally, we can conceive of love, hope, glory and other emotions in combination with disdain, and from this we can conceive yet other emotions that likewise we do not normally distinguish from others by any specific terms.

137

### Proposition 53

*When the mind thinks about itself and its own power of action, it is joyful; and the more distinctly it imagines itself and its own power of action, the more joyful it is.*

### Proof

A person knows himself only by the affections of his own body and his ideas of them (*by 2p19 and 2p23*). Therefore when it happens that the mind is able to think about itself, we suppose that by this very fact it is passing to a greater perfection, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) it is affected by joy, and the

more distinctly it can imagine itself and its own power of action, the greater its joy. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

138 This joy is the more and more fostered, the more a person imagines himself as praised by other people. For the more he imagines he is praised by other people, the greater the joy he imagines he is giving to others, and this is accompanied by an idea of himself (*by 3p29s*). Therefore (*by 3p27*) he himself is affected by greater joy, accompanied by an idea of himself. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 54

*The mind endeavors to imagine only things that posit its power of action.*

Proof

The endeavor *or* power of the mind is the very essence of the mind itself (*by 3p7*). The essence of the mind (*self-evidently*) affirms only what the mind is and can do, and not that which it is not and what it cannot do. Therefore it endeavors to imagine only things that affirm *or* posit its power of action. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 55

*Whenever the mind imagines its own lack of power, it is saddened by this very fact.*

Proof

The mind's essence affirms only what the mind is and can do, *or* it is in the nature of the mind to imagine only things that posit its power of action (*by the previous proposition*). Therefore when we say that as the mind thinks about itself, it imagines its own lack of power, we are simply saying that though the mind endeavors to imagine something which posits its power of action, its endeavor in this case is restrained, *or* (*by 3p11s*) that it is saddened. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

This sadness is very much fostered, if a person imagines himself as blamed by other people; this is proved in the same way as 3p53c.

Scholium

This sadness, accompanied by the idea of our own lack of power, is called humility, while the joy that arises from thinking about ourselves is called self-love or self-contentment. The latter is restored whenever a person thinks about his own virtues *or* his power of action, and consequently everybody is eager to talk about his own achievements and to make a show of his strength both of body and spirit; for the same reason other people find this irksome.

139

It also follows from this that human beings are envious by nature (*see 3p24s and 3p32s*), *or* are glad about the weakness of their peers and conversely are saddened by their virtue. For whenever a person imagines his own actions, he is affected by joy (*by 3p53*), which is all the greater, the more perfection he imagines his actions express and the more distinctly he imagines them, i.e. (*by what we said in 2p40s1*) the more he can distinguish them from others and see them as special things. Therefore everyone will most enjoy thinking about himself when he is regarding something in himself which he denies of other people. He will not be so glad if what he affirms of himself belongs to the universal idea of a human being or an animal. And conversely he will be saddened if he imagines that, in comparison with other people's actions, his own are rather weak. He endeavors to get rid of this sadness (*by 3p28*) by misinterpreting the actions of his peers or by embellishing his own as much as possible. It appears then that human beings are prone to hatred and envy by nature, but how children are raised also comes in to it: parents tend to encourage their children's virtue solely by the stimuli of kudos and envy. But a nagging thought may still remain that we quite often wonder at and venerate other people's virtues. To banish this thought, I will add the following corollary.

Corollary

No one envies virtue in another person except in his peers.

Proof

Envy is hatred itself (*see 3p24s*), *or* (*by 3p13s*) sadness, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) the affection by which a person's power *or* endeavor to act is restrained. But (*by 3p9s*) a person neither endeavors nor desires to do anything that

140 cannot follow from his own given nature. Therefore a person will not want to be credited with any power of action, *or* virtue (they are the same), which fits someone else's nature but is alien to his own. Therefore his desire cannot be restrained, i.e. (*by 3p11s*) he himself cannot be saddened, by his noticing some virtue in another person who is quite different from himself; consequently he will not be able to envy him either. But he does envy his peer, who is assumed to be of the same nature as himself. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

We said above in 3p52s that we venerate a person because we wonder at his wisdom, fortitude, etc. This happens (*as is evident from the proposition itself*) because we imagine that these virtues are special in him and not common to our nature, and therefore we will no more envy them in him than we envy height in trees or courage in lions, etc.

### Proposition 56

*There are as many species of joy, sadness and desire as there are species of objects that affect us; and consequently there are as many species of every emotion compounded from them, such as wavering of spirit, or derived from them, e.g. love, hatred, hope, fear, etc.*

### Proof

Joy and sadness, and consequently the emotions compounded or derived from them, are passions (*by 3p11s*). But (*by 3p1*) we necessarily are acted on insofar as we have inadequate ideas, and (*by 3p3*) we are acted on only insofar as we have them. That is (*see 2p40s*) we necessarily are acted on only insofar as we imagine, *or* (*see 2p17 with its scholium*) insofar as we are affected by an emotion that involves the nature of our body and the nature of an external body. Therefore the nature of each passion must necessarily be expressed in such a way as to explain the nature of the object affecting us. For example, the joy arising from object A involves  
141 the nature of object A itself, and the joy arising from object B involves the nature of object B itself, and therefore these two emotions of joy are different in nature because they arise from causes of a different nature. So too the emotion of sadness arising from one object is different in nature from the sadness arising from a different cause. The same goes for

love, hatred, hope, fear, wavering of spirit etc. Accordingly, there are necessarily as many species of joy, sadness, love, hatred, etc. as there are species of objects that affect us.

But desire is the very essence *or* nature of each person, insofar as it is conceived as determined by his given constitution whatever it may be to do a certain action (*see 3p9s*). Therefore just as each person is affected by external causes with one or another species of joy, sadness, love, hatred, etc., i.e. just as his nature is constituted in one way or another, so his desire is necessarily one or the other, and the nature of one desire necessarily differs from the nature of another as much as the emotions from which each one arises differ from each other. Therefore there are as many species of desire as there are species of joy, sadness, love, etc., and consequently (*by what we proved above*) as there are species of objects which affect us. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

Notable among the species of emotions – and (by 3p56) they must be numerous – are gluttony, drunkenness, lust, avarice and ambition, which are simply notions of love or desire, which explain the nature of both emotions by the objects to which they are related. For by gluttony, drunkenness, lust, avarice and ambition we mean simply an immoderate love or desire of food, drink, sex, wealth and glory. Further, insofar as we distinguish these emotions from others solely by the objects to which they are related, they do not have contraries. For temperance, sobriety and chastity, which we normally oppose to gluttony, drunkenness and lust, are not emotions *or* passions, but denote a power of the spirit which governs these emotions.

But I can't explain here all the other species of emotion (because they are as many as there are species of objects), and it is unnecessary even if I could. For the purpose we have in mind, which is to determine the strength of the emotions and the power of the mind over them, it is enough for us to have a general definition of each of the emotions. It is enough, I say, to understand the common properties of the emotions and of the mind, in order to be able to determine what sort of power the mind has and how effective it is in governing and restraining the emotions. Therefore although there is a great difference between different shades of the emotions of love or hatred or desire – for example

between love for one's children and love for one's wife – there is no need to sort out these distinctions and pursue the nature and origin of the emotions any further.

Proposition 57

*Every individual's every emotion differs from another's emotion as much as the essence of one individual differs from the essence of another.*

Proof

This proposition is clear from 2a1'' after L3, 2p13s. But we will demonstrate it from the definitions of the three basic emotions.

All emotions are related to desire, joy or sadness, as shown by the definitions we have given of them. But desire is the very nature *or* essence of each one of them (*see its definition in 3p9s*). Therefore every individual's desire differs from another's desire as much as one individual's nature *or* essence differs from another's essence. Then, joy and sadness are passions by which each individual's power, *or* his endeavor to persevere in his own being, is augmented or diminished, assisted or restrained (*by 3p11 and its scholium*). But by the endeavor to persevere in his own being so far as it is related to both mind and body at the same time, we mean appetite and desire (*see 3p9s*). Therefore joy and sadness are desire *or* appetite itself insofar as it is augmented or diminished, assisted or restrained, by external causes, i.e. (*by the same scholium*) it is the very nature of each individual. And that is why the joy or sadness of each individual also differs from the joy or sadness of others as much as one individual's nature *or* essence differs from another's essence. Consequently every individual's every emotion differs from another individual's emotion as much, etc. *Q. E. D.*

143

Scholium

It follows from this that the emotions of the so-called irrational animals (for once we know the origin of the mind, we cannot doubt that brute animals are sentient) differ as much from human emotions as their nature differs from human nature. It is true that both horses and human beings are affected by the lust to procreate, but the former is an equine lust and the latter a human lust. So too the lusts and appetites of insects, fish and birds must be different from each other. Therefore although

every individual lives content with the nature that makes it what it is and enjoys it, yet the life with which each one is content and its enjoyment of it are simply the idea *or* soul of that individual, and therefore the enjoyment of the one differs from the enjoyment of the other as much as the essence of the one differs from the essence of the other. Finally it follows from 3p57 that there is also a big difference between the enjoyment that drives a drunkard, for example, and the enjoyment that a philosopher possesses, as I just want to mention here in passing. So much for the emotions that are related to a person insofar as he is acted on. It remains to say a few things about the emotions that are related to him insofar as he acts.

Proposition 58

*Besides the joy and desire that are passions, there are other emotions of joy and desire that are related to us insofar as we act.*

Proof

When the mind conceives itself and its power of action, it is joyful (*by* 3p53); and the mind necessarily thinks of itself when it conceives a true *or* adequate idea (*by* 2p43). But (*by* 2p40s2) the mind conceives certain adequate ideas. Therefore it is also joyful insofar as it conceives adequate ideas, i.e. (*by* 3p1) insofar as it acts. Then, the mind endeavors to persevere in its being (*by* 3p9) both insofar as it has clear and distinct ideas and insofar as it has confused ideas. But by endeavor we mean desire (*by* 3p9s). Therefore desire is related to us also insofar as we understand *or* (*by* 3p1) insofar as we act. *Q. E. D.*

144

Proposition 59

*Among all the emotions that are related to the mind insofar as it acts, there is not one that is not related to joy or desire.*

Proof

All the emotions are related to desire, joy or sadness, as the definitions which we have given of them show. By sadness we mean that by which the mind's power of thought is diminished or restrained (*by* 3p11 *and its scholium*). Therefore the mind's power of understanding, i.e. of action



(*by 3p1*), is diminished or restrained insofar as the mind is saddened. Therefore no emotions of sadness can be related to the mind insofar as it acts, but only the emotions of joy and desire, which (*by the previous proposition*) are also to that extent related to the mind. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

I attribute to fortitude all actions that follow from the emotions that are related to the mind insofar as it understands, and I divide fortitude into spiritedness and generosity. By *spiritedness* I mean *the desire by which everyone endeavors to preserve his own being by the dictate of reason alone*. By *generosity* I mean *the desire by which each one endeavors to help other human beings by the dictate of reason alone and to unite them in friendship with himself*. Therefore I attribute to spiritedness actions which aim only to be useful to the person doing the actions, and I attribute to generosity actions that aim to be useful to another person as well. Therefore temperance, sobriety and presence of mind in danger, etc. are species of spiritedness; consideration, clemency, etc. are species of generosity.

With this I think that I have explained the most important emotions and waverings of spirit that arise from compounding the three basic emotions – desire, joy and sadness. And I believe I have shown them through their first causes. It is apparent from all this that we are driven about in many ways by external causes, like the waves of the sea driven about by opposing winds, ignorant of our future and of our fate. But I stress that I have shown only the most important, not all, of the conflicts of spirit there may be. For by proceeding in the same manner as above, we can easily show that love has been combined with repentance, disdain, shame, etc. In fact I believe that what I have said establishes that the emotions can be compounded in so many ways with each other, and so many variations arise, that they cannot be numbered with any precision. It is enough for my purpose to have enumerated just the most important ones; the others, which I have omitted, would be more curious than useful.

Nevertheless, something still needs to be said here about love, because it very often happens that while we are enjoying the thing we were pursuing, the body acquires a new constitution as a result of that enjoyment. Its new constitution determines it to go in a different

direction and arouses different images of things in it, and at the same time the mind begins to imagine other things and to desire other things. For example, when we imagine something whose taste has always pleased us, we want to enjoy it, i.e. we want to eat it. But even as we are enjoying it, the stomach fills up, and the body is given a different disposition. Therefore if – now that the body is otherwise disposed – an image of the same food is offered because the food itself is now in front of us and an endeavor *or* desire to eat it is also aroused, the new constitution will conflict with that desire *or* endeavor, and consequently the presence of the food which we previously wanted will be distasteful; we call this disgust and satiety. I have also not dealt with the external affections of the body that are observed in emotions, such as trembling, pallor, sobbing, laughter etc., because they are related only to the body without any reference to the mind. Finally, we need to take note of a few things about the definitions of the emotions, so I will go over them again here in a systematic manner and make some observations on each one.

#### Definitions of the Emotions

146

1. Desire [*cupiditas*] is the very essence of a human being insofar as it is conceived as determined to act in some way as a result of any given affection of it.<sup>53</sup>

#### Explanation

We said above in 3p9s that desire is an appetite with consciousness of itself, and that this appetite is the very essence of a human being, insofar as it is determined to act in those ways which serve his preservation. But in the same scholium I also noted that in truth I recognize no difference between human appetite and desire. For whether a person is conscious of his appetite or not, it still remains the very same appetite; and so to avoid the appearance of tautology, I avoided explaining desire by appetite. But I very much wanted to define it in such a way as to comprehend together all the endeavors of human nature which we indicate under the names of appetite, will, desire, or impulse. I could have said that desire is the very essence of a human being insofar as it is conceived as

<sup>53</sup> Most of Spinoza's Latin terms for the emotions are given in the 1650 Latin translation of Descartes's *Passions of the Soul*, a copy of which was in Spinoza's library.

determined to act in some way. But it would not follow from this definition (*by 2p23*) that the mind can be conscious of its desire or appetite. In order to include the cause of this consciousness, I had to add (*in the same proposition*) *insofar as it is conceived as determined to act in some way as a result of any given affection of it*. For by any affection of the human essence we mean the constitution of that essence, whether it is innate or adventitious or conceived solely through the attribute of thought or solely through the attribute of extension or whether it is related to both at the same time. Under the term desire therefore I mean here any and all endeavors, impulses, appetites and volitions of a person, which vary with the varying constitution of the person and are quite often so opposed to each other that the person is pulled in different directions and does not know which way to go.

147      2. Joy [*laetitia*] is the passing of a person from a lesser to a greater perfection.

3. Sadness [*tristitia*] is the passing of a person from a greater to a lesser perfection.

#### Explanation

I say passing. For joy is not perfection itself. For if a person were born with the perfection he is passing to, he would be in possession of it without an emotion of joy. This appears clearly in the emotion of sadness, which is contrary to it. For no one can deny that sadness consists in the passing to a lesser perfection, not in the lesser perfection itself, since a person cannot be sad insofar as he shares in some perfection. Nor can we say that sadness consists in the privation of a greater perfection. For privation is nothing; and the emotion of sadness is an act, and can therefore only be the act of passing to a lesser perfection, i.e. an act by which a person's power of action is diminished or restrained (*see 3p115*).

I give no definitions of cheerfulness, delight, melancholy and distress, because they are very closely related to the body and are simply species of joy or sadness.

4. Wonder [*admiratio*] is the imagination of a thing on which the mind remains fixed because this special imagination has no connection with others. *See 3p52 with its scholium.*

Explanation

In 2p18s we showed the reason why the mind instantly switches from thinking of one thing to thinking of another thing. It is because the images of those things are so arranged and connected with each other that one follows another, and this cannot be conceived when the image of a thing is novel. The mind will continue to think about it until it is determined by other causes to think of other things. Therefore the imagination of a new thing, considered in itself, is of the same nature as the others. This is why I do not include wonder among the emotions. I see no reason to do so, since this captivation of the mind does not arise from a positive cause drawing the mind away from other things, but only arises because there is lacking a cause to determine the mind to move on from thinking of one thing to thinking of others.

148

Therefore (*as I noted in 3p11s*) I recognize only three basic *or* primary emotions: joy, sadness and desire. The only reason I discussed wonder is because it is usual to designate some of the emotions derived from the three basic emotions by special names when they are related to objects which we wonder at. The same reason also prompts me to add a definition of disdain.

5. Disdain [*contemptus*] is the imagination of something that makes so small an impact on the mind that, in the presence of the thing, it is tempted to imagine things which are not in the thing itself rather than those that are. *See 3p52s.*

I offer no definitions of veneration and scorn here because no emotions take their names from them, so far as I know.

6. Love [*amor*] is joy accompanied by the idea of an external cause.

Explanation

This definition explains the essence of love clearly enough. The definition given by writers who define *love as the will of the lover to unite himself with the beloved thing* expresses not the essence of love but its property. These writers have not fully grasped the essence of love, and therefore they could not have any clear conception of its property, and consequently everyone has thought their definition to be very obscure. But note that when I say that it is a property in the lover to will to unite himself with the beloved thing, I do not mean by will either consent or mental deliberation or free

149 decision (for we showed that this is fictitious in 2p48). Nor do I mean the desire of uniting himself with the beloved thing when it is absent, or of remaining with it when it is present; for love can be conceived without either desire. But by will I understand the lover's contentment in the presence of the beloved thing, which strengthens or at least fosters his joy.

7. Hatred [*odium*] is sadness accompanied by the idea of an external cause.

Explanation

The required comment here is easily gathered from what we said in the Explanation to the previous definition. *See also 3p13s.*

8. Inclination [*propensio*] is joy accompanied by the idea of something that is accidentally a cause of joy.

9. Aversion [*aversio*] is sadness accompanied by the idea of something that is accidentally a cause of sadness. *On this see 3p15s.*

10. Devotion [*devotio*] is love for someone whom we wonder at.

Explanation

We showed in 3p52 that wonder arises from the novelty of a thing. If therefore it happens that we often imagine something that we wonder at, we shall cease to wonder. We see therefore that the emotion of devotion easily declines into simple love.

11. Derision [*irrisio*] is the joy that arises from imagining that there is something we disdain in a thing we hate.

Explanation

Insofar as we disdain something that we hate, we deny its existence (*see 3p52s*), and to that extent (*by 3p20*) we are joyful. But since we are supposing that a person continues to hate the thing he derides, it follows that his joy is not unmitigated. *See 3p47s.*

150 12. Hope [*spes*] is uncertain joy arising from the idea of something in the future or in the past about whose outcome we are to some extent in doubt.

13. Fear [*metus*] is uncertain sadness arising from the idea of something in the future or in the past about whose outcome we are to some extent in doubt. *See on this 3p18s2.*

Explanation

It follows from these definitions that there is no hope without fear nor fear without hope. For anyone who depends upon hope and is in doubt about the outcome of a thing, is supposed to be imagining something that excludes the existence of a future thing, and therefore to that extent he is saddened (*by 3p19*), and consequently, so long as he depends upon hope, he is supposed to fear that the thing may happen. Conversely anyone who is in fear, i.e. is doubtful about the outcome of a thing he hates, is also imagining something that excludes the existence of the thing, and therefore (*by 3p20*) he is joyful, and consequently to that extent he has hope that it may not happen.

14. Assurance [*securitas*] is joy arising from the idea of something in the future or in the past about which the cause to have doubts has been taken away.

15. Despair [*desperatio*] is sadness arising from the idea of something in the future or in the past about which the cause to have doubts about it has been taken away.

Explanation

Assurance arises from hope and despair arises from fear when the cause to have doubts about the outcome of the thing has been taken away. This happens because a person imagines that the past or future thing is at hand and he regards it as present, or because he imagines other things that exclude the existence of the things that gave rise to doubt. For although we can never be certain about the outcome of particular things (*by 2p31c*), it may still happen that we have no doubts about their outcome. For we have shown that it is one thing to have no doubts about something (*see 2p49s*), and it is another thing to have certainty about something. Therefore it may happen that we are affected by the same emotion of joy or sadness by the image of something in the past or in the future as from the image of a thing in the present, as we demonstrated in 3p18; see this together with its scholia.

151

16. Relief [*gaudium*] is joy accompanied by the idea of something in the past that came to pass contrary to expectation.

17. Remorse [*conscientiae morsus*] is sadness accompanied by the idea of something in the past that came to pass contrary to expectation.

18. Pity [*commiseratio*] is sadness accompanied by the idea of bad things happening to someone else whom we imagine to be similar to ourselves. See 3p22s and 3p27s.

Explanation

There seems to be no difference between pity and compassion [*misericordia*] except perhaps that pity refers to a single instance of the emotion, compassion to a habit of pity.

19. Approval [*favor*] is love for someone who has benefited another person.

20. Indignation [*indignatio*] is hatred of someone who has done harm to another person.

Explanation

I know these words mean something different in common usage. But it is not my intention to explain the meaning of words but the nature of things, and to designate them with words whose meaning in common usage is not completely different from the meaning in which I want to use them. I hope it is enough to give this warning just this once. For the cause of these emotions see 3p27c1 and 3p22s.

21. Adulation [*existimatio*] is to think too well of another person out of love.

22. Contempt [*despectus*] is to think too poorly of another person out of hatred.

152 Explanation

Adulation then is an effect of love and contempt is an effect, *or* property, of hatred. Therefore *adulation* can also be defined as *love insofar as it affects a person in such a way that he thinks too well of a beloved thing*. Conversely *contempt* can also be defined as *hatred insofar as it affects a person in such a way that he thinks too poorly of someone he hates*. On this see 3p26s.

23. Envy [*invidia*] is hatred insofar as it affects a person in such a way that he is saddened by another person's happiness but takes pleasure in harm to him.

Explanation

Compassion is commonly opposed to envy, and accordingly it can be defined as follows, despite the usual meaning of the word.

24. Compassion [*misericordia*] is love insofar as it affects a person in such a way that he enjoys another person's good but is saddened by harm to him.

Explanation

For envy, see the scholia to propositions 3p24 and 3p32.

These are the emotions of joy and sadness, which are accompanied by the idea of an external thing as cause either through itself or accidentally. Now I move on to other emotions, which are accompanied by the idea of an internal thing as cause.

25. Self-contentment [*acquiescentia in se ipso*] is the joy that arises from a person's thinking about himself and his own power of action.

26. Humility [*humilitas*] is the sadness that arises from a person's thinking about his own lack of power *or* weakness.

Explanation

Self-contentment is opposed to humility insofar as we mean by it the joy that arises from our thinking about our own power of action. But insofar as we also mean by it joy accompanied by the idea of some deed we believe we did by a free decision of the mind, then it is opposed to repentance, which we define as follows. 153

27. Repentance [*poenitentia*] is sadness accompanied by the idea of some deed which we believe we did by a free decision of the mind.

Explanation

We have shown the causes of these emotions in 3p51s and in 3p53, 3p54 and 3p55 and 3p55s. On free decision of the mind, see 2p35s. Here we need to note that it is not surprising that sadness inevitably ensues on all actions that are conventionally called *wrong*, and joy follows on those that are called *right*. We easily understand from what we have said above that this depends very much on upbringing. Parents cause feelings [*commotiones*] of sadness to be attached to the former actions and of joy to the



latter by criticizing the former and constantly scolding their children for them, and by commending and praising the latter. This is also confirmed by experience itself. For custom and religion are not the same for everybody. On the contrary things that are sacred for some people are profane for others, and things that are honorable for some people are base for others. Therefore each person feels repentance for some deed he has done or glories in it depending on how he has been brought up.

28. Pride [*superbia*] is to think too well of oneself out of love of oneself.

#### Explanation

154 Pride thus differs from adulation because the latter refers to thinking too well of an external object, whereas pride refers to a person thinking too well of himself. And as adulation is an effect of love, so *pride* is an effect or property of self-love. For this reason it can also be defined as *love of oneself or self-contentment insofar as it affects a person so much that he thinks too well of himself* (see 3p26s). There is no emotion contrary to this one. For no one thinks too poorly of himself because of self-hatred; moreover no one thinks too poorly of himself because he imagines that he cannot do something or other. For whatever action a person imagines that he cannot do, he necessarily imagines it, and is so disposed by this imagining that he cannot in reality do what he imagines he cannot do. As long as he imagines that he cannot do something or other, he is not determined to do it; and consequently for the time being it is impossible for him to do it.

However we will be able to conceive of the possibility that a person thinks too poorly of himself if we focus on things that depend on opinion alone. For it may happen that as someone in a sad mood is contemplating his own weakness, he imagines that he is disdained by everyone, even though others could not be further from disdaining him at all. A person may also think too poorly of himself if in the present time he says something negative about himself in the future, of which he is uncertain. For example, he may say that he can conceive nothing certain, and that he can desire or do no action which is not wrong or base, etc. Then, we may say that a person thinks too poorly of himself, when we see that, from an excessive fear of shame, he does not dare to do things that his peers dare to do. Therefore we can oppose this emotion to pride, and I will call it abjection. For as pride arises from

self-contentment, so abjection arises from humility, and accordingly we define it as follows.

29. Abjection [*abjectio*] is to think too poorly of oneself out of sadness.

**Explanation**

Usually however it is humility that we oppose to pride. But when we do so, we are focusing more on their effects than on their nature. For we normally call a person proud if he glories too much (*see 3p30s*), if he talks up only his own virtues and highlights other people's faults, if he tries to get ahead of everyone, and if he goes around with the sort of pomp and circumstance affected by others whose position is far superior to his. By contrast, we call a person humble if he blushes too often, if he admits his own faults and talks up other people's virtues, if he gives way to everyone and walks with his head down and if he neglects to make himself look good. But these emotions – humility and abjection – are very rare. For human nature, considered in itself, struggles against them as much as possible (*see 3p15 and 3p54*). Therefore those who are most believed to be abject and humble are usually the most ambitious and envious.

155

30. Glory [*gloria*] is joy accompanied by the idea of some action of our own that we imagine others praise.

31. Shame [*pudor*] is sadness accompanied by the idea of some action that we imagine others blame.

**Explanation**

On these emotions see 3p30s. Here we note the differences between shame and modesty [*verecundia*]. Shame is the sadness that follows an action of which one is ashamed. Modesty is a fear *or* anxiety about shame which inhibits a person from doing something base. Shamelessness is normally opposed to modesty, but it is not in truth an emotion, as I shall show at the appropriate place;<sup>54</sup> but the terms for the emotions (as I have already pointed out)<sup>55</sup> owe more to usage than to their nature.

With this I have completed the explanation I proposed of the emotions of joy and sadness. I turn therefore to those that are related to desire.

<sup>54</sup> Spinoza mentions shamelessness again in 4p58s, but he does not show that it is not an emotion.

<sup>55</sup> See DOE 20.

32. Longing [*desiderium*] is the desire *or* appetite to possess some thing, fostered by the memory of the thing and at the same time restrained by the memory of other things that exclude the existence of the thing that is wanted.

Explanation

156 When we recall something, as we have often said above, we are disposed, simply because we recall it, to regard it with the same emotion as we would if it were present. But while we are awake, this disposition *or* endeavor is usually restrained by images of things that exclude the existence of the thing we are recalling. Therefore when we remember a thing that affects us with some kind of joy, we endeavor by that very fact to regard it as present along with the emotion of joy, but this endeavor is immediately restrained by memory of things that exclude its existence. Therefore longing is in reality a sadness, which is opposed to the joy that arises from the absence of something we hate; on this see 3p47s. However I treat this emotion as belonging to the emotions of desire because the term *longing* seems to be related to desire.

33. Emulation [*aemulatio*] is a desire for something that arises in us from our imagining that others have the same desire.

Explanation

A person who runs away because he sees other people running away or who is afraid because he sees that other people are afraid, or again a person who sees that someone else has burnt his hand and draws his own hand back and turns his body away as if his own hand were being burnt, is certainly imitating the other person's emotion, but we will not say that he is emulating him. This is not because we recognize one cause for emulation and a different cause for imitation, but because it is normal to say that someone is emulating another person when he imitates something we judge to be honorable, useful or pleasing. See 3p27 with its scholium on the cause of emulation. For the reason why envy is very often associated with this emotion, see 3p32 together with its scholium.

34. Gratefulness [*gratia*] *or* gratitude [*gratitudo*] is a desire *or* impulse of love, by which we endeavor to benefit someone who, with an equal emotion of love, has conferred a benefit on us. *See 3p39 and 3p41s.*

35. Benevolence [*benevolentia*] is a desire to benefit someone we pity. See 3p27s.

36. Anger [*ira*] is the desire by which we are prompted by hatred to do harm to someone we hate. See 3p39.

37. Vengeance [*vindicta*] is the desire by which we are prompted, by responding to hatred with hatred, to do harm to someone who has done harm to us from the same emotion. See 3p40c2 with its scholium. 157

38. Cruelty [*crudelitas*] or savagery [*saevitia*] is the desire by which a person is prompted to do harm to someone whom we love or pity.

#### Explanation

Clemency [*clementia*] is opposed to cruelty; this is not a passion but a power of spirit by which a person governs anger and vengeance.

39. Timidity [*timor*] is the desire to avert a greater evil which we fear by means of a lesser evil. See 3p39s.

40. Courage [*audacia*] is the desire by which a person is prompted to do something dangerous that his peers are afraid to try.

41. Cowardice [*pusillanimitas*] is said of a person whose desire is restrained by fear of a danger that his peers dare to face.

#### Explanation

Cowardice then is simply the fear of some bad thing that most people do not usually fear; that is why I do not count it as an emotion of desire. But I wanted to explain it here, because insofar as we focus on the desire, it is in truth opposed to the emotion of courage.

42. Consternation [*consternatio*] is said of someone whose desire to avoid something bad is restrained by his wonder at the bad thing that he fears.

#### Explanation

Consternation then is a species of cowardice. But because consternation arises from a double form of timidity, it is better defined as a *fear which gets such a grip on a stupefied or wavering person that he cannot rid himself of* 158

*the bad thing.* I say *stupefied*, because we understand that his desire to get rid of the bad thing is restrained by his wonder at it. I add *wavering*, because our supposition is that this desire is restrained by timidity in the face of another bad thing which torments him equally. The result is that he does not know which of the two he should get rid of. On all this see 3p39s and 3p52s. On cowardice and courage see 3p51s.

43. Human kindness [*humanitas*] or consideration [*modestia*] is a desire to do things that please people and not to do things that displease them.

44. Ambition [*ambitio*] is an immoderate desire of glory.

#### Explanation

Ambition is a desire by which all the emotions (*by 3p27 and 3p31*) are nurtured and strengthened; and therefore this emotion can hardly be surpassed. As long as a person is in the grip of some desire, he is necessarily in the grip of this desire at the same time. *Every good man, says Cicero, is motivated most of all by glory. Even philosophers put their names to the books they write about despising glory,*<sup>56</sup> etc.

45. Gluttony [*luxuria*] is an immoderate desire, or even love, of feasting.

46. Drunkenness [*ebrietas*] is an immoderate desire and love of drinking.

47. Avarice [*avaritia*] is an immoderate desire and love of riches.

48. Lust [*libido*] is also a desire and a love of sexual intercourse.

#### Explanation

This desire for intercourse, whether moderate or not, is usually called lust. Also, these five emotions (*as I mentioned in 3p56s*) do not have contraries. For consideration is a species of ambition (on this see 3p29s);  
159 then I have already pointed out that temperance, sobriety and chastity designate a power of mind and not a passion. Though it may happen that a person who is avaricious, ambitious or timid will refrain from excessive

<sup>56</sup> Cicero, *Pro Archia*, 11, 26.

food, drink or sex, nevertheless avarice, ambition and timidity are not contrary to gluttony, drunkenness or lust. For an avaricious person often longs to indulge himself with other people's food and drink. And an ambitious person will not show restraint in anything provided he expects it to stay secret, and if he lives among drunken and lustful people, he will be all the more prone to the same faults precisely because he is ambitious. Finally a timid person does things he does not want to do. Even if, to avoid death, an avaricious person throws his riches overboard into the sea, he still remains avaricious. And if a lustful person is saddened because he is unable to have his way, he does not therefore cease to be lustful. And absolutely, these emotions are not so much concerned with acts of feasting, drinking etc. themselves as with the appetite and love itself. Nothing therefore can be opposed to these emotions but generosity and spiritedness, which we will discuss later.<sup>57</sup>

I will not give definitions for jealousy [*zelotypia*] and other waverings of the mind, both because they arise from a compounding of emotions we have already defined, and because most of them have no names, which shows that it is sufficient for practical life to have only a general knowledge of them. But it is clear from the definitions of the emotions that we have explained that they all arise from desire, joy or sadness, *or* rather that they are nothing but these three, each of which is accustomed to be given a variety of names according to their various relations and extrinsic characteristics. If we would now care to focus on these basic emotions and on what we said above about the nature of the mind, we will be able to define emotions, insofar as they are related to the mind alone, as follows.

#### General Definition of the Emotions

An emotion, which is called a passion [*pathema*]<sup>58</sup> of the soul, is a confused idea, by which the mind affirms a greater or lesser force of the existence of its own body or of some part of it than before, and an idea given which the mind itself is determined to think of this thing rather than of that.

<sup>57</sup> See 3p59s.

<sup>58</sup> Spinoza's term for 'passion' here is not his usual '*passio*.' '*Pathema*' is Descartes's term for passions in the *Principles of Philosophy* IV, 190.

160 Explanation

I say first that an emotion *or* passion of the soul is a *confused idea*. For we have shown (see 3p3) that the mind is acted on only insofar as it has inadequate *or* confused ideas.

Then I say that it is an idea *by which the mind affirms a greater or lesser force of the existence of its own body or of some part of it than before*. For all the ideas of bodies that we possess (*by 2p16c2*) indicate the actual constitution of our own body more than the nature of an external body. But this idea, which constitutes the form of an emotion, must either indicate or express the constitution of the body or of some part of it which the body itself or some part of it possesses because its power of action *or* the force of its existence is either augmented or diminished, assisted or restrained. But note that when I say *a greater or lesser force of existence than before*, I do not mean that the mind compares the present constitution of its body with its previous constitution. I mean that the idea that constitutes the form of the emotion affirms something about the body which in truth involves more or less reality than before. And since the essence of the mind consists (*by 2p11 and 2p13*) in affirming the actual existence of its own body, and since we understand the essence of a thing through its perfection, it follows that the mind passes to a greater or lesser perfection when it happens that it affirms something about its body or some part of it which involves more or less reality than before. When therefore I said above that the mind's power of thought is augmented or diminished, I meant simply to say that the mind has formed an idea of its own body or of some part of it which expresses more or less reality than it had previously affirmed of its body. For the excellence of ideas and the actual power of thought is judged by the excellence of the object.

Finally I added *and an idea given which the mind itself is determined to think of this thing rather than of another* in order to express the nature of desire as well as the nature of joy and of sadness which the first part of the definition explains.

*End of the third part*

## Fourth Part of the Ethics

161

### OF HUMAN SERVITUDE, OR OF THE STRENGTH OF THE EMOTIONS

#### Preface

*Human powerlessness in governing and restraining the emotions I call servitude. A person who is subject to his emotions is not governed by himself but by fortune, so that often although he sees what is better for him, he is compelled to follow the worse.<sup>59</sup> In this part I propose to demonstrate the cause of this, as well as the good and the bad that the emotions possess. But before I begin, I want to say something about perfection and imperfection and about good and bad.*

*Anyone who has set himself to make something and has completed it will say that the thing has been perfected, and so will anyone else who knows, or believes he knows, the intention and aim of the creator of that work. For example, if someone sees a piece of work (which I suppose is not yet completely finished) and knows that the aim of its creator is to build a house, he will say that it is an imperfect house, but on the other hand as soon as the work has been carried through to the purpose which its creator set himself to give it, he will see it as perfect. But if someone sees a work the like of which he has never seen before and does not know the intention of the craftsman, he will clearly not be able to know whether that piece of work is perfect or imperfect. This seems to be the first meaning of these terms. But*

162

<sup>59</sup> Spinoza here quotes Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7, 20. Spinoza also adapts or alludes to these lines in 3p2s and 4p17s.



people began to form universal ideas and to devise exemplars of houses, temples, towers, etc., and to prefer some exemplars to others, and the result was that everyone began to call perfect one that agreed with the universal idea he had formed of that sort of thing, and on the other hand one that did not so well agree with the exemplar they had conceived, they called imperfect, even if it was completely finished according to the intention of the craftsman. This seems to be the same reason why people also commonly call natural things perfect and imperfect, i.e. things that have obviously not been made by human hands. For people tend to form universal ideas of natural things as well as of artificial things, ideas which they consider to be the exemplars of things, and which they believe that nature (which they suppose always acts for the sake of some purpose) looks toward and uses as exemplars for herself. Therefore when they see something happening in nature that does not so well agree with the exemplar they have conceived of such a thing, they believe that nature itself has been lacking or has sinned at that point and left the thing imperfect.

163 We see then that people have become accustomed to calling natural things perfect or imperfect more from prejudice than from a true knowledge of them. For we showed in the appendix to the first part that nature does not act for a purpose; for that eternal and infinite being which we call God or nature acts by the same necessity by which he exists. For we have shown that by the same necessity of nature by which he exists he also acts (1p16). The reason therefore or cause why God or nature acts and why he exists is one and the same. It follows that since he does not exist for the sake of a purpose, he does not act for the sake of a purpose either; but as he has no principle or purpose in existing, so he has no principle or purpose in acting. And the so-called final cause is nothing but a human appetite itself, considered as a principle or primary cause of a thing. For example, when we say that habitation was the final cause of this or that house, we are surely saying simply that human beings had an appetite to build a house because they imagined the advantages of a home. Therefore habitation, insofar as it is considered as a final cause, is nothing but this particular appetite, which is in truth an efficient cause that is considered as a first cause because people are commonly ignorant of the causes of their own appetites. For, as I have often said, they are certainly conscious of their actions and their appetites, but are ignorant of the causes which determine them to want something.

As for the common remark that nature is sometimes lacking or sinful and produces things that are imperfect, I count this among the falsehoods which

*I discussed in the appendix to the first part. Therefore perfection and imperfection are in truth no more than ways of thinking, that is, notions which we are accustomed to surmise by comparing individuals of the same species or genus with each other. This is the reason why I said above (2def6) that by reality and perfection I mean the same thing. For we are accustomed to reduce all the individual things in nature to one genus, which we call the most general, namely the notion of being, which belongs to absolutely all individual things in nature. Insofar therefore as we reduce individual things in nature to this genus, and compare them with each other, and find that some have more being or reality than others, to that extent we say that some are more perfect than others. And insofar as we attribute something to them that involves negation, such as limitation, end, lack of power etc., to that extent we call them imperfect; we do so because they do not affect our minds in the same way as do those which we call perfect, not because something is lacking in them of their own or because nature has sinned. For nothing belongs to the nature of anything but that which follows from the necessity of the nature of an efficient cause. Anything therefore that follows from the necessity of the nature of an efficient cause happens necessarily.*

164

*As concerns good and bad: they too indicate nothing positive in things, considered, that is, in themselves. They are simply ways of thinking or notions which we form by comparing things with each other. For one and the same thing can be at the same time both good and bad, and even indifferent. For example, music is good for a melancholy person, but bad for a person in mourning, and to a deaf person it is neither good nor bad. But even though this is the case, we have to retain these words. Because we desire to form an idea of a human being as an exemplar of human nature to which we may look, it will be useful for us to retain these same words in the sense I mentioned. In what follows therefore I will mean by good anything that we certainly know to be a means for us to approach ever closer to the exemplar of human nature that we set for ourselves; and by bad that which we certainly know hinders us from relating to that same exemplar. Then, we shall say that human beings are more or less perfect or imperfect insofar as they more or less approach this same exemplar. For we must particularly note that when I say someone passes from a lesser to a greater perfection and vice versa, I do not mean that he changes from one essence or form into another – for a horse for example is as much destroyed by changing into a human being as by changing into an insect – but that we conceive that his power of action, insofar as it is understood through his nature, is augmented or diminished.*

165

*Finally by perfection in general I will mean reality, as I have said, i.e. the essence of each thing insofar as it exists and operates in a certain way, without any regard to its duration. No particular thing can be said to be more perfect simply because it has persevered in existing for a longer time. For the duration of things cannot be determined from their essence, since the essence of things involves no fixed and determinate period of existence. Whether a thing becomes more perfect or less, it will always be able to persevere in existence by the same force by which it begins to exist, so that in this respect all things are equal.*

### Definitions

1. I understand good as that which we certainly know to be useful to us.
2. I understand bad as that which we certainly know hinders us from becoming possessed of any good thing.

On these see the preface above, toward the end.

3. I call particular things contingent, insofar as, while we focus only on their essence, we find nothing that necessarily posits their existence or that necessarily excludes it.
4. And I call particular things possible, insofar as, while we focus on the causes from which they must be produced, we do not know whether they are determined to produce them.

In 1p33s1 I made no distinction between possible and contingent, because there was no need to distinguish them carefully at that point.

5. I understand contrary emotions in what follows as emotions that draw a person in different directions, even though they are of the same kind, such as gluttony and avarice, both of which are species of love, and are not contrary by nature but by accident.
6. I have explained in 3p18s1 and 3p18s2 how I understand an emotion toward something in the future, something in the present and something in the past.

But here we need to take note that we can distinctly imagine distances both of place and time only to a certain fixed limit. That is, we habitually imagine that all objects that are more than 200 feet away from us, *or* whose distance from our location exceeds the distance that we can distinctly imagine, are equally far away

from us, and accordingly we habitually imagine them exactly as if they were in the same plane. So too with objects whose period of existence we imagine to be at a longer interval of time from the present than we are accustomed to imagine distinctly; we imagine them all to be equally distant from the present, and we place them at more or less a single moment of time.

7. By a purpose for the sake of which we do something, I mean an appetite.

8. By virtue and power I mean the same thing, i.e. (by 3p7) insofar as virtue is related to a human being, it is the very essence of a human being *or* his nature insofar as it has the ability to effect certain things that can be understood through the laws of his nature alone.

#### Axiom

There is no particular thing in nature than which there is no other that is more powerful and stronger. Rather for any given thing, there is another more powerful one by which the given thing can be destroyed.

#### Proposition 1

167

*Nothing positive that a false idea has, is taken away by the presence of the true, insofar as it is true.*

#### Proof

Falsity consists solely in the privation of knowledge that inadequate ideas involve (*by 2p35*); they have nothing positive themselves by virtue of which they are called false (*by 2p33*). On the contrary, insofar as they are related to God, they are true (*by 2p32*). Therefore if anything positive that a false idea has were taken away by the presence of the true, insofar as it is true, a true idea would be taken away by itself, and this (*by 3p4*) is absurd. Therefore nothing positive that a false idea, etc. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

This proposition is understood more clearly from 2p16c2. An imagination is an idea which indicates the current constitution of the human body more than the nature of an external body, though not distinctly but confusedly; this is how it comes about that the mind is said to be in error.

For example, when we look at the sun, we imagine that it is about 200 feet away from us. We are mistaken in this, so long as we are ignorant of the true distance. But once its distance is known, the error is certainly taken away but not the imagination, i.e. the idea of the sun that explains its nature only insofar as the body is affected by it. Thus, although we know its true distance, we will still imagine it as being close to us. For as we said in 2p35s, we do not imagine the sun to be so close to us because we are ignorant of its true distance, but because the mind conceives the quantity of the sun insofar as the body is affected by it. Thus when the rays of the sun fall upon the surface of water and are reflected into our eyes, we imagine it exactly as if it were in water, even though we know its true location. Similarly with all the other imaginations by which the mind is misled, whether they indicate the natural constitution of the body or indicate that its power of action is augmented or diminished, they are not  
168 contrary to the true and do not disappear in its presence. Admittedly, it does happen, when we falsely fear something bad, that the fear vanishes when we hear a true report about it. But conversely it also happens, when we fear something bad which is certainly going to occur, that the fear vanishes if we hear a false report. And therefore imaginations do not disappear because of the presence of the true insofar as it is true, but because other stronger imaginations occur, which exclude the present existence of the things we imagine, as we showed in 2p17.

Proposition 2

*We are acted on insofar as we are a part of nature that cannot be conceived through itself apart from other things.*

Proof

We are said to be acted on when something arises in us of which we are only a partial cause (*by 3def2*), i.e. (*by 3def1*) something that cannot be deduced solely from the laws of our nature. We are acted on therefore insofar as we are a part of nature that cannot be conceived through itself apart from other things. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 3

*The force by which a human being perseveres in existing is limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes.*

Proof

This is clear from the axiom to this part. For any given person, there will also be something else, call it A, which is more powerful, and given A, there will then be another thing, call it B, which is more powerful than A, and so on *ad infinitum*. Accordingly, the person's power is defined by the power of the other thing, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 4

*It cannot happen that a human being is not a part of nature, and that he can undergo no changes but those that can be understood solely through his own nature and of which he is the adequate cause.*

Proof

169

The power by which particular things, including therefore human beings, preserve their own being, is the very power of God *or* nature (*by 1p24c*), not insofar as it is infinite, but insofar as it can be explained through the actual human essence (*by 3p7*). The power of a human being therefore, insofar as it is explained through the actual essence of a human being, is a part of the infinite power of God *or* nature, i.e. (*by 1p34*) of its essence. That is the first point.

Then, if it could happen that a human being could undergo no changes but those that can be understood solely through the nature of a human being himself, it would follow (*by 3p4 and 3p6*), that he could not perish but would necessarily always exist. This would have to follow from a cause whose power was finite or infinite. That is, it would have to follow either solely from the power of a human being, who would thus be able to prevent all other changes to himself that could arise from external causes, or from the infinite power of nature by which all particular things would be directed in such a way that the person could undergo no other changes but those which serve his own preservation. But the first alternative is absurd (*by the previous proposition, whose proof is universal and can be applied to all particular things*). Therefore if it could happen that a human being underwent no changes but those that could be understood solely through the nature of a human being himself, and consequently (*as we have just shown*) that he would necessarily always

exist, this would have to follow from the infinite power of God. Consequently (*by 1p16*) the order of the whole of nature, insofar as it is conceived under the attributes of extension and thought, would have to be deduced from the necessity of the divine nature insofar as it is considered as affected by the idea of some human being. And (*by 1p21*) it would follow from this that a human being was infinite, which (*by the first part of this proof*) is absurd. Therefore it cannot happen that a person undergoes no other changes than those of which he himself is the adequate cause. *Q. E. D.*

#### Corollary

It follows from this that a human being is always necessarily subject to passions and follows the common order of nature, and obeys it, and adapts himself to it as much as the nature of things requires.

#### 170 Proposition 5

*The force and growth of any passion and its perseverance in existing is defined not by the power by which we endeavor to persevere in existing, but by the power of an external cause compared with our own.*

#### Proof

The essence of a passion cannot be explained through our essence alone (*by 3def1 and 3def2*), i.e. (*by 3p7*) the power of a passion cannot be defined by the power by which we endeavor to persevere in our being, but (*as has been shown by 2p16*) must necessarily be defined by the power of an external cause compared with our own. *Q. E. D.*

#### Proposition 6

*The force of any passion or emotion can so surpass all the other actions or power of a person that the emotion stubbornly stays with him.*

#### Proof

The force and the growth of any passion and its perseverance in existing is defined by the power of the external cause compared with our own (*by the previous proposition*); and therefore (*by 4p3*) it can so surpass the power of a person, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 7

*An emotion cannot be restrained or taken away except through an emotion that is contrary to and stronger than the emotion that is to be restrained.*

Proof

Insofar as an emotion is related to the mind, it is an idea by which the mind affirms a lesser or greater force of bodily existence than before (*by the general definition of the emotions, which is found at the end of the third part*). Therefore when the mind is assailed by some emotion, the body is affected at the same time by an affection which augments or diminishes its power of action. Furthermore (*by 4p5*) this bodily affection draws force from its own cause of persevering in its own being, and accordingly it can only be restrained or taken away by a corporeal cause (*by 2p6*) which affects the body with an affection which is contrary to the other one (*by 3p5*) and stronger (*by 4a*). And thus (*by 2p12*) the mind will be affected by the idea of an affection which is stronger and contrary to the previous one, i.e. (*by the general definition of the emotions*) the mind will be affected by an emotion which is stronger and contrary to the previous one and which will exclude the existence of the former one or take it away. Accordingly an emotion can only be taken away or restrained by means of a contrary and stronger emotion.  
*Q. E. D.*

171

Corollary

Insofar as an emotion is related to the mind, it cannot be restrained or taken away except by the idea of a contrary affection of the body which is stronger than the affection which we are undergoing. For the emotion which we are undergoing can only be restrained or taken away by means of a stronger emotion that is also contrary to it (*by 4p7*), i.e. (*by the general definition of the emotions*) by the idea of a stronger affection of the body which is also contrary to the affection which we are undergoing.

Proposition 8

*Cognition of good and bad is nothing but an emotion of joy or sadness insofar as we are conscious of it.*



Proof

We call good or bad that which helps or hinders the preservation of our being (*by 4def1 and 4def2*), i.e. (*by 3p7*) that which augments or diminishes, assists or restrains our power of action. Therefore (*by the definitions of joy and sadness which you may see in 3p11s*) insofar as we perceive that a thing affects us with joy or sadness, we call it good or bad; and thus cognition of good and bad is simply the idea of joy or sadness which necessarily follows from the emotion of joy or sadness itself (*by 2p22*). But this idea is united with the emotion in the same way as the mind is united with the body (*by 2p21*), i.e. (*as was shown in 2p21s*)  
172 this idea is in truth not distinguished from the emotion itself or (*by the general definition of the emotions*) the idea of the bodily affection except by the concept alone. Therefore this cognition of good and bad is nothing but the emotion itself, insofar as we are conscious of it. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 9

*An emotion whose cause we imagine to be present to us at the moment, is stronger than if we imagined it not to be present.*

Proof

An imagination is an idea by which the mind views a thing as present (*see the definition of it in 2p17s*), but which indicates the constitution of the human body more than the nature of the external thing (*by 2p16c2*). An emotion therefore (*by the general definition of the emotions*) is an imagination insofar as it indicates the constitution of the body. But an imagination (*by 2p17*) is more intense as long as we imagine nothing that excludes the present existence of the external thing. Therefore an emotion whose cause we imagine to be present to us at the moment is more intense *or* stronger than if we imagined it not to be present. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

When I said above in 3p18 that we are affected by the same emotion from the image of something in the future or in the past as we would be if the thing we are imagining were present, I explicitly noted that it was true insofar as we are focusing only on the image of the thing itself; for

that is of the same nature whether the thing we have imagined is present or not. But I did not deny that it is weakened when we think of other things which are present to us and which exclude the present existence of the future thing. I did not note this at the time, because I planned to defer discussion of the strength of the emotions to this part.

Corollary

The image of a thing in the future or in the past, i.e. of a thing which we view in relation to future time or past time, excluding the present, is weaker, all other things being equal, than the image of a present thing. Consequently, an emotion relating to a future or a past thing is, all other things being equal, milder than an emotion toward a present thing.

173

Proposition 10

*We are more intensely affected toward a future thing which we imagine will be upon us soon than if we imagine the time of its existence to be further away from the present; we are also more intensely affected toward the memory of a thing which we imagine to be not long past than if we imagined it to be long past.*

Proof

Insofar as we imagine that something will soon be upon us or is not long past, by that very fact we are imagining something that excludes the presence of the thing less than if we imagined its period of existence to be in the future quite far away from the present or long past (*as is obvious*), and to that extent (*by 4p9*) we will be more intensely affected by it. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

It follows from our comments on 4def6 that we are equally mildly affected by objects that are further away from the present than our imagination can determine, even though we understand that they are separated from each other by long intervals of time.

Proposition 11

*Our emotion toward a thing which we imagine as necessary is more intense, all other things being equal, than toward a possible or a contingent or non-necessary thing.*

Proof

Insofar as we imagine that something is necessary, to that extent we affirm its existence, and conversely we deny the existence of a thing insofar as we imagine it as not necessary (*by 1p33s1*); accordingly (*by 4p9*)  
174 our emotion toward a necessary thing is more intense, all other things being equal, than toward a non-necessary thing. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 12

*Our emotion toward a thing which we know does not exist at present and which we imagine as possible, is more intense, all other things being equal, than toward a contingent thing.*

Proof

Insofar as we imagine a thing as contingent, we are not affected by an image of any other thing that posits the existence of the thing (*by 4def3*); on the contrary (*by hypothesis*) we imagine certain things which exclude its present existence. But insofar as we imagine that a thing is possible in the future, to that extent we are imagining certain things that posit its existence (*by 4def4*), i.e. (*by 3p18*) things that provoke hope or fear; and thus our emotion toward a possible thing is more vehement. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Our emotion toward a thing which we know does not exist at present and which we imagine as contingent, is much milder than if we imagined the thing to be present to us at the moment.

Proof

Our emotion toward a thing which we imagine as existing in the present is more intense than if we imagined it as future (*by 4p9c*), and is much more vehement than if we imagined the future time to be very far away from the present (*by 4p10*). Therefore our emotion toward a thing whose time of existence we imagine to be far distant from the present is much milder than if we imagined it as present; nevertheless (*by 4p12*) it is more intense than if we imagined the same thing as contingent. Therefore our emotion toward a contingent thing will be much milder than if we imagined the thing to be present to us at the moment. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 13

175

*Our emotion toward a contingent thing which we know does not exist in the present is, all things being equal, milder than our emotion toward a past thing.*

Proof

Insofar as we imagine a thing as contingent, we are not affected by an image of another thing that posits the existence of the thing (*by 4def3*). On the contrary (*following the hypothesis*) we are imagining certain things which exclude its present existence. But insofar as we imagine it together with its relation to past time, to that extent we are supposed to be imagining something which brings it back to mind *or* which raises an image of the thing (*see 2p18 and 2p18s*), and accordingly, to this extent, makes us see it as if it were present (*by 2p17c*). Thus (*by 4p9*) the emotion toward a contingent thing which we know does not exist in the present will, all other things being equal, be milder than the emotion toward something in the past. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 14

*True cognition of good and bad cannot restrain any emotion insofar as it is true, but only insofar as it is considered as an emotion.*

Proof

An emotion is an idea by which the mind affirms a greater or lesser force of the existence of its body than before (*by the general definition of the emotions*). Therefore (*by 4p1*) it contains nothing positive that can be taken away by the presence of truth, and consequently a true cognition of good and bad cannot restrain an emotion insofar as it is true. But insofar as it is an emotion (*see 4p8*), if it is stronger than the emotion that is to be restrained, it will be able to restrain the emotion just to that extent (*by 4p7*). *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 15

176

*The desire that arises from a true cognition of good and bad can be extinguished or restrained by other desires arising from emotions that assail us.*

Proof

From a true cognition of good and bad insofar as this is an emotion (*by 4p8*), a desire necessarily arises (*by DOE1*) which is all the greater, the greater the emotion is from which it arises (*by 3p37*). But because this desire (*by hypothesis*) arises from our truly understanding something, it follows in us insofar as we act (*by 3p3*). It must therefore be understood solely through our essence (*by 3def2*), and consequently (*by 3p7*) its force and growth must be defined by human power alone.

Moreover the desires that arise from the emotions that assail us are the greater, the more vehement these emotions turn out to be. Therefore their force and growth (*by 4p5*) must be defined by the power of external causes, which, if compared with ours, infinitely surpass our power (*by 4p3*). Therefore desires that arise from similar emotions may be more vehement than the desire which arises from a true cognition of good and bad, and accordingly (*by 4p7*) they will be able to restrain or extinguish it. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 16

*A desire arising from [true]<sup>60</sup> cognition of good and bad, insofar as this cognition looks to the future, can be quite easily restrained or extinguished by a desire for things that are pleasant in the present.*

Proof

177 An emotion toward a thing that we imagine to be in the future, is milder than toward a thing that is present (*by 4p9c*). But the desire that arises from a true cognition of good and bad, even if this cognition is of things that are good in the present, can be extinguished or restrained by some impetuous desire (*by the previous proposition, whose proof is universal*). Therefore a desire arising from that cognition insofar as it looks to the future will quite easily be able to be restrained or extinguished, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 17

*A desire arising from true cognition of good and bad, insofar as this is concerned with contingent things, can still be quite easily restrained by a desire for things present.*

<sup>60</sup> We have added the term 'true' here. Given the proof, its omission appears to be an oversight.

Proof

This proposition is proved in the same way as the previous one, from 4p12c.

Scholium

I think I have shown by these arguments the reason why human beings are moved more by opinion than by true reason, and why a true cognition of good and bad raises disturbances of spirit and often gives way to every kind of lust; hence the famous line of the poet: *I see the better, and I approve it, but I follow the worse.*<sup>61</sup> Ecclesiastes also seems to have had this in mind when he said: *he who increases knowledge, increases distress.*<sup>62</sup> I do not say these things in order to conclude that it is better to be ignorant than to know, or that an intelligent person is no better off in governing his emotions than a stupid person.<sup>63</sup> I say it because it is necessary to know both the power of our nature and its lack of power, so that we may be able to determine what reason can do in governing the emotions and what it cannot do; and in this part I have set out to discuss only human powerlessness. For I plan to discuss the power of reason over the emotions separately.

Proposition 18

*A desire that arises from joy, all things being equal, is stronger than a desire that arises from sadness.*

Proof

Desire is the very essence of a human being (*by DOE1*), i.e. (*by 3p7*) the endeavor by which a person endeavors to persevere in his own being. Therefore a desire that arises from joy is assisted or augmented by the emotion of joy itself (*by the definition of joy, for which see 3p11s*). But conversely a desire that arises from sadness is diminished or restrained by the emotion of sadness itself (*by the same scholium*). Therefore the force of a desire that arises from joy has to be defined by human power as well as by the power of an external cause; but that which arises from

178

<sup>61</sup> Spinoza is quoting Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7, 20. <sup>62</sup> Ecclesiastes, 1.18.

<sup>63</sup> Spinoza is likely alluding here to Terence, *Eunuchus*, 232.

sadness has to be defined only by human power. Accordingly the former is stronger than the latter. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

With these few words I have explained the causes of human powerlessness and inconstancy and why human beings do not keep to the precepts of reason. It remains now for me to show what it is that reason prescribes to us and which emotions agree with the rules of human reason and which on the other hand are contrary to them. But before I begin the proof of these points in our extensive geometrical order, I would like first to set out briefly here the dictates of reason themselves, so that everyone may more easily perceive my position.

Reason requires nothing contrary to nature; it therefore requires that everyone love himself, pursue what is useful for himself – what is useful for him in truth – and seek all that in truth leads a human being to greater perfection, and absolutely requires that everyone endeavor to preserve his own being so far as in him lies. This is as necessarily true as that the whole is greater than its part (*see 3p4*).

Then, virtue (*by 4def8*) is nothing but acting by the laws of one's own nature, and no one endeavors to preserve his own being (*by 3p7*) except by the laws of his own nature. From this it follows, *first*, that the foundation of virtue is the very endeavor to preserve his own being, and joy consists in a person's being able to preserve his own being. *Secondly*, it follows that virtue is to be sought for its own sake and that there is nothing more excellent or more useful than virtue for the sake of which it should be sought. *Thirdly* and finally, it follows that those who kill themselves are powerless in spirit and completely overwhelmed by external causes that are inimical to their nature.

179 Furthermore, from 2post4 it follows that we can never ensure that we need nothing outside ourselves to preserve our being and live without having any dealings with things outside ourselves; and if we also consider our minds, our intellect would certainly be more imperfect if the mind were alone and understood nothing but itself. There are many things therefore outside ourselves which are useful to us and which are to be sought for that reason. Of these there are none more excellent than those that fully agree with our own nature. If for example two individual things of exactly the same nature are joined together, they make an individual

thing that is twice as powerful as the single one. Nothing therefore is more useful to a human being than another human being; human beings, I say, can wish for nothing better for preserving their own being than that all should agree in all things, so that the minds and bodies of all of them compose as it were one mind and one body, and all of them simultaneously endeavor as much as they can to preserve their own being, and all simultaneously pursue what is useful for all in common. It follows from this that human beings who are governed by reason, that is, human beings who aim at what is useful for themselves under the command of reason, want nothing for themselves that they do not desire for all other human beings, and therefore they are just, faithful and honorable.

These are the dictates of reason that I said I would set out here in a few words before I begin to prove the same things in our more extensive order. I have done this in order to win a favorable hearing, if at all possible, from those who believe that the principle that everyone is bound to pursue what is useful for himself is the foundation of impiety and not of virtue and piety. Therefore now that I have briefly shown that the contrary is the case, I will embark on a proof of it in the same manner as we have followed before.

Proposition 19

*By the laws of his own nature everyone necessarily seeks or is averse to what he judges to be good or bad.*

Proof

Cognition of good and bad (*by 4p8*) is the emotion of joy or sadness itself, insofar as we are conscious of it; and accordingly (*by 3p28*) everyone necessarily seeks what he judges to be good and conversely is averse to what he judges to be bad. But this appetite is simply the very essence or nature of a human being (*by the definition of appetite, for which see 3p9s and DOE1*). Therefore by the laws of his own nature everyone necessarily seeks or is averse to what, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 20

*The more each person endeavors to pursue what is useful for himself, i.e. to preserve his own being, and is able to do so, the more he is endowed with*



*virtue; and conversely insofar as each person neglects what is useful for himself, i.e. neglects to preserve his own being, to that extent he is powerless.*

Proof

Virtue is human power itself, which is defined by the essence of a human being alone (*by 4def8*); i.e. (*by 3p7*) it is defined solely by the endeavor by which a person endeavors to persevere in his own being. Therefore the more each person endeavors to preserve his own being and is able to do so, the more he is endowed with virtue, and consequently (*by 3p4 and 3p6*), insofar as anyone neglects to preserve his own being, to that extent he is powerless. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

No one therefore neglects to seek what is useful for himself *or* to preserve his own being, unless he is overcome by external causes that are contrary to his nature. No one, I say, is averse to food or kills himself by the necessity of his own nature; he is compelled by external causes and this can happen in many ways. Someone may kill himself because he is forced to do so by another person who turns the right hand in which he happens to be holding a sword and forces him to drive the sword into his own heart; or because, like Seneca, on the orders of a tyrant, he is compelled to open his veins, i.e. he desires to avoid a greater evil by a lesser one; or finally because obscure external causes so dispose his imagination and so affect his body that it takes on another nature contrary to his former one, a nature whose idea cannot be in his mind (*by 3p10*). But that a human being should endeavor by a necessity of his  
181 own nature not to exist or to change into another form, is as impossible as something coming into being from nothing, as everyone can see with a little thought.

Proposition 21

*No one can desire to be blessed, to act well, and to live well, if he does not at the same time desire to be, to act and to live, i.e. actually to exist.*

Proof

The proof of this proposition, *or* rather the thing itself, is evident in itself as well as from the definition of desire. For (*by DOE1*) the desire to live

and act blessedly *or* well, etc. is the very essence of a human being, i.e. (*by 3p7*) the endeavor by which each person endeavors to preserve his own being. Therefore no one can desire, etc. *Q. E. D.*

**Proposition 22**

*No virtue can be conceived prior to this one (i.e. the endeavor to preserve itself).*

**Proof**

The endeavor to preserve itself is the very essence of a thing (*by 3p7*). If therefore any virtue could be conceived prior to this virtue, i.e. this endeavor, the very essence of a thing (*by 4def8*) would be conceived as prior to the thing itself. And this (*self-evidently*) is absurd. Therefore no virtue, etc. *Q. E. D.*

**Corollary**

The endeavor to preserve itself is the first and only foundation of virtue. For nothing else can be conceived as prior to this principle (*by 4p22*), and (*by 4p21*) no virtue can be conceived without it.

**Proposition 23**

*Insofar as a person is determined to do some action on the basis of inadequate ideas, he cannot be said to act from virtue absolutely, but only insofar as he is determined to act on the basis of understanding.*

**Proof**

Insofar as a person is determined to act on the basis of inadequate ideas, to that extent (*by 3p1*) he is acted on, i.e. (*by 3def1 and 3def2*) he is doing some action that cannot be perceived through his essence alone, i.e. (*by 4def8*) an action that does not follow from his virtue. But insofar as he is determined to some action on a basis of understanding, to that extent (*by the same 3p1*) he is acting, i.e. (*by 3def2*) he is doing some action which is perceived through his essence alone *or* (*by 4def8*) which follows adequately from his virtue. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 24

*To act from virtue absolutely is nothing else in us than to act, to live, to preserve one's being (these three things signify the same thing) by the command of reason, and on the foundation of pursuing what is useful for oneself.*

Proof

To act from virtue absolutely is (*by 4def8*) simply to act by the laws of one's own nature. But we act only insofar as we understand (*by 3p3*). Therefore to act from virtue is nothing else in us than to act, to live, to preserve one's being by the command of reason, and (*4p22c*) on the foundation of pursuing what is useful for oneself. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 25

*No one endeavors to preserve his own being for the sake of another thing.*

Proof

183 The endeavor by which each thing endeavors to persevere in its own being is defined solely by the essence of the thing itself (*by 3p7*), and so long as that is given, it necessarily (*by 3p6*) follows – but not from the essence of another thing – that everyone endeavors to preserve his own being. This is also clear from *4p22c*. For if a person endeavored to preserve his own being for the sake of another thing, then that thing would be the first foundation of virtue (*as is self-evident*), and this (*by the corollary cited*) is absurd. Therefore no one endeavors to preserve his own being, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 26

*All that we endeavor on the basis of reason is simply to understand; and insofar as the mind is using reason, it does not judge anything to be useful for itself but that which contributes to understanding.*

Proof

The endeavor to preserve itself is simply the essence of a thing itself (*by 3p7*), and insofar as it exists as such, it is conceived as having the force to persevere in existence (*by 3p6*) and to do the actions that follow

necessarily from its own given nature (*see the definition of appetite in 3p9s*). But the essence of reason is nothing other than our minds, insofar as they understand clearly and distinctly (*see the definition of this in 2p40s2*). Therefore (*by 2p40*) all that we endeavor on the basis of reason is simply to understand. Then, since this endeavor of the mind, by which the mind, insofar as it reasons, endeavors to preserve its own being, is simply to understand (*by the first part of this proof*), this endeavor to understand (*by 4p22c*) is the first and only foundation of virtue, and we will not endeavor to understand things for the sake of any other purpose (*by 4p25*), but on the contrary the mind, insofar as it reasons, will not be able to conceive anything as good for itself but that which contributes to understanding (*by 4defi*). *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 27

*We know nothing to be good or bad with certainty but that which in truth contributes to understanding or that can hinder us from understanding.*

Proof

Insofar as the mind reasons, it seeks only to understand, and it does not judge anything to be useful to itself but that which contributes to understanding (*by the previous proposition*). But (*by 2p41 and 2p43; see also 2p43s*) the mind does not have certainty about things except insofar as it has adequate ideas, or (*which is the same thing by 2p40s*)<sup>64</sup> insofar as it reasons. Therefore, we know nothing to be good with certainty but that which in truth contributes to understanding and conversely nothing to be bad with certainty but that which in truth hinders us from understanding. *Q. E. D.*

184

Proposition 28

*The highest good of the mind is cognition of God, and the highest virtue of the mind is to know God.*

Proof

The highest thing that the mind can understand is God, i.e. (*by 1def6*) an absolutely infinite being, without which (*by 1p15*) nothing can be or be

<sup>64</sup> It appears here that Spinoza should have cited 2p40s2, where he defines reason. This reference may indicate that in an earlier version of the manuscript, 2p40 had only one scholium.

conceived; and therefore (*by 4p26 and 4p27*) that which is most highly useful to the mind, or (*by 4def1*) its highest good, is cognition of God. Then, the mind acts only insofar as it understands (*by 3p1 and 3p3*), and only to that extent (*by 4p23*) can it absolutely be said to act from virtue. It is therefore the absolute virtue of the mind to understand. But the highest thing that the mind can understand is God (*as we have already demonstrated*). Therefore the highest virtue of the mind is to understand or to know God. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 29

*No particular thing whose nature is completely different from our own can either assist or restrain our power of action, and, absolutely, nothing can be good or bad for us unless it has something in common with us.*

Proof

185 The power of any particular thing, including (*by 2p10c*) that of a human being, by which it exists and operates, is determined solely by another particular thing (*by 1p28*), whose nature (*by 2p6*) must be understood through the same attribute through which human nature is conceived. Therefore, however our power of action is conceived, it can be determined, and therefore assisted or restrained, by the power of any other particular thing that has something in common with us and not by the power of a thing whose nature is completely different from our own. Now things which are a cause of joy or sadness (*by 4p8*), i.e. (*by 3p11s*) things that augment or diminish, assist or restrain our power of action, we call good or bad. Therefore things whose nature is completely different from our own cannot be either good or bad for us. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 30

*No thing can be bad through what it has in common with our nature, but insofar as it is bad for us, to that extent it is contrary to us.*

Proof

We call something bad if it is a cause of sadness (*by 4p8*), i.e. (*by its definition, for which see 3p11s*) if it diminishes or restrains our power of

action. Therefore if a thing were bad for us through what it has in common with us, it could diminish or restrain the very thing that it has in common with us, and this (*by 3p4*) is absurd. Therefore nothing can be bad for us through what it has in common with us. To the contrary, insofar as it is bad, i.e. (*as we have just shown*) insofar as it can diminish or restrain our power of action, to that extent (*by 3p5*) it is contrary to us. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 31

*Insofar as something agrees with our nature, to that extent it is necessarily good.*

Proof

Insofar as something agrees with our nature, it cannot (*by the previous proposition*) be bad. It will therefore necessarily be either good or indifferent. If the latter is assumed – that it is neither good nor bad – nothing (*by 4a*) will follow from its nature that serves the preservation of our nature, i.e. (*by hypothesis*) that serves the preservation of the nature of the thing itself. But this is absurd (*by 3p6*). Therefore, insofar as it agrees with our nature, it is necessarily good. *Q. E. D.* 186

Corollary

It follows from this that the more anything agrees with our nature, the more useful it is to us *or* the better for us, and conversely the more useful a thing is to us, the more it agrees with our nature. For insofar as it does not agree with our nature, it will necessarily be different from our nature or contrary to it. If it is different, then (*by 4p29*) it cannot be either good or bad; but if it is contrary, then it will also be contrary to what agrees with our nature, i.e. (*by 4p31*) contrary to good, *or* bad. Nothing therefore can be good except insofar as it agrees with our nature, and therefore the more anything agrees with our nature, the more useful it is, and *vice versa*. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 32

*Insofar as human beings are subject to passions, to that extent they cannot be said to agree by nature.*

Proof

Things that are said to agree by nature are understood to agree in power (*by 3p7*), but not in powerlessness *or* negation, and consequently (*see 3p3s*) not in passion either. Therefore insofar as people are subject to passions, they cannot be said to agree by nature. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

187 This is also obvious in itself; for anyone who says that white and black only agree in the fact that neither is red, is affirming absolutely that white and black agree in nothing. So too if anyone says that a stone and a human being agree only in the fact that both are finite, lacking in power, or that neither exists by the necessity of its own nature, or finally that they are indefinitely surpassed by the power of external causes, he is simply affirming that a stone and a human being agree in nothing. For things which agree only in a negative *or* in what they do not have, in truth agree in nothing.

Proposition 33

*Human beings can differ in nature insofar as they are assailed by emotions, which are passions, and to that extent also one and the same person is variable and inconstant.*

Proof

The nature *or* essence of emotions cannot be explained through our essence *or* nature alone (*by 3def1 and 3def2*) but by power, i.e. (*by 3p7*) it can be defined by the nature of the external causes compared with our own. This is why there are as many species of each emotion as there are species of objects by which we are affected (*see 3p56*), and that people are differently affected by one and the same object (*see 3p51*) and are to that extent different in nature, and finally that one and the same person (*by the same 3p51*) is affected by the same object in different ways and is to that extent variable, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 34

*Insofar as human beings are assailed by emotions that are passions, they can be contrary to each other.*

Proof

A human being, call him Peter, may be the cause that Paul is sad, because he has something similar to a thing that Paul hates (*by 3p16*), or because Peter has sole possession of something that Paul also loves himself (*see 3p32 and 3p32s*), or for other causes (*for the most important of these, see 3p55s*). The result of this (*by DOE7*) will be that Paul hates Peter, and consequently it will easily happen (*by 3p40 with its scholium*) that Peter hates Paul in return, and therefore (*by 3p39*) that they endeavor to do harm to each other, i.e. (*by 4p30*) that they are contrary to each other. But the emotion of sadness is always a passion (*by 3p59*); therefore insofar as people are assailed by emotions, which are passions, they can be contrary to each other. *Q. E. D.*

188

Scholium

I said that Paul hates Peter because he imagines that he possesses something that Paul himself also loves. It seems to follow from this at first glance that because these two men love the same thing and consequently agree in nature they will be detrimental to each other, and if this is true, propositions 4p30 and 4p31 would be false. But if we are willing to weigh the matter fairly, we shall certainly see that all these things agree with each other. For these two men are not troublesome to each other insofar as they agree in nature, i.e. insofar as both of them love the same thing, but insofar as they differ from each other. For (*by 3p31*) the love of both is enhanced insofar as both love the same thing, i.e. (*by DOE6*) this very thing enhances the joy of both of them. Therefore it is far from being the case that they are troublesome to each other insofar as they love the same thing and agree in nature. The cause of it, as I have said, is precisely that they are supposed to differ in nature. For we suppose that Peter has an idea of possession of the beloved thing, whereas Paul has an idea of the loss of the beloved thing. This is why the latter is affected by sadness and conversely the former is affected by joy; and to that extent they are contrary to each other. We can easily show in the same way that all other causes of hatred depend solely upon the fact that human beings are different in nature and not upon anything in which they agree.



Proposition 35

*Only insofar as human beings live by the command of reason, do they necessarily always agree in nature.*

Proof

189 Insofar as people are assailed by emotions, which are passions, they can be different in nature (*by 4p33*) and contrary to each other (*by 4p34*). But human beings are only said to act insofar as they live by the command of reason (*by 3p3*), and thus whatever follows from human nature, insofar as it is defined by reason, has to be (*by 3def2*) understood through human nature alone as through its proximate cause. But by the laws of his own nature everyone seeks what he judges to be good and endeavors to be rid of what he judges to be bad (*by 4p19*), and what we judge by the dictate of reason to be good or bad, necessarily is good or bad (*by 2p41*). Therefore it is only insofar as human beings live by the command of reason that they necessarily do the actions that are necessarily good for human nature and consequently for each person, i.e. (*by 4p31c*) things that agree with the nature of each person. Therefore human beings insofar as they live by the command of reason always also necessarily agree with each other. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary 1

There is no particular thing in nature that is more useful to a human being than a human being who lives by the command of reason. For the thing most useful to a human being is something that most nearly agrees with his own nature (*by 4p31c*), i.e. (*as is self-evident*) another human being. But a human being acts by the laws of his own nature absolutely when he lives by the command of reason (*by 3def2*), and to that extent only does he necessarily always agree with the nature of another human being (*by 4p35*). Therefore of all particular things there is nothing more useful to a human being than another human being, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary 2

When more than anything everyone pursues what is useful to himself, then human beings are useful to each other more than anything. The

more each human being pursues what is useful for himself and endeavors to preserve himself, the more he is endowed with virtue (*by 4p20*), or – which is the same thing (*by 4def8*) – the greater the power he is possessed of for acting by the laws of his own nature, i.e. (*by 3p3*) for living by the command of reason. But human beings most agree in nature when they live by the command of reason (*by 4p35*). Therefore (*by the previous corollary*) human beings will be most useful to each other when each one most pursues what is useful to himself. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

190

What we have just shown is also supported every day by experience itself with so many shining examples that practically everyone knows the expression: man is a God to man.<sup>65</sup> However it rarely happens that human beings live by the command of reason, but have so mismanaged things that people are mostly envious and troublesome to each other. Nevertheless they can hardly live solitary lives, so that the definition of a human being as a social animal has become very familiar;<sup>66</sup> and in truth the fact is that many more advantages than disadvantages arise from the common society of human beings. Satirists therefore may sneer as much as they like at human affairs, theologians may profess horror, melancholy persons may praise the rude and savage life for all they are worth and condemn human beings and express wonder at the brute beasts. Despite all this, human beings find by experience that they get what they need for themselves much more easily by mutual assistance and that they can ward off the dangers that threaten them on all sides only by combining their forces. Not to mention that it is far preferable and worthier of our cognition to study the doings of human beings than those of beasts. But I will treat these things more extensively elsewhere.

Proposition 36

*The highest good of those who follow after virtue is common to all, and all can equally enjoy it.*

<sup>65</sup> An ancient Greek proverb. See Diogenianus 1.80; Zenobius 1.91 in *Corpus Paroemiographorum*, vol. I.

<sup>66</sup> See, for instance, Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a3.

Proof

To act from virtue is to act by the command of reason (*by 4p24*), and any action that we endeavor to do on the basis of reason is to understand (*by 4p26*). Therefore (*by 4p28*) the highest good of those who follow after virtue is to know God, i.e. (*by 2p47 and its scholium*) the good which is common to all and can be equally possessed by all, insofar as they are of the same nature. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

191 But if anyone asks, what if the highest good of those who follow after virtue were not common to all, would it not follow from this, as above (*see 4p34*), that human beings who live by the command of reason, i.e. (*by 4p35*) human beings, insofar as they agree in nature, would be contrary to each other? He may have this response, that it is not by accident but it arises from the very nature of reason that the highest good of a human being is common to all, because it is deduced from the human essence itself insofar as it is defined by reason, and because a human being could not be or be conceived if he did not have the power of enjoying this highest good. For (*by 2p47*) it belongs to the essence of the human mind to have adequate cognition of the eternal and infinite essence of God.

Proposition 37

*The good that everyone who follows after virtue wants for himself, he will also desire for other men, and all the more, the greater the cognition he has of God.*

Proof

Human beings are most useful to their fellow human beings insofar as they live by the command of reason (*by 4p35c1*), and therefore (*by 4p19*) we will necessarily endeavor by the command of reason to ensure that people live by the command of reason. But the good which everyone who lives by the dictate of reason, i.e. (*by 4p24*) everyone who follows after virtue, wants for himself, is to understand (*by 4p26*). Therefore he will also desire for other people the good that everyone who follows after virtue wants for himself. Then, insofar as desire is related to the mind, it

is the very essence of the mind (*by DOE1*). But the essence of the mind consists in cognition (*by 2p11*), which involves cognition of God (*by 2p47*), and without which (*by 1p15*) the mind cannot be or be conceived. Therefore the greater the cognition of God the essence of the mind involves, the greater also will be the desire with which anyone who follows after virtue desires for the other person the good that he wants for himself. *Q. E. D.*

Alternatively

A person will love a good that he loves and wants for himself with greater constancy if he sees that others love it too (*by 3p31*); and therefore (*by the corollary to the same proposition*) he will endeavor to make other people love it too. And because this good (*by 4p36*) is common to all, and all can enjoy it, he will (*by the same reasoning*) endeavor to have everyone enjoy it, and the more he enjoys this good, the more (*by 3p37*) he will do so. *Q. E. D.*

192

Scholium 1

Anyone who endeavors by emotion alone to get other people to love what he himself loves and to get them to live in conformance with his own character is acting merely by impulse and therefore arouses hatred, especially in people who have other preferences and who therefore strive and endeavor under the same impulse to get other people to live in conformance with their own character.

Then, since the highest good that a person seeks because of an emotion is often such a good as only one person can possess, it comes about that those who love do not have constancy in purpose, and while they enjoy singing the praises of the thing they love, they are afraid to be believed. But anyone who endeavors to lead others by reason, is acting not by impulse but kindly and obligingly, and has complete constancy of purpose.

Furthermore, whatever we desire and whatever action we do of which we are the cause insofar as we have an idea of God *or* insofar as we know God, I relate to religion. And the desire to do good which is generated by our living by the command of reason, I call piety.

Then, the desire by which a person who lives by the command of reason is bound to unite others to him in friendship, I call honor; and

I call honorable that which people who live by the command of reason approve. Conversely I call anything that is inimical to making friendship base. In addition to this, I have also shown what the foundations of a commonwealth are.

Then, the difference between true virtue and powerlessness is easily gathered from what I said above: namely, that true virtue is simply living by the command of reason alone; and therefore powerlessness consists simply in a person's being passively led by things outside himself and being determined by them to do the actions that the common constitution of external things requires of him and not those things which his own nature, considered in itself alone, requires.

193 These are the things that I promised to prove in 4p18s. It is evident from them that the law about beasts that are not to be slaughtered is founded more in empty superstition and womanish compassion than in sound reason.<sup>67</sup> The principle of pursuing what is useful for ourselves teaches us to form close ties with human beings, and not with beasts or things whose nature is different from human nature, but that we have the same right over them as they have over us. In fact, human beings have a greater right over animals than animals have over human beings, because the right of anything is defined by its own virtue *or* power. I do not deny that animals are sentient, but I do deny that we are for that reason forbidden to consider what is useful for ourselves and use them at our pleasure and treat them as is most agreeable to us, since they do not agree with us in nature and their emotions are by nature different from human emotions (*see* 3p57s). It remains for me to explain what justice is, what injustice is, what sin is and also what merit is. On these topics see the following scholium.

#### Scholium 2

In the appendix to the first part I promised to explain what praise and blame, merit and sin, justice and injustice are. I have explained praise and blame in 3p29s. This is the place to speak about the others. But first a few words must be said about the natural and the civil state of human beings.

<sup>67</sup> Spinoza is likely referring to *Leviticus*, 22:28 which prohibits slaughtering an animal and its offspring on the same day, which is a part of kosher dietary law.

Every person exists by the highest right of nature, and consequently by the highest right of nature every person does the actions that follow from the necessity of his own nature. Therefore by the highest right of nature every person judges what is good and what is bad; he looks to what is useful for himself in conformance with his own character (*see 4p19 and 4p20*); he avenges himself (*see 3p40c2*); and he endeavors to preserve what he loves and to destroy what he hates (*see 3p28*). But if people lived by the command of reason, each person (*by 4p35c1*) would hold this right of his without injury to other people. But human beings are subject to emotions (*by 4p4c*) that far surpass human power *or* virtue (*by 4p6*). Therefore they are often drawn in different directions (*by 4p33*) and are contrary to each other (*by 4p34*), so long as they lack mutual assistance (*by 4p35s*).

Therefore so that human beings may live in harmony and assist each other, it is necessary that they give up their own natural right and give each other assurance that they will do nothing that may cause injury to another. The means by which it may be brought about that human beings who are necessarily subject to emotions (*by 4p4c*) and who are inconstant and variable (*by 4p33*) may be able to give each other assurance and have trust in each other, is evident from 4p7 and 3p39: no emotion can be restrained except by another emotion that is stronger and contrary to the emotion that needs to be restrained, and everyone refrains from inflicting injury through fear of greater injury. The only condition therefore under which society can be firmly established is if it takes to itself the right which every person has of avenging himself and of making judgments about good and bad, and if it thus has the ability to prescribe a common way of life and to make laws and to reinforce them not with reason, which (*by 4p17s*) cannot restrain the emotions, but with threats. Such a society, reinforced by laws and by the ability to preserve itself, is called a commonwealth, and those who are protected by its right are called citizens.

We easily understand from all this that there is nothing in the state of nature that is good or bad by the consent of all, since everyone in the state of nature looks only to what is useful for himself, and decides what is good or bad in conformance with his own character thinking only of what is useful for himself, and he is not bound by any law to obey anyone except himself, and therefore in the state of nature sin cannot be conceived. But it can be conceived in the civil state, where good and

bad are decided by common consent, and everyone is bound to obey the commonwealth. Sin therefore is nothing but disobedience, and for this reason it is punished solely by the right of the commonwealth. Conversely obedience is regarded as merit in a citizen, because it is only because of this that he is judged worthy to enjoy the advantages of the commonwealth.

195 Then, in the state of nature no one is owner of anything by common consent, and there is nothing in nature that can be said to belong to this person or that person; but everything belongs to everybody. Accordingly in the state of nature the will of rendering to each one what is his<sup>68</sup> cannot be conceived, nor that of stealing from anyone what belongs to him, i.e. in the state of nature nothing is done that can be said to be just or unjust, but only in the civil state, where it is decided by common consent what belongs to this person or to that. It is apparent from all this that justice and injustice, sin and merit, are extrinsic notions, and not attributes which explain the nature of the mind. But enough of this.

### Proposition 38

*Anything that disposes the human body to be capable of being affected in more ways, or which makes it capable of affecting external bodies in more ways is useful to a human being; and all the more useful, the more capable the body is made of being affected and of affecting other bodies in more ways; conversely anything that makes the body less capable of these things is harmful.*

### Proof

The more capable the body is made for these things, the more capable the mind is made for perceiving (*by 2p14*). Therefore anything that disposes the body in this way and makes it capable of these things is necessarily good *or* useful (*by 4p26 and 4p27*), and all the more useful, the more capable it can make the body of these things. Conversely (*by the converse of the same 2p14 and by 4p26 and 4p27*) anything is harmful if it makes the body less capable of these things. *Q. E. D.*

<sup>68</sup> This is an allusion to Justinian, *Institutes* I.I.I: '*justitia est constans et per petua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuendi.*'

Proposition 39

*Those things are good that ensure that the proportion of motion and rest which the parts of the human body have toward each other is preserved; conversely those things are bad that make the parts of the human body have a different proportion of motion and rest toward each other.*

Proof

For its own preservation the human body needs very many other bodies (*by 2post4*). But what constitutes the form of the human body is that its parts communicate their motions to each other in a fixed proportion (*by the definition before L4, which you will find after 2p13*). Therefore things that ensure that the proportion of motion and rest that the parts of the human body have toward each other is preserved, also preserve the form of the human body. Consequently they ensure (*by 2post3 and 2post6*) that the human body can be affected in many ways and that it can also affect external bodies in many ways; and therefore (*by the previous proposition*) they are good. 196

Then, things which cause the parts of a human body to have a different proportion of motion and rest, ensure (*by the same definition in the second part*) that the human body takes a different form. That is, they ensure (*as is self-evident, and as we also pointed out at the end of 4pref*) that the human body is destroyed, and consequently that it is rendered completely incapable of being affected in more different ways, and accordingly (*by 4p38*) these things are bad. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

I will explain in the fifth part how much these things can hinder or help the mind. But here we should note that I mean that a body dies when its parts are so disposed that they have a different proportion of motion and rest toward each other. For I do not dare to deny that a human body, while retaining the circulation of the blood and the other things by which a body is judged to be alive, can still be changed into another nature completely different from its own. For no reason compels me to say that a body is not dead unless it is changed into a corpse; in fact experience itself seems to suggest otherwise. For it sometimes happens that a person undergoes such



major changes that I would not be prepared to say that he is the same person. I have heard tell of a certain Spanish poet<sup>69</sup> who was struck down with a disease, and although he recovered from it, he remained so oblivious of his past life that he did not believe that the stories and tragedies that he had composed were his, and he could certainly have been taken for a dumb idiot, if he had also forgotten his native language. And if this seems incredible, what shall we say about infants? A person of advanced years believes their nature to be so different from his own that he could not be persuaded that he had ever been an infant if he did not make a conjecture about himself from others. But for fear of providing material for superstitious people to raise outlandish questions, I prefer to leave the subject here.

197 Proposition 40

*Things that promote a common society of human beings or which ensure that human beings live in concord are useful; those conversely that bring discord into a commonwealth are bad.*

Proof

Things that make human beings live in concord ensure at the same time that they live by the command of reason (*by 4p35*), and therefore (*by 4p26 and 4p27*) they are good, and conversely (*by the same reasoning*) things that incite discord are bad. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 41

*Joy is not directly bad but good; conversely sadness is directly bad.*

Proof

Joy (*by 3p11*) is an emotion by which the body's power of action is augmented or assisted; conversely sadness is an emotion by which the body's power of action is diminished or restrained; therefore (*by 4p38*) joy is directly good, etc. *Q. E. D.*

<sup>69</sup> This is likely a reference to Luis de Góngora (1561–1627), who lost his memory a year before his death. Spinoza's library included a volume of his works.

Proposition 42

*Cheerfulness can never be excessive, but is always good; conversely melancholy is always bad.*

Proof

Cheerfulness (*see the definition of it in 3p11s*) is joy which insofar as it is related to the body, consists in all the parts of the body being equally affected, i.e. (*by 3p11*) it consists in the body's power of action being augmented or assisted, so that all its parts have the same proportion of motion and rest toward each other; and therefore (*by 4p39*) cheerfulness is always good and cannot be excessive. But melancholy (*for its definition see the same 3p11s*) is sadness, which insofar as it is related to the body, consists in the body's power of action being absolutely diminished or restrained; and this (*by 4p38*) is always bad. *Q. E. D.*

198

Proposition 43

*Delight can be excessive and can be bad; and distress can be good insofar as delight or joy is bad.*

Proof

Delight is joy which insofar as it is related to the body, consists in one or some parts of it being more affected than others (*see its definition in 3p11s*), and the power of this emotion can be so great that it surpasses all of the body's other actions (*by 4p6*) and stays stubbornly with it, and therefore prevents the body from being capable of being affected in very many other ways, and therefore (*by 4p38*) it can be bad. Then, distress, which by contrast is a sadness, cannot be good (*by 4p41*) considered simply in itself. But because its force and growth are defined by the power of an external cause compared with our own (*by 4p5*), we can conceive infinite degrees and kind of strength in this emotion (*by 4p3*). Therefore we can conceive it to be such that it can check delight so that delight does not go to excess, and to that extent (*by the first part of this proposition*) it can ensure that the body is not rendered less capable; and accordingly to that extent it will be good. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 44

*Love and desire can be excessive.*

Proof

Love is joy (*by DOE6*) accompanied by the idea of an external cause. Delight therefore (*by 3p11s*), accompanied by the idea of an external cause, is love; and therefore (*by the previous proposition*) love can be  
199 excessive. Then, a desire is greater, the greater the emotion from which it arises (*by 3p37*). Therefore as an emotion (*by 4p6*) can surpass all a person's other actions, so too the desire that arises from that emotion can surpass all his other desires, and accordingly it can be as excessive as we showed in the previous proposition that delight can be. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Cheerfulness, which I said was good, is more easily conceived than observed. For the emotions by which we are assailed every day are mostly related to some part of the body which is affected more than the rest, and accordingly emotions are at their worst excessive and keep the mind's attention so exclusively fixed on one object that it cannot think about other things. And although human beings are subject to more than one different emotion, and consequently we find very few people who are constantly assailed by one and the same emotion, there are a number of people with whom one and the same emotion stubbornly stays. For we see that people are sometimes so affected by one object that even though it is not present, they still believe it is in front of them, and when this happens to someone who is not asleep, we say that he is delirious or raving; and people who are afire with love and who dream all night and all day of nothing but a girlfriend or a mistress, are thought to be equally crazy because they are usually met with laughter. But when an avaricious person thinks of nothing but profit or money and an ambitious person thinks about glory etc., these people are not regarded as delirious because they tend to be troublesome and are thought to deserve hatred. But in truth avarice, ambition, lust, etc. are species of delirium, even though they are not counted as diseases.

Proposition 45

*Hatred can never be good.*

Proof

We endeavor to destroy a person we hate (*by 3p39*), i.e. (*by 4p37*) we endeavor something that is bad. Therefore etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

200

Note that here and in what follows, by this word hatred I mean only hatred that is directed toward human beings.

Corollary 1

Envy, derision, disdain, anger, vengeance, and the other emotions that are related to hatred or arise from it, are bad, as is also clear from 3p39 and 4p37.

Corollary 2

Anything that we seek because we are affected by hatred is base, and in the civil state is unjust. This is also clear from 3p39 and from the definitions of base and unjust, on which see 4p37s.

Scholium

I see a great difference between derision (which I said in corollary 1 was bad) and laughter. For laughter, like joking, is pure joy; and therefore, it is good in itself (*by 4p41*) provided it is not excessive. Surely nothing but grim and gloomy superstition forbids pleasure. How is it more proper to quench hunger and thirst than to drive melancholy away? This is my reasoning, and this is where my thinking has brought me.<sup>70</sup> No deity and no one but an envious person takes pleasure in my lack of power and misfortune, nor regards as virtue our tears, sobbing, fears and other such things that are signs of a powerless spirit. On the contrary, the greater the joy we are affected by, the greater the perfection we pass to, i.e. the more we must necessarily be sharing in the divine nature. Therefore to

<sup>70</sup> Spinoza here is adapting Terence, *Adelphi*, 68; see also 3pref.

use and take pleasure in things as much as possible (though not to the point of disgust, for that is not pleasure) is the part of a wise person. It is, I say, the part of a wise person to refresh and restore himself with a moderate amount of good food and drink, as well as with pleasant scents, the beauty of green plants, dress, music, sports, public entertainments and other such things that each person can enjoy without any injury to others. For the human body is composed of very many parts of different natures that continually need fresh and varied nourishment, so that the whole body may be equally capable of everything that can follow from its nature and consequently that the mind may also be equally capable of understanding more than one thing simultaneously. This manner of living therefore agrees best both with our principles and with common practice. Therefore, of all others, this manner of living is the best, and is commendable in every way, and there is no need to discuss these things more clearly nor more extensively.

#### Proposition 46

*A person who lives by the command of reason endeavors as far as he can to repay the hatred, anger, disdain, etc. of another person toward himself with love or generosity in return.*

#### Proof

All emotions of hatred are bad (*by 4p45c1*); and therefore anyone who lives by the command of reason endeavors so far as he can to ensure that he is not assailed by emotions of hatred (*by 4p19*), and consequently (*by 4p37*) he will endeavor to ensure that no other person undergoes these emotions. But hatred is augmented by reciprocal hatred and conversely can be extinguished by a response of love (*by 3p43*), so that hatred turns to love (*by 3p44*). Therefore anyone who lives by the command of reason will endeavor to repay another person's hatred, etc. with love in return, i.e. with generosity (*see the definition of this in 3p59s*). *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

Anyone who wishes to avenge offenses with reciprocal hatred surely lives in misery. But anyone who on the contrary strives to overcome hatred with love is certainly joyful and goes about the struggle free of care; he resists several people as easily as a single person; he has the least need

possible for the assistance of fortune. Those whom he conquers yield joyfully; they are joyful not because of a failure of their strength but because of an increase in it. This all follows so clearly from the definitions of love and of intellect that there is no need to prove each point one by one.

Proposition 47

*The emotions of hope and fear cannot be good in themselves.*

Proof

202

There are no emotions of hope and fear without sadness. For fear is (by *DOE13*) sadness; and there is no hope without fear (see *DOE12ex* and *DOE13ex*). Accordingly (by *4p41*) these emotions cannot be good in themselves, but only insofar as they can restrain an excess of joy (by *4p43*). *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

A relevant point here is that these emotions indicate a failure of cognition and the mind's lack of power; for the same reason assurance, despair, relief and remorse are also signs of a powerless spirit. For although assurance and relief are emotions of joy, they still assume that a sadness has preceded them, namely hope and fear. Therefore the more we endeavor to live by the command of reason, all the more we endeavor to be less dependent on hope, to free ourselves from fear, to rule fortune as much as we can and to direct our actions by a settled plan of reason.

Proposition 48

*The emotions of adulation and contempt are always bad.*

Proof

These emotions (by *DOE 21* and *DOE 22*) are contrary to reason and therefore (by *4p26* and *4p27*) bad. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 49

*Adulation easily makes the person who is the object of adulation proud.*

Proof

If we see that someone thinks too well of us because of love, we will easily glory in it (*by 3p41s*), or be affected by joy (*by DOE30*); and we will easily believe anything good that we hear said of us (*by 3p25*). Therefore we will think too well of ourselves because of our love of ourselves, i.e. (*by DOE28*) we will easily become proud. *Q. E. D.*

203 Proposition 50

*In a person living by the command of reason, pity is bad in itself and useless.*

Proof

Pity (*by DOE 18*) is a sadness, and accordingly (*by 4p41*) it is bad in itself. The good that follows from it, namely that we endeavor to liberate the person we pity from misery (*by 3p27c3*), we desire to do solely because of the command of reason (*by 4p37*). And we cannot do an action that we certainly know to be good except by the dictate of reason alone (*by 4p27*). Therefore pity in a person living by the command of reason is bad in itself and useless. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that a person living by the dictate of reason endeavors as much as he can not to be touched by pity.

Scholium

Anyone who rightly knows that all things follow from the necessity of the divine nature and happen in accordance with the eternal laws and rules of nature, will surely find nothing that deserves hatred, laughter or disdain, and he will not pity anything; but insofar as human virtue allows, he will endeavor to act well, as they say, and be joyful.<sup>71</sup> It is worth adding here that anyone who is easily touched by the emotion of pity and is moved by other people's misery or tears often does an action that he later repents, both because we do no action that we certainly know is good as a result of an emotion and because we are easily deceived by false tears. Here I am speaking explicitly about the person who lives

<sup>71</sup> Spinoza may be referring to work by Leiden Professor Franciscus Sylvius.

by the command of reason. Anyone who is moved neither by reason nor by pity to help other human beings is rightly called inhuman. For (*by 3p27*) he seems to be unlike a human being.

Proposition 51

204

*Approval is not opposed to reason but can agree with it and arise from it.*

Proof

Approval is love for a person who has benefited someone else (*by DOE19*), and therefore can be related to the mind, insofar as the mind is said to act (*by 3p59*), i.e. (*by 3p3*) insofar as it understands; and accordingly approval agrees with reason, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Alternatively

Anyone who lives by the command of reason desires for other people too the good he wants for himself (*by 4p37*). Therefore his own endeavor to benefit others is assisted by seeing someone else benefiting others; i.e. (*by 3p11s*) he will be joyful, accompanied (*by hypothesis*) with the idea of a person who has benefited others; and accordingly (*by DOE19*) he approves of him. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Indignation as we define it (*see DOE20*) is necessarily bad (*by 4p45*). But we must note that when a sovereign body, because of the longing by which it is bound to preserve the peace, punishes a citizen who has committed an offense against another person, I do not say that the sovereign is indignant with the citizen, because it is not prompted by hatred to destroy the citizen, but punishes him from a motive of piety.

Proposition 52

*Self-contentment can arise from reason, and only the contentment that arises from reason is the highest there can be.*

Proof

Self-contentment is the joy that arises from a person's thinking about himself and his own power of action (*by DOE25*). But the true power of



205 human action, *or* virtue, is reason itself (*by 3p3*), and this is what the person clearly and distinctly thinks about (*by 2p40 and 2p43*). Therefore self-contentment arises from reason. Then, as a person thinks about himself, he perceives nothing clearly and distinctly *or* adequately except the things that follow from his own power of action (*by 3def2*), i.e. (*by 3p3*) things that follow from his own power of understanding. Therefore the highest contentment that there can be arises from this reflection alone. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

Self-contentment is truly the highest thing that we can hope for. For (*as we have shown in 4p25*) no one endeavors to preserve his own being for the sake of some other purpose. And such contentment is progressively encouraged and strengthened by praise (*by 3p53c*), and conversely (*by 3p55c*) is progressively undermined by blame. Therefore we are very much motivated by glory, and we can scarcely bear a life of reproach.

### Proposition 53

*Humility is not a virtue, or it does not arise from reason.*

### Proof

Humility is the sadness arising from a person's thinking of his own lack of power (*by DOE26*). But insofar as a person knows himself by true reason, he is to that extent assumed to understand his own essence, i.e. (*by 3p7*) his power. Therefore if in thinking about himself a person perceives some lack of power in himself, it does not come from his understanding himself but (*as we have shown in 3p55*) from his power of action being restrained. But if we suppose that a person perceives his own lack of power because he recognizes that something is more powerful than himself, and he determines his own power of action in the light of this cognition, then we conceive that the person is simply understanding himself distinctly or (*by 4p26*) that his power of action is assisted. Therefore the humility *or* sadness that arises from a person's thinking about his own lack of power does not arise from true reflection *or* reason, and is not a virtue but a passion. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 54

*Repentance is not a virtue, or it does not arise from reason; but anyone who feels repentance for a deed is miserable or powerless twice over.*

Proof

The first part of this is proved in the same way as the previous proposition. The second part is obvious simply from the definition of this emotion (see *DOE27*). For first one allows himself to be overcome by a wrong desire and then he allows himself to be overcome by sadness.

Scholium

Because human beings rarely live by the dictate of reason, these two emotions of humility and repentance, as well as hope and fear, are more useful than detrimental. Since sinning is inevitable, it is better to sin in that direction.<sup>72</sup> For if human beings, powerless in spirit as they are, were all equally proud, not ashamed of anything and not afraid of anything, by what bonds could they be united and kept in check?<sup>73</sup> The crowd is terrifying if it is not afraid.<sup>74</sup> This is why it is not surprising that the Prophets, who looked not to what was useful for the few but for the community, so strongly recommended humility, repentance and reverence. And in truth people who are subject to these passions can be induced more easily than others to live in the end under the command of reason, i.e. to be free and to enjoy the life of blessed people.

Proposition 55

*Extremes of pride or abjection are extreme ignorance of oneself.*

Proof

This is evident from *DOE28* and *DOE29*.

Proposition 56

*Extreme pride or abjection thus indicate extreme powerlessness of spirit.*

<sup>72</sup> Spinoza is adapting Terence, *Adelphi*, 174.

<sup>73</sup> This line alludes to Terence, *Adelphi*, 84.

<sup>74</sup> Here Spinoza is adapting Tacitus, *Annals* I, 29.

207 Proof

The first foundation of virtue is to preserve one's own being (*by 4p22c*), and to do so by the command of reason (*by 4p24*). Anyone therefore who does not know himself, is ignorant of the foundation of all the virtues and consequently is ignorant of the virtues themselves. Then, to act from virtue is simply to act by the command of reason (*by 4p24*), and anyone who acts by the command of reason must necessarily know that he is acting by the command of reason (*by 2p43*). The person therefore who is most ignorant of himself and consequently of all the virtues (*as we have just shown*) acts from virtue least of all, i.e. (*as is evident from 4def8*) he is the most powerless in spirit. Therefore (*by the previous proposition*) extremes of pride or abjection indicate extreme powerlessness of spirit. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It most evidently follows from this that it is the proud and the abject who are the most subject to emotions.

Scholium

Abjection however can be more easily corrected than pride, since pride is an emotion of joy, while abjection is an emotion of sadness; and therefore (*by 4p18*) pride is stronger than abjection.

Proposition 57

*A proud person loves the presence of parasites or flatterers, and hates the presence of generous people.*

Proof

Pride is joy arising from a person's thinking too well of himself (*by DOE28 and DOE6*), and a proud person will endeavor to foster this opinion as much as he can (*see 3p13s*). Therefore proud persons will love the presence of parasites or flatterers (*I have not given definitions of these because they are too well known*), and will avoid the presence of generous people who think of themselves in an appropriate way. *Q. E. D.*

It would take too long to enumerate here all the bad things about pride, since proud people are subject to all the emotions, but to none less than love and pity. Here one must not fail to point out that anyone who thinks too poorly of other people is also said to be proud, and in this sense therefore pride is to be defined as a joy that arises from a person's false opinion that he is a cut above other people. Abjection as the contrary of such pride would have to be defined as sadness arising from a person's false belief that he is beneath others. Given this, we easily conceive that a proud person is necessarily envious (*see 3p55s*), and especially hates people who are highly praised for their virtues. His hatred of them is not easily overcome by love or benefits (*see 3p41s*). He only takes pleasure in the company of people who indulge his powerless spirit and turn a fool into a lunatic.

Though abjection is contrary to pride, an abject person is nevertheless close to a proud person. Since his sadness arises from his estimating his own powerlessness by the power *or* virtue of others, his sadness will be relieved, i.e. he will be made joyful, if his imagination is occupied in contemplating other people's faults; this is the origin of the well-known line: *It is a consolation to the wretched to have companions of their sufferings.*<sup>75</sup> Conversely, he will be made all the sadder, the more inferior he believes he is to others. This is why none are more prone to envy than abject persons; and this is why they particularly endeavor to watch other people's doings in order to criticize them rather than reform them, and that in the end the only thing they praise is abjection, which they glory in though in such a way that they still seem to be abject.

These things follow from this emotion as necessarily as it follows from the nature of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles. And I have already said that I call these and similar emotions bad insofar as I focus only on what is useful for human beings. But the laws of nature reflect the common order of nature of which human beings are a part. I wanted to mention this here in passing, so that no one will think that at this point I am cataloguing all the faults and absurdities of human beings

<sup>75</sup> See, for example, M. Neander, *Ethice vetus et sapiens veterum Latinorum sapientum* (1590), 411.

209 and have abandoned my design to demonstrate the nature and properties of things. For, as I said in the preface to the third part I consider human emotions and their properties precisely like all other natural things. And surely human emotions reveal, if not the power and art of human beings, at least the power and art of nature, no less than do many other things that we wonder at and observe with pleasure. But I move on to note things about the emotions that are useful or detrimental to human beings.

Proposition 58

*Glory does not conflict with reason but can arise from it.*

Proof

This is evident from DOE<sub>13</sub> and from the definition of honor, for which see 4p37s1.

Scholium

So-called vainglory is a self-contentment which is fostered solely by the opinion of the crowd, and when that stops, the contentment itself ceases, i.e. (*by 4p52s*) the highest good that everyone loves. This is why anyone who glories in the opinion of the crowd makes it his daily, anxious business by every expedient to preserve his fame. For the opinion of the crowd is variable and capricious, and therefore fame quickly fades unless steps are taken to preserve it. In fact because everyone wants to win the applause of the crowd, everyone is quick to run down other people's reputations. And since the struggle is about what is judged to be the highest good, it gives rise to a tremendous lust to put each other down in every way possible, and the person who finally emerges victorious glories more because he blocked somebody else than because of his own success. This glory therefore *or* self-contentment is in truth vain, because it is nothing.

What we need to note about shame is easily inferred from what we have said about compassion and repentance. I only add that shame, like pity, although not a virtue, is still good insofar as it indicates to the person who is filled with shame that he has a desire in him to live honorably, just like distress which is called good insofar as it indicates that the part that is hurt is not putrefied. Therefore although a person

who is ashamed of something he has done is truly sad, he is nevertheless more perfect than a person without shame, who has no desire to live honorably. 210

These are the observations that I undertook to make about the emotions of joy and sadness. As for the desires, they are certainly good or bad insofar as they arise from good or bad emotions. But in truth all the desires, insofar as they are generated in us from such emotions as are passions, are blind (*as is easily inferred from what we said in 4p44s*), and they would be of no use if human beings could easily be led to live solely by the dictate of reason, as I shall now show in a few words.

Proposition 59

*To all the actions to which we are determined by an emotion that is a passion, we can be determined by reason without such an emotion.*

Proof

To act from reason (*by 3p3 and 3def2*) is simply to do the things that follow from the necessity of our nature, considered in itself alone. But sadness is bad insofar as it diminishes or restrains this power of action (*by 4p41*). Therefore we cannot be determined by this emotion to do any action which we could not do if we were led by reason. Moreover joy is bad insofar as it prevents a person from being capable of action (*by 4p41 and 4p43*), and therefore to that extent also we cannot be determined to any action which we could not do if we were led by reason. Finally, insofar as joy is good, to that extent it agrees with reason (for it consists in a person's power of action being augmented or assisted); and it is not a passion except insofar as a person's power of action is not thereby augmented to the point that he conceives himself and his actions adequately (*by 3p3 with its scholium*). Therefore if a person affected by joy were brought to so great a perfection that he conceived himself and his actions adequately, he would be capable of the same actions to which he is already determined by such emotions as are passions, in fact he would be more capable. But all the emotions are related to joy, sadness or desire (*see DOE4ex*); and desire (*by DOE1*) is simply the endeavor to act itself. Therefore we can be led by reason alone without an emotion that is a passion to all the actions to which we are determined by such an emotion. *Q. E. D.* 211

Alternatively

Every action is said to be bad insofar as it arises from our being affected by hatred or some bad emotion (*see 4p45c1*). But no action considered in itself alone is good or bad (*as we showed in 4pref*), but one and the same action is sometimes good and sometimes bad; therefore we can also be led by reason to the same action which is sometimes bad *or* which arises from some bad emotion (by 4p19).

Scholium

I can explain this more clearly by an example. The action of beating, insofar as it is considered physically and focusing only on a person's raising his arm, closing his hand and moving the whole arm forcefully downward, is a virtue which is conceived from the structure of the human body. If therefore a person is determined to close his hand or move his arm by an impulse of anger or hatred, this happens, as we showed in the second part, because one and the same action can be combined with any number of images of things. Thus we can be determined to one and the same action as much by images of things that we conceive in a confused manner as by those that we conceive clearly and distinctly. It appears therefore that every desire that arises from an emotion that is a passion would be of no use if human beings could be led by reason. Let us see now why we say that a desire which arises from an emotion which is a passion is blind.

Proposition 60

*A desire arising from joy or sadness, which is related to one, or some, but not all the parts of the body, takes no account of what is useful for the whole person.*

212 Proof

Suppose, for example, that a part A of a body is so strengthened by the force of some external cause that it dominates the rest (*by 4p6*). This part will not for that reason endeavor to shed its strength so that the other parts of the body may perform their functions. For it would have to have the force *or* power to shed its own strength, and this (*by 3p6*) is absurd. Therefore that part, and consequently (*by 3p7 and 3p12*) the mind too,

will endeavor to preserve that condition. And therefore the desire that arises from such an emotion of joy takes no account of the whole. Conversely, if the part A is assumed to be restrained so that other parts dominate, one may demonstrate in the same way that the desire that arises from sadness takes no account of the whole either. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Since therefore (*by 4p44s*) joy is most often related to one part of the body, we generally desire to preserve our own being without taking account of our total health. Add to this that the desires which bind us most (*by 4p9c*) look only to the present time and not to the future.

Proposition 61

*Desire that arises from reason cannot be excessive.*

Proof

Desire (*by DOE1*), considered absolutely, is the very essence of a human being, insofar as it is conceived to be determined in any way whatsoever to do some action. Therefore the desire that arises from reason, i.e. (*by 3p3*) the desire that is generated in us insofar as we act, is the very essence *or* nature of a human being insofar as it is conceived to be determined to do actions that are conceived adequately solely through the essence of a human being (*by 3def2*). Therefore if this desire could be excessive, human nature, considered in itself alone, could exceed itself, *or* would be able to do more than it can, which is a manifest contradiction. Accordingly this desire cannot be excessive. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 62

213

*Insofar as the mind conceives of things by the dictate of reason, it is equally affected whether the idea is of something in the future or in the past or in the present.*

Proof

Whatever the mind conceives when led by reason, it conceives from the same vantage of eternity *or* necessity (*by 2p44c2*), and it is affected by the same certainty (*by 2p43 and its scholium*). Therefore whether the idea is



of something in the future or in the past or in the present, the mind conceives of the thing with the same necessity, and is affected by the same certainty; and whether the idea is of something in the future or in the past or in the present, it will nevertheless be equally true (*by 2p41*), i.e. (*by 2def4*) it will still always have the same properties of an adequate idea. Therefore insofar as the mind conceives of things by the dictate of reason, it is affected in the same way, whether the idea is of something in the future or in the past or in the present. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

If we could have adequate cognition of the duration of things and determine their times of existence by reason, we would regard future things and present things with the same emotion, and would want a good which the mind conceived as future exactly like a present good. Consequently the mind would necessarily let a lesser present good go in favor of a greater future good, and it would not want anything that was good in the present but the cause of something bad in the future, as we will demonstrate shortly. But we can have only a very inadequate cognition of the duration of things (*by 2p31*), and we determine the times of existence of things (*by 2p44s*) by the imagination alone, which is not equally affected by the image of a present thing and a thing in the future. This is why the true cognition of good and bad which we have is merely abstract *or* universal, and the judgment that we make about the order of things and the nexus of causes in order to be able to determine what is good or bad for us in the present, is rather imaginary than real.

214 Therefore it is no wonder that the desire that arises from a cognition of good and bad, insofar as this regards the future, can be rather easily checked by a desire for things that are attractive in the present; on this see 4p16.

### Proposition 63

*Anyone who is led by fear and does good actions in order to avoid what is bad, is not led by reason.*

### Proof

All emotions related to the mind insofar as it acts, i.e. (*by 3p3*) emotions that are related to reason, are simply emotions of joy and desire

(*by 3p59*). And therefore (*by DOE13*) anyone who is led by fear and does good actions through timidity in the face of something bad is not led by reason. Q. E. D.

#### Scholium

Superstitious people, who know more about rebuking vices than about teaching virtues and who do not strive to lead human beings by reason but to restrain them by fear so that they avoid what is bad rather than love the virtues, have no aim in life but to make others as miserable as themselves, and therefore it is not surprising that they are for the most part troublesome and hateful to people.

#### Corollary

Under the influence of a desire arising from reason, we follow good directly and avoid what is bad indirectly.

#### Proof

The desire that arises from reason can arise only from the emotion of joy which is not a passion (*by 3p59*), i.e. from the joy which cannot be excessive (*by 4p61*). But it does not arise from sadness, and accordingly this desire (*by 4p8*) arises from a cognition of good and not of what is bad; and therefore we want good directly because of the command of reason, and to that extent only we avoid what is bad. Q. E. D.

#### Scholium

This corollary is explained by the example of a sick person and a healthy person. A sick person eats things he is averse to because he is timid in the face of death; but a healthy person enjoys his food, and so enjoys his life better than if he feared death and directly desired to avoid it. Similarly, a judge who condemns a guilty person to death not from hatred or anger, etc. but solely from love for the public welfare is led by reason alone.

215

#### Proposition 64

*Cognition of what is bad is inadequate cognition.*

Proof

Cognition of what is bad (*by 4p8*) is sadness itself, insofar as we are conscious of it. And sadness is a transition to a lesser perfection (*by DOE<sub>3</sub>*), and for that very reason it cannot be understood through the very essence of a human being (*by 3p6 and 3p7*). Accordingly (*by 3def2*) it is a passion, which (*by 3p3*) depends upon inadequate ideas, and consequently (*by 2p29*) cognition of it, i.e. cognition of what is bad, is inadequate. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that if the human mind had none but adequate ideas, it would form no notion of what is bad.

Proposition 65

*Under the command of reason we will follow the greater of two good things and the lesser of two bad things.*

Proof

A good which prevents us from enjoying a greater good is in truth a bad thing; for bad and good (*as we showed in 4pref*) are predicated of things insofar as we compare them with each other, and (*by the same reasoning*) a thing that is less bad is in truth a good. Therefore (*by 4p63c*) under the command of reason we will want *or* follow only the greater good and what is less bad. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Under the command of reason we will follow a thing that is less bad as being the greater good, and we will disregard a lesser good which is a cause of something worse. For the bad thing which is called less bad here 216 is in truth a good, and conversely the good thing is bad; therefore (*by 4p63c*) we will want the former and disregard the latter. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 66

*Under the command of reason we will want a greater future good in preference to a lesser present one, and a lesser present bad thing in preference to a good thing which is the cause of some future bad thing.*

Proof

If the mind could have adequate cognition of a future thing, it would be affected by the same emotion toward the future thing as toward the present one (*by 4p62*). Therefore insofar as we focus on reason itself, as we are supposing that we do in this proposition, the thing is the same whether the greater good or bad thing is supposed to be future or present. Accordingly (*by 4p65*) we will want a greater good in the future in preference to a lesser one in the present, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Under the command of reason we shall want a less bad thing in the present which is the cause of a greater future good and we shall ignore a lesser present good which is the cause of a worse thing in the future. This corollary is related to 4p66 as the corollary to 4p65 is related to 4p65 itself.

Scholium

If then all this is compared with what we showed earlier in this part (as far as 4p18) about the strength of the emotions, we shall easily see the difference between a person who is led solely by emotion *or* opinion and a person who is led by reason. The former, willingly or unwillingly, is doing actions of which he is supremely ignorant. But the latter pleases only himself, and does only the actions that he knows to be of the first importance in life and which therefore he most desires. Therefore I call the former a slave; the latter I call a free person, and I would like to say a few more things about his character and manner of life.

Proposition 67

217

*A free person thinks about death less than anything, and his wisdom is a meditation not on death but on life.*

Proof

A free person, i.e. a person who lives solely by the dictate of reason, is not led by the fear of death (*by 4p63*), but directly desires good (*by the corollary to the same proposition*), i.e. (*by 4p24*) he desires to act, to live, to preserve his being on the foundation of pursuing what is useful for

himself. Therefore less than anything does he think about death; but his wisdom is a meditation on life. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 68

*If human beings were born free, they would form no concept of good and bad as long as they were free.*

Proof

I have said that a person is free if he is led by reason alone. A person therefore who is born free and remains free has only adequate ideas, and accordingly he has no concept of bad (*by 4p64c*), and consequently (for good and bad are correlatives) not of good either. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

It is clear from 4p4 that the supposition in this proposition is false and cannot be conceived, except insofar as we focus on human nature alone *or* rather on God, not insofar as he is infinite but only insofar as he is the cause that human beings exist. This and other things that we have already proved seem to be signified by Moses in the famous story of the first human being. For in that story the only power of God that is conceived is the power by which he created a man, i.e. the power by which he looked only to what was useful for the man, and in this connection it is said that God prohibited the free man from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that as soon as he ate of it, he immediately feared to die rather than desired to live. Then, the story also says that when the man found a wife who thoroughly agreed with his own nature, he knew that there was nothing in nature that could be more useful to him than she was, but that after he came to believe that the beasts were similar to him, he immediately began to imitate their emotions (*see 3p27*) and to lose his freedom. But the Patriarchs later recovered it, led by the spirit of Christ, i.e. by the idea of God, on which alone it depends that a human being is free and that he desires for other human beings the good that he desires for himself, as we proved above (*by 4p37*).

218

Proposition 69

*The virtue of a free person is seen to be equally great in declining dangers as in overcoming them.*

Proof

An emotion can only be restrained or taken away by an emotion that is contrary to and stronger than the emotion that is to be restrained (*by 4p7*). But blind courage and fear are emotions that can be conceived to be equally great (*by 4p5 and 4p3*). Therefore great virtue of spirit or fortitude (*see the definition of this in 3p59s*) is as much required for restraining courage as fear, i.e. (*by DOE40 and DOE41*) a free person declines dangers with the same virtue of spirit with which he endeavors to overcome them. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

For a free person therefore timely flight and fighting are equally ascribed to great spiritedness, *or* a free person chooses flight with the same spiritedness *or* presence of mind as he chooses conflict.

Scholium

I have explained in 3p59s what spiritedness is, or what I understand by it. By danger I mean anything that can be a cause of some bad thing like sadness, hatred, discord, etc.

Proposition 70

*A free person who lives among ignorant people endeavors to decline their offer of benefits as much as possible.*

Proof

219

Each person judges what is good in conformance with his own character (*see 3p39s*). Therefore an ignorant person who has conferred a benefit on someone will value it in conformance with his own character, and if he sees that it is valued at a lower rate by the recipient of it, he will be sad (*by 3p42*). But a free person endeavors to unite other people with himself in friendship (*by 4p37*) and not to return to people benefits that are equivalent according to their emotions, but to lead himself and others by the free judgment of reason and to do only those actions that he himself knows to be of the first importance. Therefore a free person will endeavor to decline benefits from ignorant people as much as he can,

so that they will not hate him, but that he may comply with reason alone and not their appetite. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

I say *as much as he can*. For even though people may be ignorant, they are still human beings who can offer human assistance in times of need, and nothing trumps this. Therefore it often happens that it is necessary to accept benefits from them and consequently to show such gratitude to them in return as is suited to their character. Moreover we should be cautious even in declining benefits, so that we may not give the appearance of disdain for them or of being afraid to repay them because of avarice, and so offend them in this way even as we try to forestall their hatred. Therefore in declining benefits, we must take account of both the useful and the honorable.

Proposition 71

*Only free persons are wholly grateful to each other.*

Proof

Only free persons are completely useful to each other and united with each other in the closest bonds of friendship (*by 4p35 and its corollary 1*), and endeavor to benefit each other with an equal zeal of love (*by 4p37*); and therefore (*by DOE34*) only free persons are wholly grateful to each other. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

220 The gratefulness that people who are led by blind desire have toward each other is usually a ploy *or* a con rather than gratefulness. Moreover ingratitude is not an emotion. However ingratitude is base because it usually indicates that a person is affected by too much hatred, anger or pride or avarice, etc. For a person who does not know how to acknowledge gifts because of *gaucherie* is not ungrateful; even less so is anyone who is not moved by the gifts of a loose woman to gratify her lust or by the gifts of a thief to conceal his thefts, or of anyone of that sort. For on the contrary a person who does not allow himself to be corrupted by gifts, to his own or the public's detriment, shows that he has a constant spirit.

Proposition 72

*A free person never acts deceitfully but always in good faith.*

Proof

If a free person did anything deceitful, insofar as he is free, he would act in that way by the dictate of reason (for it is only to that extent that we call him free). Thus acting with deceit would be a virtue (*by 4p24*), and consequently (*by the same proposition*) everyone would be better advised for the preservation of his being to act deceitfully, i.e. (*as is self-evident*) people would be better advised to agree merely in words and to oppose each other in action, and this (*by 4p31c*) is absurd. Therefore a free person, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

The question may be raised: what if a person could free himself by perfidy from imminent danger of death, would not reason emphatically urge him to be perfidious in order to preserve his being? The reply will be along the same lines, that if reason urges it, it urges it on everyone, and thus reason urges all people merely to make a deceitful pretense of uniting their forces and having common laws, i.e. it urges them in truth not to share common laws, and this is absurd.

Proposition 73

*A person who is led by reason is freer in a commonwealth where he lives by the common decree than in solitude where he obeys only himself.*

Proof

A person who is led by reason is not led to obey by fear (*by 4p63*), but insofar as he endeavors to preserve his own being by the dictates of reason, i.e. (*by 4p66s*) insofar as he endeavors to live freely, he desires to maintain the system of common life and do what is useful for the community (*by 4p37*), and consequently (*as we have shown in 4p37s2*) he desires to live by the common decree of the commonwealth. Therefore a person who is led by reason desires to keep the common laws of the commonwealth so that he may live more freely. *Q. E. D.*

221



## Scholium

These and similar points that we have made about a person's true liberty are related to fortitude, i.e. (*by 3p59s*) spiritedness and generosity. I don't think it is worthwhile here to demonstrate separately all the properties of fortitude, much less to say that a person of fortitude hates no one, is angry with no one, is never envious or indignant with anyone, despises no one and is not at all proud. All this and everything that is connected with true life and religion are easily proved from 4p37 and 4p46 – namely that hatred is to be overcome by a response of love, and that everyone who is led by reason desires that the good that he wants for himself should also come to others.

And again, as we noted in 4p50s and in other places, a person of fortitude considers above everything that all things follow from the necessity of the divine nature. Accordingly, whatever he finds troublesome and bad, everything that appears impious, horrifying, unjust and base, arises from his conceiving the things themselves in a disturbed, mutilated and confused fashion. Because of this he endeavors above all to conceive things as they are in themselves and to remove impediments to true cognition, such as hatred, anger, envy, derision, pride and all the other things of that sort that we have laid out above; and thus, as far as he can, he endeavors, as we said, to act well and be joyful. But how far human virtue goes toward achieving these things and what it can do, I shall demonstrate in the following part.

## 222 Appendix

*What I have said in this part about the right manner of living is not arranged so that it can be taken in at a single glance; things have been demonstrated piecemeal to facilitate the deduction of one from the other. I propose therefore to offer a survey of the same things here and to reduce them to their main points.*

1. All our endeavors *or* desires follow from the necessity of our nature in such a way that they can be understood either through that alone as their proximate cause or insofar as we are a part of nature that cannot be adequately conceived through itself apart from other individual things.

2. The desires that follow from our nature in such a way that it can be understood through itself alone are those related to the mind, insofar as it is conceived as consisting of adequate ideas. The other desires are related

to the mind only insofar as it conceives things inadequately, and their force and growth must be defined not by human power but by the power of things outside us. Therefore the former are rightly called actions, and the latter passions; for the former always indicate our power, and conversely the latter indicate our powerlessness and our mutilated cognition.

3. Our actions, i.e. those desires which are defined by the power *or* reason of a person, are always good, but the others can be both good and bad.

4. In life therefore it is useful above all things to perfect the intellect *or* reason as much as we can, and the highest happiness *or* blessedness of a human being consists in this alone. For blessedness is nothing other than the very contentment of spirit which arises from an intuitive cognition of God. But to perfect the intellect is simply to understand God and the attributes and actions of God that follow from the necessity of his nature. Therefore the ultimate purpose of a human being who is led by reason, i.e. the highest desire by which he strives to govern all the others, is the desire by which he is led to an adequate conception of himself and of everything that can fall under his understanding. 223

5. There is therefore no life worth living without understanding, and things are good only insofar as they assist a person to enjoy the life of the mind, which is defined by understanding. Conversely the only things that we say are bad are those that can prevent a human being from perfecting his reason and enjoying a rational life.

6. But because everything of which a human being is the efficient cause is necessarily good, nothing bad can happen to a human being except from external causes, insofar, that is, as he is a part of the whole of nature, whose laws human nature is compelled to obey and which it is compelled to adapt to in almost infinite ways.

7. It cannot happen that a human being is not a part of nature and does not follow its common order, but if he is surrounded by such individual things as agree with the nature of a human being, a person's power of action will be assisted and fostered. Conversely if he is among things that do not agree with his nature, he will not be able to adapt to them without a great change in himself. 224

8. Whatever there is in nature that we judge to be bad *or* able to impede our existing and enjoying a rational life, we are permitted to rid ourselves of it in any way that seems quite safe. Conversely whatever there is that we judge to be good *or* useful for preserving our being and enjoying a rational life, we are permitted to take for our use and to use in

any way whatsoever. And absolutely, by the highest right of nature, everyone is permitted to do what he judges will be useful for himself.

225 9. Nothing can better agree with a thing's nature than other individual things of the same species; and therefore (*by appp7*) there is nothing more useful to a human being for preserving his own being and enjoying a rational life than a human being who is led by reason. Then, we know nothing among particular things that is more excellent than a human being who is led by reason, and therefore a human being cannot better show the worth of his skill and character more than in educating people so that they may in the end live under the rule of their own reason.

10. Insofar as human beings are brought into conflict by envy or some emotion of hatred against each other, they are to that extent contrary to each other, and consequently the more to be feared, in that they have more capabilities than other individual things in nature.

11. However hearts are won not by arms but by love and generosity.

12. It is especially useful for human beings to forge relationships and to bind themselves with those ties by which they may more capably form a unity among themselves, and absolutely to act in all those ways that serve to strengthen friendships.

226 13. But skill and vigilance are required for this. For human beings are variable (since those who live by the prescription of reason are few and far between), and yet they are mostly envious and more inclined to vengeance than to compassion. It therefore requires a singular power of spirit for a person to bear with each one in conformance with his own character and to keep himself from imitating their emotions. On the other hand, those who know better how to denounce human beings and rebuke their vices rather than to teach virtues, and do not know how to strengthen people's spirits but only how to break them, are troublesome both to themselves and to others. This is why many people have preferred to live among animals rather than among human beings because of excessive sensitivity of spirit and a false zeal for religion, like boys or adolescents who cannot with equanimity put up with their parents' tirades but take refuge in military service, and prefer the rigors of war and tyrannical rule to the advantages of life at home along with paternal admonitions, and they will suffer any burden to be placed upon them provided they get back at their parents.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> This is likely an allusion to Terence's *Heautontimorumenos*, where Clinia becomes a soldier to escape his father's tyranny.

14. Therefore although for the most part human beings manage everything to suit their own personal lust, still many more advantages than disadvantages result from their common society. Therefore it is better to put up with the offenses they commit with equanimity and to direct our zeal toward things that serve the preservation of concord and friendship.

15. The things that generate concord are related to justice, equity and honor. For as well as being offended by injustice and inequity, people are also offended by anything that is held to be base *or* by someone's rejecting the accepted morals of the commonwealth. The things especially necessary for fostering love are things that pertain to religion and piety. For these see 4p37s1 and 4p37s2, 4p46s and 4p73s.

16. Concord also very often arises from fear but without trust. Note also that fear arises from powerlessness of spirit and therefore is no part of the use of reason; and consequently neither is pity, even though it bears an appearance of piety. 227

17. People are also won over by openhandedness especially to people who cannot get the necessities for sustaining life. Nevertheless to give help to every indigent person far exceeds the resources and usefulness of a private person. For the wealth of a private person is very unequal to achieving this. And the capacity of a single person is also too limited to unite them all in friendship. Therefore the care of the poor falls upon society as a whole and aims only at what is useful for the community.

18. In accepting benefits and in showing gratitude an entirely different sort of care must be taken; on this see 4p17s and 4p71s.

19. Also, meretricious love, i.e. the lust of begetting which arises from beauty, and, absolutely, every love that recognizes any other cause than freedom of spirit, easily passes into hatred, unless, which is worse, it becomes a species of delirium, and then it fosters discord more than concord. See 3p31s.

20. Concerning marriage, it is certain that it agrees with reason if the desire for sexual intercourse is generated not by beauty alone, but also from a love of having children and educating them wisely, and if in addition the love on both sides, in the man as well as in the woman, has for its cause not beauty alone but, above all, freedom of spirit. 228

21. Flattery also creates concord, but with the sordid implication of servitude or insincerity; for none are more captivated by flattery than proud persons who want to be first but are not.

22. In abjection there is a false appearance of piety and religion. And although abjection is contrary to pride, an abject person is nevertheless very close to a proud person. See 4p57s.

23. Shame too contributes to concord but only in things that cannot be concealed. Then, because shame itself is a species of sadness, it is not concerned with the use of reason.

24. The rest of the emotions of sadness toward people are directly opposed to justice, equity, honor, piety and religion. Although indignation seems to carry an appearance of equity, nevertheless life becomes lawless when everyone is permitted to pass judgment on other people's doings and to vindicate for himself his own or another person's right.

229 25. Consideration, i.e. the desire to please people, which is determined by reason, is related to piety (as we said in 4p37s1). But if it arises from an emotion, it is ambition *or* the desire by which people very often raise discord and sedition under a false image of piety. For anyone who desires to help other people with advice or deeds so that they may enjoy the highest good along with him will do all he can to win their love but not to turn that into wonder at himself in order to get his teaching labelled with his own name;<sup>77</sup> and he will strive to offer absolutely no cause for envy. Then, in public discourses he will be careful not to report people's faults, and he will speak only very sparingly about human powerlessness. However he will speak generously of human virtue *or* power and how it may be perfected, so that people may endeavor to live by the precept of reason, so far as they can, not from fear or aversion but moved by the emotion of joy alone.

26. Apart from human beings, we know no particular thing in nature whose mind we may enjoy and which we may be able to join to ourselves in friendship or in some kind of relationship. Therefore the rule that we seek what is useful for ourselves does not require us to preserve anything in nature apart from human beings.<sup>78</sup> Rather, depending on their various uses, it teaches us to preserve them or to destroy them or to adapt them in any way for our own use.

<sup>77</sup> This line alludes to Terence, *Eunuchus*, 263.

<sup>78</sup> The 'rule' here is likely the dictate of reason from 4p18s: 'there are many things therefore outside ourselves which are useful to us and which are to be sought for that reason.' He also appears to refer to this dictate in 4app32.

27. The usefulness we derive from things outside ourselves, apart from the experience and cognition that we acquire from our observation of them and our changing them from one form to another, is above all the preservation of the body. For this reason the things that are especially useful to us are those that can nourish and sustain the body, so that all of its parts may be able to perform their functions properly. For the more ways the body is capable of being affected by external bodies and the more ways it is capable of affecting external bodies, the more capable the mind is of thinking (see 4p38 and 4p39). But very few things in nature seem to be of this description, and therefore in order to nourish the body in the requisite manner, it is necessary to make use of many nutriments of different natures. For the human body is composed of a great many parts of diverse nature which need continual and varied sustenance, so that the whole body may be equally capable of everything that can follow from its nature, and so that the mind in consequence may be equally capable of conceiving more things. 230

28. The resources of a single person would not suffice to obtain all these things, if human beings did not exchange mutual services. Money has come to act as a substitute for all things, and because of this its image has to a very large extent come to occupy the minds of ordinary people, because they can scarcely imagine any species of joy that is not accompanied by the idea of money as its cause.

29. But this fault is found only in people who pursue money not because of need or to provide necessities, but because they have learned the arts of moneymaking by which they raise themselves to magnificence. They feed their bodies as a matter of habit, but sparingly, believing that anything they spend on the preservation of their bodies is to the detriment of their treasure. But those who know the true use of money, and have the disposal of a moderate amount of wealth based on need alone, live content with little. 231

30. Since therefore things that assist the parts of the body to perform their functions are good, and joy consists in the assistance or augmentation of a person's power insofar as he consists of mind and body, everything that brings joy is good. Since however things do not act for the purpose of affecting us with joy, and their power of action is not regulated for what is useful to us, and finally since joy is most often primarily related to one part of the body, emotions of joy can very often

(unless reason and vigilance are exercised) be excessive, and consequently so can the desires generated from them. Moreover the first thing we get from an emotion is what is pleasant in the present,<sup>79</sup> and we are not able to judge the future with equal emotion of spirit. See 4p44s and 4p60s.

31. But superstition seems to state the contrary: that what brings sadness is good and what on the other hand brings joy is bad. But as we have already said (see 4p45s), only an envious person takes pleasure in my lack of power and misfortune. For the greater the joy we are affected by, the greater the perfection to which we pass; and consequently the more we participate in the divine nature; nor can a joy governed by a true estimate of what is useful for us ever be bad. But a person on the other hand who is led by fear and does a good action in order to avoid something bad is not led by reason.

32. But human power is very limited and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes; and therefore we do not have an absolute ability to adapt things outside ourselves to our own use. But we will bear with equanimity things that have turned out for us contrary to what is required by the rule that we seek what is useful for ourselves, if we are conscious that we have done our duty, and that the power we have could not extend so far as to avert those things, and that we are a part of the whole of nature whose order we follow.<sup>80</sup> But if we clearly and distinctly understand this, that part of ourselves which is defined by understanding, i.e. the better part of ourselves, will be fully content with it and will endeavor to persevere in that contentment. For insofar as we understand, we cannot want anything but what is necessary, and absolutely we cannot be content with anything but what is true; and therefore insofar as we understand these things correctly, to that extent the endeavor of the better part of ourselves agrees with the order of the whole of nature.

*End of the fourth part*

<sup>79</sup> This line alludes to Terence, *Heautontimorumenos*, 962.

<sup>80</sup> Another possible reference to the dictate of reason to seek things outside ourselves that are useful (4p18s). See also 4app26.

## Fifth Part of the Ethics

233

### OF THE POWER OF THE INTELLECT, OR OF HUMAN FREEDOM

#### Preface

*I pass finally to the remaining part of the Ethics, which is about the way or the path that leads to freedom. In this part therefore I shall discuss the power of reason showing what reason itself can do in the face of the emotions. I shall then show what freedom of mind or blessedness is, and we shall see from this how much more effective a wise person is than an ignorant person. Not relevant here are the questions how and in what manner the intellect should be perfected and also the art by which the body is to be healed in order to perform its function properly. The latter belongs to medicine and the former to logic. Here then, as I said, I shall discuss only the power of the mind or of reason, and above all I shall show how much sovereignty it has over the emotions to restrain and govern them and what sort of sovereignty that is. We have already demonstrated above that we do not have absolute sovereignty over them. The Stoics however thought that they depended absolutely on our will and that we could have absolute sovereignty over them. But they were compelled by refractory experience rather than by their principles to admit that a good deal of practice and effort are also required to restrain and govern them. Someone tried to show this by instancing two dogs (if I remember correctly). One of the dogs was a house dog and the other was a hunting dog. In the end by habituation he was able to get the house dog used to go hunting, and the hunting dog conversely to stop chasing hares.*

234



Descartes very much favors this view. For he took the position that the soul or mind is specifically united with a certain part of the brain, i.e. the so-called pineal gland, by means of which the mind senses all the motions aroused in the body as well as external objects and which the mind can move in various ways simply because it wills to.<sup>81</sup> He declared that this gland is poised in the middle of the brain in such a way that it can be moved by the tiniest motion of the animal spirits. He then declared that this gland is poised in the middle of the brain in as many various ways as the various ways in which the animal spirits impact it. Moreover, there are as many various traces imprinted upon it as there are various external objects that drive the animal spirits themselves toward it. The result is that if subsequently the gland, by the will of the soul which moves it in different ways, is poised in one way or another as it was once poised by the motions of the spirits in one way or another, then the gland itself will drive and determine the animal spirits in the same way as they had previously been driven by the similar poise of the gland.

Moreover he declared that every single willing of the mind is united by nature with a certain specific motion of the gland. For example if anyone has a will to look at a distant object, this will is going to cause the pupil to be dilated. However if he is thinking merely about dilating the pupil, it will not help to have a will to do that, because nature has not connected the motion of the gland which serves to drive spirits toward the optic nerve in a way that is suitable for dilating or contracting the pupil with the will to dilate or contract it but only with the will to view distant or close objects.

235 Finally he declared that although each and every motion of this gland seems to be connected by nature with particular thoughts of ours from the beginning of our lives, they can nevertheless be connected with others by habituation; this he endeavors to prove in *The Passions of the Soul*, part 1, article 50. He concludes from this that there is no soul so weak that it cannot, when properly directed, acquire absolute control over its passions. For as he defines them, they are perceptions or senses or disturbances of the soul, which are specially related to it, and which N. B. are produced, preserved and strengthened by some motion of the spirits (see *The Passions of the Soul*, part 1, article 27).<sup>82</sup> But since we can connect any motion of the gland and consequently of the spirits with any willing, and since the

<sup>81</sup> For Descartes's theory of the pineal gland as the seat of the soul and as the site of interaction between mind and body, see *Passions of the Soul*, articles 31–7.

<sup>82</sup> This is a direct quote from the 1650 Latin translation, which was in Spinoza's library.

*determination of the will depends upon our abilities alone, it follows that if we determine our will by definite, firm judgments in accordance with which we wish to direct the actions of our life, and if we join to these judgments the motions of the passions which we wish to have, we shall acquire an absolute sovereignty over our passions.*<sup>83</sup>

*This is the opinion of this illustrious man (as far as I gather it from his own words), but I would scarcely have believed that it had been put forward by so great a man, if it had been less clever. Surely I cannot properly express my bewilderment that a philosopher who had stated firmly that he deduced nothing except from self-evident principles, and affirmed nothing except what he perceived clearly and distinctly, and who had so often rebuked the scholastics because they attempted to explain obscure matters by means of occult qualities, should take up a hypothesis that is more occult than any occult quality. What, I ask, does he mean by the union of mind and body? What clear and distinct concept does he have, I ask, of the very close union of a thought with a certain tiny portion of quantity? I certainly wish he had explained this union through its proximate cause. But he had conceived the mind as so distinct from the body that he could not assign any special cause either to this union or to the mind itself but had to have recourse to the cause of the whole universe, i.e. to God.*

236

*Then I would very much like to know how many degrees of motion the mind can attribute to that pineal gland and how much force it can deploy to keep it poised. For I don't know whether this gland is moved around more slowly or more swiftly by the mind than by the animal spirits, and whether the movements of the passions, which we have closely connected to firm judgments, may not in turn be disconnected from them by corporeal causes. It would follow from the latter that however firmly the mind may have set itself to face danger and may have joined motions of courage to this decision, yet despite this, when the danger is seen, the gland may be so suspended that the mind cannot think about anything except flight. And certainly, since there is no common measure between the will and the motion, there is also no comparison made between the power or strength of the mind and that of the body; and consequently the strength of the latter can in no ways be determined by the strength of the former. Moreover not only is this gland not found to be situated in the middle of the brain in such a way that it can be moved*

<sup>83</sup> See *Passions of the Soul*, articles 44–50.

around so easily and in so many ways, but also not all the nerves extend all the way to the cavities of the brain. Finally I omit everything he says about the will and its freedom,<sup>84</sup> since I have more than sufficiently shown that these things are false.<sup>85</sup>

Therefore because the power of the mind, as I showed above, is defined by understanding alone, we will determine purely by cognition of the mind the remedies for the emotions, remedies which I believe everyone knows by experience but does not accurately observe or distinctly see, and from that we will deduce everything that concerns its blessedness.

237 Axioms

1. If two contrary actions are aroused in one subject, a change will necessarily have to take place either in both of them or in one alone, until they cease to be contrary.

2. The power of an effect is defined by the power of its cause insofar as its essence is explained or defined through the essence of the cause itself.

This axiom is evident from 3p7.

Proposition 1

*Just as thoughts and ideas of things are ordered and connected in the mind, so too affections of the body or images of things are precisely ordered and connected in the body.*

Proof

The order and connection of ideas is the same (*by 2p7*) as the order and connection of things, and *vice versa* the order and connection of things is the same (*by 2p6c and 2p7*) as the order and connection of ideas. Therefore just as the order and connection of ideas in the mind happen in accordance with the order and connection of the affections of the body (*by 2p18*), so *vice versa* (*by 3p2*) the order and connection of affections of the body happen as these thoughts and the ideas of things are ordered and connected in the mind. *Q. E. D.*

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, the Fourth Meditation (AT VII, 57–60) and the *Principles of Philosophy* I, 37, 39–41.

<sup>85</sup> See 1p32, 2p35s, 2p48, 2p49s; see also 1p17c2, 1app.

Proposition 2

*If we disconnect a disturbance of the spirit, or emotion, from the thought of an external cause and connect it with other thoughts, then the love or hatred for the external cause, as well as the waverings of spirit arising from these emotions, will be destroyed.*

Proof

238

What constitutes the form of love or hatred is joy or sadness accompanied by the idea of an external cause (*by DOE6 and DOE7*). Therefore when the cause is taken away, the form of love or hatred is taken away at the same time; and therefore these emotions and those arising from them are destroyed. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 3

*An emotion which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it.*

Proof

An emotion which is a passion is a confused idea (*by the general definition of the emotions*). Therefore if we form a clear and distinct idea of an emotion itself, this idea will not be distinguished from the emotion itself insofar as it is related to the mind alone (*by 2p21 with its scholium*) by anything but reason; and thus (*by 3p3*) the emotion will cease to be a passion. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Therefore the better we know an emotion, the more it is placed within our abilities and the less passive the mind is in relation to it.

Proposition 4

*There is no affection of the body that we cannot form some clear and distinct concept of.*

Proof

Things which are common to all can only be conceived adequately (*by 2p38*), and thus (*by 2p12 and L2 following 2p13*) there is no affection of the body that we cannot form some clear and distinct concept of. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

239 It follows from this that there is no emotion that we cannot form some clear and distinct concept of. For an emotion is the idea of an affection of the body (*by the general definition of the emotions*), and therefore (*by 5p4*) it must involve some clear and distinct concept.

Scholium

There is nothing from which some effect does not follow (*by 1p36*), and we understand clearly and distinctly whatever follows from an idea which is adequate in us (*by 2p40*). It follows that each person has the ability to understand clearly and distinctly himself and his emotions, if not absolutely, at least partly; and consequently to ensure that he is less acted on by them. One must therefore devote oneself above all to the task of getting to know each emotion, as far as possible, clearly and distinctly, so that from an emotion the mind may be determined to think those things that it clearly and distinctly perceives and in which it is fully content, and thus the emotion itself may be separated from the thought of an external cause and be connected with true thoughts. The upshot of this will be that not only love, hatred, etc. will be destroyed (*by 5p2*), but also that the appetites *or* desires which usually arise from such an emotion will be unable to be excessive (*by 4p61*). For one must note, above all, that it is one and the same appetite by which a human being is said both to act and to be acted on. For example, we have shown that human nature is so constituted, that everyone wants other people to live in conformance with his own character (*see 3p31s*). And this appetite in a person who is not led by reason is a passion; it is called ambition and it does not differ very much from pride. By contrast in a person who lives by the dictate of reason, it is an action *or* a virtue, and it is called piety (*see 4p37s1 and 4p37, alternative proof*). In this manner all appetites *or* desires are merely passions insofar as they arise from inadequate ideas; and they are accounted virtue when they are aroused or generated from adequate ideas. For all the desires by which we are determined to do some action can arise as much from adequate ideas as from inadequate ideas (*see 4p59*). And (to return to the point from which I digressed)  
240 no better remedy for the emotions that lies within our abilities can be devised than that which consists in a true cognition of them, since there

is no other power of the mind available than that of thinking and forming adequate ideas, as we have shown above (*by 3p3*).

Proposition 5

*The emotion toward a thing which we imagine simply and not as necessary nor as possible nor as contingent, is, all other things being equal, the greatest of all.*

Proof

An emotion toward a thing that we imagine to be free is greater than toward a necessary thing (*by 3p49*), and consequently still greater than the emotion toward a thing that we imagine as possible or contingent (*by 4p11*). But to imagine something as free is no other than to imagine the thing simply, in ignorance of the causes by which it has been determined to act (*by our proofs in 2p35s*). Therefore the emotion toward a thing that we simply imagine is, other things being equal, greater than toward a necessary, possible or contingent thing, and consequently it will be the greatest. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 6

*Insofar as the mind understands all things as necessary, to that extent it has greater power over the emotions, or is less acted on by them.*

Proof

The mind understands that all things are necessary (*by 1p29*) and are determined to exist and operate by an infinite nexus of causes (*by 1p28*); and therefore (*by the previous proposition*) it ensures to that extent that it is less acted on by the emotions arising from them and (*by 3p48*) it is less affected toward them. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

The more this cognition that things are necessary is concerned with particular things that we imagine quite distinctly and vividly, the greater the power of the mind over the emotions. Experience itself also testifies to this. For we see that sadness for the loss of some good thing that has perished is mitigated as soon as the person who lost it considers that that good thing could not have been saved in any case. Thus we also see

241

that no one pities an infant because it does not know how to speak or walk or reason and because it lives for so many years as it were unconscious of itself. But if most people were born as adults and only one or two as infants, then everyone would pity every one of the infants, because then they would consider infancy itself not as a natural and necessary thing but as a fault *or* something sinful in nature; and we could give several other instances of this sort.

Proposition 7

*Emotions arising from or aroused by reason, if we take time into account, are more powerful than those related to particular things which we regard as absent.*

Proof

We do not regard a thing as absent because of the emotion by which we imagine it but because the body is affected by a different emotion which excludes the existence of the thing (*by 2p17*). Therefore an emotion related to a thing which we regard as absent is not of such a nature as to overcome all a person's other actions and power (*on this see 4p6*). To the contrary, it is of such a nature that it can only be restrained in some fashion by the emotions that exclude the existence of the external cause (*by 4p9*). But an emotion that arises from reason is necessarily related to the common properties of things (*see the definition of reason in 2p40s2*); and we always regard these as present (for there can be nothing which excludes their present existence) and imagine them always in the same way (*by 2p38*). Therefore such an emotion always remains the same, and consequently (*by 5a1*) emotions which are contrary to it and which are not fostered by their own external causes will have to adapt themselves continually to it until they are no longer contrary, and to that extent an emotion arising from reason is the more powerful. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 8

*The more concurrent and simultaneous causes by which an emotion is aroused, the greater it is.*

Proof

Several causes simultaneously can do more than if they were fewer (*by 3p7*); and therefore (*by 4p5*) the more causes simultaneously by which an emotion is aroused, the stronger it is. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

This proposition is also evident from 5a2.

Proposition 9

*An emotion related to several different causes which the mind regards at the same time as the emotion itself is less harmful, and we are less acted on by it, and therefore we are less affected toward each cause, than another equally great emotion which is related to only one or a small number of causes.*

Proof

An emotion is only bad or harmful insofar as it hinders the mind from being able to think (*by 4p26 and 4p27*). Therefore an emotion which determines the mind to regard several objects at the same time is less harmful than another equally great emotion which keeps the mind so focused on one or a few objects that it cannot think of other things. That is the first point. Then, because the essence of the mind, i.e. (*by 3p7*) its power, consists in thought alone (*by 2p11*), the mind is less acted on by an emotion which determines it to regard several things at the same time than by an equally great emotion that keeps the mind occupied in regarding only one or a few objects. That is the second point. Finally (*by 3p48*) insofar as this emotion is related to several causes, it is also lesser in relation to each one. *Q. E. D.*

243

Proposition 10

*So long as we are not assailed by emotions that are contrary to our nature, we have the ability to order and connect the affections of the body in accordance with the order of the intellect.*

Proof

Emotions that are contrary to our nature, i.e. (*by 4p30*) emotions that are bad, are bad insofar as they impede the mind from understanding (*by 4p27*). Therefore so long as we are not assailed by emotions that are contrary to our nature, for so long the power of the mind by which it endeavors to understand things (*by 4p26*) is not impeded, and therefore for so long it has the ability to form clear and distinct ideas and to deduce one idea from another (*see 2p40s2 and 2p47s*). Consequently (*by 5p1*) for



so long we have the ability to order and connect the affections of the body in accordance with the order of the intellect. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

With this ability of rightly ordering and connecting the affections of the body we can ensure that we are not easily affected by bad emotions. For (*by 5p7*) greater force is required to restrain emotions which are ordered and connected in accordance with the order of the intellect than those that are uncertain and random. The best thing we can achieve therefore, so long as we do not have perfect cognition of our emotions, is to conceive a right manner of living *or* sure tenets of life and to commit them to memory and apply them constantly to particular situations that often meet us in life, so that they may have a broad effect on our imagination and always be at hand for us.

244 For example, we have included among the tenets of life (*see 4p46 and 4p46s*) the tenet that hatred is to be overcome by love *or* generosity and not repaid with reciprocal hatred. In order that we may always have this precept of reason on hand when we need it, we must often think of and reflect on the common offenses people commit and by what means and in what way they are best forestalled by generosity. In this way we shall join an image of an offense to an image of this tenet and it will be always on hand for us (*by 2p18*) when an offense is committed against us. We should also have on hand an account of what is truly useful to us and also of the good that arises from mutual friendship and common society, as well as an understanding that the highest contentment of spirit arises from a right manner of living (*by 4p52*) and that human beings, like all other things, act from the necessity of nature. If we have all these things at hand, the offense *or* the hatred that an offense normally gives rise to, will occupy a very small part of our imagination and will easily be overcome. Or if the anger that normally arises from very serious offenses is not so easily overcome, it will still be overcome despite everything, although not without waverings of spirit, in a far shorter space of time than if we did not have these things premeditated in this way, as is evident from 5p6, 5p7 and 5p8. We must think in the same way about spiritedness in order to divest ourselves of fear; we must often review and imagine the common dangers of life and reflect how by presence of mind and fortitude they may best be averted and overcome.

Note however that in ordering our thoughts and imaginings we must always focus (*by 4p63c and 3p59*) on what is good in each thing, so that we may be determined always to act from an emotion of joy. For example, if anyone becomes conscious that he follows too much after glory, he should think about the right use of it and what is the purpose of pursuing it and by what means it can be acquired, and not about its abuse and the vanity and inconstancy of human beings, or other things of this sort which no one dwells on except from sickness of spirit. It is the most ambitious people who most afflict themselves with such thoughts, when they despair of achieving the kudos they are ambitious for; and while spewing out their anger, they try to give an appearance of wisdom. It is certain therefore that it is those who make the most clamor about the abuse of glory and the vanity of the world who are the most desirous of glory. This is not confined to ambitious people, but is common to all whom fortune turns against and who are powerless in spirit. A poor person who is also avaricious never stops talking about the misuse of money and the faults of the wealthy. He achieves nothing by this except to torment himself and show others that he has no equanimity in bearing either his own poverty or other people's wealth. So too men who have been badly treated by a girlfriend think of nothing but women's caprice and their deceitful spirits and all their other stereotypical faults – all of which they immediately consign to oblivion as soon as the girlfriend takes them back. Anyone therefore who is eager to govern his emotions and appetites solely by the love of freedom, so far as he can, will strive to get to know the virtues and their causes and to fill his spirit with the gladness that arises from a true cognition of them. But he will not be at all eager to dwell on people's faults and disparage them and find gladness in a false appearance of freedom. Anyone who will diligently observe these things (for they are not difficult) and practice them, will in a short space of time surely be able for the most part to direct his actions by the sovereignty of reason.

245

Proposition 11

*The more things an image is related to, the more frequent it is or the more often it is invigorated and the more it occupies the mind.*

Proof

The more things an image *or* emotion is related to, the more causes there are which can arouse and foster it, and the mind (*by hypothesis*) regards all of them at the same time as a result of that emotion; and therefore because of that the emotion is more frequent *or* more often invigorated and (*by 5p8*) occupies the mind more. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 12

*Images of things are more easily joined with images related to things we understand clearly and distinctly than with other things.*

Proof

Things that we understand clearly and distinctly are either common properties of things or deduced from them (*see the definition of reason in 2p40s2*), and consequently they are aroused in us more often (*by the previous proposition*). Therefore it can more easily happen that we regard other things simultaneously with these rather than with other things, and consequently (*by 2p18*) that they are more easily joined with these than with other things. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 13

*The more other things an image is joined with, the more often it is invigorated.*

Proof

The more other things an image is joined with, the more causes there are (*by 2p18*) that can arouse it. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 14

*The mind can ensure that all affections of the body or images of things are related to the idea of God.*

Proof

There is no affection of the body which the mind cannot form a clear and distinct concept of (*by 5p4*); and therefore it can ensure (*by 1p15*) that they are all related to the idea of God. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 15

*Anyone who understands himself and his emotions clearly and distinctly loves God, and all the more, the more he understands himself and his emotions.*

Proof

Anyone who understands himself and his emotions clearly and distinctly is joyful (*by 3p53*), and this is accompanied by the idea of God (*by the previous proposition*); and therefore (*by DOE6*) he loves God, and (*by the same reasoning*) all the more, the more he understands himself and his emotions. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 16

*This love for God must occupy his mind more than anything.*

Proof

This love is joined with all the affections of the body (*by 5p14*) and is fostered by all of them (*by 5p15*); and therefore (*by 5p11*) it must occupy the mind more than anything. *Q. E. D.* 247

Proposition 17

*God is without passions, and is not affected by any emotion of joy or sadness.*

Proof

All ideas, insofar as they are related to God, are true (*by 2p32*), i.e. (*by 2def4*) they are adequate; and therefore (*by the general definition of the emotions*) God is without passions. Then, God cannot pass either to a greater or to a lesser perfection (*by 1p20c2*); and therefore (*by DOE2 and DOE3*) he is not affected by any emotion of joy or sadness. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Properly speaking, God does not love anyone or hate anyone. For (*by 5p17*) God is not affected by any emotion of joy or sadness, and consequently (*by DOE6 and DOE7*) he does not love or hate anyone either.

Proposition 18

*No one can hate God.*

Proof

The idea of God which is in us is adequate and perfect (*by 2p46 and 2p47*); and therefore insofar as we think of God, to that extent we are acting (*by 3p3*), and consequently (*by 3p59*) there can be no sadness accompanied by the idea of God, i.e. (*by DOE7*) no one can hate God. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

Love for God cannot be turned into hatred.

Scholium

248 But it may be objected that as we understand God to be the cause of all things, we are by that very fact considering God to be the cause of sadness. I reply that insofar as we understand the causes of sadness, to that extent (*by 5p3*) it does itself cease to be a passion, i.e. (*by 3p59*) to that extent it ceases to be sadness; and therefore insofar as we understand God to be the cause of sadness, to that extent we are joyful.

Proposition 19

*He who loves God cannot endeavor that God love him in return.*

Proof

If a person endeavored this, he would be desiring (*by 5p17c*) that God whom he loves not be God, and consequently (*by 3p19*) he would be desiring to be saddened, and this (*by 3p28*) is absurd. Therefore he who loves God, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 20

*This love for God cannot be tainted by emotions either of envy or jealousy, but the more people we imagine to be joined with God in the same bond of love, the more it is fostered.*

Proof

This love for God is the highest good that we can seek by the dictate of reason (*by 4p28*). It is common to all human beings (*by 4p36*), and we desire everyone to enjoy it (*by 4p37*). Therefore (*by DOE23*) it cannot

be tainted by the emotion of envy nor (*by 5p18 and by the definition of jealousy, for which see 3p35s*) by the emotion of jealousy either. To the contrary (*by 3p31*) the more people we imagine to enjoy it, the more it must be fostered. *Q. E. D.*

### Scholium

We can in this same way show that there is no emotion that is directly contrary to this love by which this love can be destroyed; and therefore we can conclude that this love for God is the most constant of all emotions, and cannot be destroyed, insofar as it is related to the body, 249 except with the body itself. We shall see later what nature it has, insofar as it is related to the mind alone.

With this I have covered all the remedies for the emotions, *or* everything that the mind, considered in itself, can do in the face of the emotions. It is clear from all this that the power of the mind over the emotions consists:

First, in cognition of the emotions itself (*see 5p4s*).

Secondly, in the fact that it separates the emotions from the thought of an external cause which we imagine in a confused way (*see 5p2 with the same 5p4s*).

Thirdly, in the time, by which the affections related to things that we understand surpass those which are related to things that we conceive in a confused *or* mutilated fashion (*see 5p7*).

Fourthly, in the very many causes which foster the affections related to the common properties of things or to God (*see 5p9 and 5p11*).

Fifthly and finally, in the order by which the mind is able to order and connect its emotions with each other (*see 5p10s as well as 5p12, 5p13 and 5p14*).

But in order that this power of the mind over the emotions may be better understood, the first thing to note is that we call emotions great when we compare one person's emotion with another's and see that one person is assailed by a particular emotion more than someone else, or when we compare one and the same person's emotions with each other and find that the same person is affected *or* moved by one emotion more than by another. For (*by 4p5*) the force of each emotion is defined by the power of the external cause compared with our own. The power

of the mind however is defined by cognition alone, whereas its powerlessness, *or* passion, is estimated solely by privation of cognition, i.e. by that through which ideas are said to be inadequate. It follows from this that a mind is most acted on when inadequate ideas constitute its greatest part, so that it is distinguished more by being acted on than by acting. Conversely a mind acts the most when adequate ideas constitute its greatest part, so that, although there are as many inadequate ideas in the latter as in the former, it is still distinguished more by ideas that are related to human virtue than those that betray human powerlessness.

250 Then, we should note that sicknesses of the spirit and misfortune mostly have their origin in an excessive love for something that is subject to many changes and that we can never control. For no one is anxious or worried about anything but what he loves; and offense, suspicion, enmity, etc. arise only from a love for things which no one can in truth possess. We easily conceive from this therefore what clear and distinct cognition can do in the face of the emotions, especially the third kind of cognition (*on which see 2p47s*) whose foundation is the very cognition of God. That is, insofar as they are passions, if it does not absolutely take them away (*see 5p3 with 5p4s*), it at least ensures that they make up a very small part of the mind (*see 5p14*). Then, it generates love for an unchangeable and eternal thing (*see 5p15*) which we in truth possess (*see 2p45*) and which for that reason is tainted by none of the faults that there are in ordinary love, but can always be greater and greater (*by 5p15*) and occupy the greatest part of the mind (*by 5p16*) and have broad effects upon it.

And with this I have dealt with everything that concerns this present life. As I said at the beginning of this scholium, anyone will easily be able to see that in these few words I have covered all the remedies for the emotions, if he has paid attention to what we have said in this scholium and at the same time to the definitions of the mind and its emotions and finally to 3p1 and 3p3. It is now time therefore to move on to things that pertain to the duration of the mind without relation to the body.

#### Proposition 21

*The mind can only imagine anything or recall past things so long as the body lasts.*

Proof

The mind does not express the actual existence of its body nor does it conceive the affections of the body as actual except so long as the body lasts (*by 2p8c*). Consequently (*by 2p26*) it does not conceive any body as actually existing except so long as its own body lasts, and accordingly it cannot imagine anything (*see the definition of imagination in 2p17s*) or recall past things except so long as the body lasts (*see the definition of memory in 2p18s*). *Q. E. D.* 251

Proposition 22

*In God however there is necessarily an idea that expresses the essence of this or that human body from the vantage of eternity.*

Proof

God is not only the cause of the existence of this or that human body but also of its essence (*by 1p25*), which must necessarily be conceived through the very essence of God (*by 1a4*) and by a certain eternal necessity (*by 1p16*), and this concept must necessarily be in God (*by 2p3*). *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 23

*The human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body; but something of it remains, and that is eternal.*

Proof

There is necessarily in God a concept *or* idea that expresses the essence of the human body (*by the previous proposition*), which for that reason is necessarily something that pertains to the essence of the human mind (*by 2p13*). But we attribute no duration that can be defined by time to the human mind, except insofar as it expresses the actual existence of the body, which is explained through duration and can be defined by time. That is to say (*by 2p8c*), we attribute duration to it only while the body lasts. However since, despite this, there is something that is conceived by a certain eternal necessity through the very essence of God (*by the previous proposition*), this something which pertains to the essence of the mind will necessarily be eternal. *Q. E. D.*



Scholium

252 As we have said, this idea which expresses the essence of the body from the vantage of eternity is a certain mode of thinking that pertains to the essence of the mind and is necessarily eternal. Nevertheless it cannot be that we recall that we existed before the body, since there can be no traces of this in the body, and eternity cannot be defined by time and cannot have any relation to time. But nevertheless we sense [*sentimus*] and experience that we are eternal. For the mind no less senses the things that it conceives by understanding than the things which it has in memory. For the eyes of the mind with which it sees and observes things are the proofs themselves. Therefore although we do not recall that we existed before the body, we nevertheless sense that our mind, insofar as it involves the essence of the body from the vantage of eternity, is eternal, and as such its existence cannot be defined by time *or* explained through duration. Our mind therefore can only be said to endure and its existence can only be defined by a definite time, insofar as it involves the actual existence of the body, and to that extent only does it have the power of determining the existence of things in time and of conceiving them under duration.

Proposition 24

*The more we understand particular things, the more we understand God.*

Proof

This is evident from 1p25c.

Proposition 25

*The mind's highest endeavor and its highest virtue is to understand things by the third kind of cognition.*

Proof

The third kind of cognition proceeds from an adequate idea of certain attributes of God to an adequate cognition of the essence of things (*see the definition of this in 2p40s2*). The more we understand things in this way, the more (*by the previous proposition*) we understand God; and

accordingly (*by 4p28*) the mind's highest virtue, i.e. (*by 4def8*) the mind's power or nature, or (*by 3p7*) its highest endeavor, is to understand things by the third kind of cognition. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 26

253

*The more capable the mind is of understanding with the third kind of cognition, the more it desires to understand things by this same kind of cognition.*

Proof

This is obvious. For insofar as we conceive that the mind is capable of understanding things with this kind of cognition, to that extent we conceive that it is determined to understand things with the same kind of cognition, and consequently (*by DOE1*), the more capable the mind is for this, the more it desires it. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 27

*From this third kind of cognition arises the highest contentment of spirit that there can be.*

Proof

The highest virtue of the mind is to know God (*by 4p28*) or to understand things by the third kind of cognition (*by 5p25*); and this virtue is all the greater, the more the mind knows things by this kind of cognition (*by 5p24*). Therefore anyone who knows things by this kind of cognition passes to the highest human perfection, and consequently (*by DOE2*) is affected by the highest joy accompanied (*by 2p43*) by an idea of himself and his own virtue. Accordingly (*by DOE25*) from this kind of cognition arises the highest contentment there can be. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 28

*The endeavor or desire to know things by the third kind of cognition cannot arise from the first kind of cognition, but it can arise from the second.*

Proof

This proposition is self-evident. For whatever we understand clearly and distinctly, we understand either through itself or through another thing 254

which is conceived through itself. That is, ideas that are clear and distinct in us *or* that are related to the third kind of cognition (see 2p40s2) cannot follow from mutilated and confused ideas, which (*by the same scholium*) are related to the first kind of cognition, but from adequate ideas, *or* (*by the same scholium*) from the second and third kinds of cognition. Accordingly (*by DOE1*) the desire to know things by the third kind of cognition cannot arise from the first kind but it can arise from the second. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 29

*Whatever the mind understands from the vantage of eternity, it does not understand from its conceiving the actual present existence of the body but from conceiving the essence of the body from the vantage of eternity.*

Proof

Insofar as the mind conceives the present existence of its body, to that extent it conceives a duration which can be determined by time, and to that extent only does it have the power to conceive things in relation to time (*by 5p21 and 2p26*). But eternity cannot be explained through duration (*by 1def8 and its explanation*). Therefore to that extent the mind does not have the ability to conceive things from the vantage of eternity. But it is of the nature of reason to conceive things from the vantage of eternity (*by 2p44c2*), and it also belongs to the nature of the mind to conceive the essence of the body from the vantage of eternity (*by 5p23*), and nothing but these two things belongs to the essence of the mind (*by 2p13*). Therefore this power of conceiving things from the vantage of eternity does not belong to the mind, except insofar as it conceives the essence of the body from the vantage of eternity. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

255 We conceive things as actual in two ways: either insofar as we conceive them to exist in relation to a certain time and place, or insofar as we conceive them to be contained in God and to follow from the necessity of the divine nature. But those that are conceived in the second way as true *or* real, we conceive from the vantage of eternity, and the ideas of them involve the eternal and infinite essence of God, as we showed by 2p45 (see also its scholium).

Proposition 30

*Insofar as our mind knows itself and the body from the vantage of eternity, to that extent it necessarily has cognition of God and knows that it is in God and is conceived through God.*

Proof

Eternity is the very essence of God insofar as this involves necessary existence (*by 1def8*). Therefore to conceive things from the vantage of eternity is to conceive things insofar as they are conceived through God's essence as real beings *or* insofar as through God's essence they involve existence. And therefore insofar as our mind conceives itself and the body from the vantage of eternity, to that extent it necessarily has cognition of God and knows, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Proposition 31

*The third kind of cognition depends on the mind as on a formal cause insofar as the mind itself is eternal.*

Proof

The mind conceives nothing from the vantage of eternity except insofar as it conceives the essence of its body from the vantage of eternity (*by 5p29*), i.e. (*by 5p21 and 5p23*) except insofar as it is eternal. Therefore (*by the previous proposition*) insofar as it is eternal, it has cognition of God, and this cognition is necessarily adequate (*by 2p46*). Accordingly, insofar as the mind is eternal, it is capable of knowing all the things that can follow from this given cognition of God (*by 2p40*), i.e. it is capable of knowing things by the third kind of cognition (*see the definition of this in 2p40s2*). For this reason (*by 3def1*), insofar as the mind is eternal, it is the adequate *or* formal cause. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

256

Therefore the more proficient anyone is in this kind of cognition, the better he is conscious of himself and of God, i.e. the more perfect he is and the more blessed; this will become yet clearer in what follows. But though we are already certain that the mind is eternal insofar as it conceives things from the vantage of eternity, nevertheless we must here

note the following. In order to explain more easily the things we want to show and to make them better understood, we will consider the mind as if it were only now beginning to be and were only now beginning to understand things from the vantage of eternity, as we have done so far. We may do this without any risk of error, provided we are careful not to draw any conclusions except from clear premises.

Proposition 32

*Whatever we understand by the third kind of cognition, we find a pleasure in it which is accompanied by the idea of God as its cause.*

Proof

From this kind of cognition arises the highest contentment of spirit there can be, i.e. (by *DOE25*) joy accompanied by the idea of oneself as its cause (by *5p27*) and consequently (by *5p30*) also by the idea of God as its cause. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

From the third kind of cognition the intellectual love of God necessarily arises. For there arises from this kind of cognition (by *5p32*) a joy accompanied by the idea of God as cause, i.e. (by *DOE6*) love of God, not insofar as we imagine him as present (by *5p29*) but insofar as we understand God to be eternal; this is what I call the intellectual love of God.

Proposition 33

*The intellectual love of God, which arises from the third kind of cognition, is eternal.*

257 Proof

The third kind of cognition (by *5p31 and 1a3*) is eternal, and therefore (by *the same 1a3*) the love which arises from it is also necessarily eternal. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Although this love for God has not had a beginning (by *the previous proposition*), it nevertheless has all the perfections of love, exactly as if it had arisen as we surmised in the corollary to the previous proposition.

There is no difference here except that the mind has eternally had the same perfections that we just surmised, accompanied by the idea of God as eternal cause. But if joy consists in passing to a greater perfection, blessedness surely must consist in the mind's being endowed with perfection itself.

Proposition 34

*The mind is subject to emotions that are related to passions only so long as the body lasts.*

Proof

An imagination is an idea by which the mind regards a thing as present (*see the definition of it in 2p17s*), but it reveals the present constitution of a person's body more than the nature of the external thing (*by 2p16c2*). An emotion therefore (*by the general definition of the emotions*) is an imagination, insofar as it reveals the present constitution of the body, and therefore (*by 5p21*) the mind is subject to emotions that are related to passions only so long as the body lasts. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that no love but intellectual love is eternal.

Scholium

If we attend to the common opinion that people have, we shall see that they are conscious of the eternity of their own minds but confuse it with duration and attribute it to imagination *or* memory, which they believe remain after death.

258

Proposition 35

*God loves himself with infinite intellectual love.*

Proof

God is absolutely infinite (*by 1def6*), i.e. (*by 2def6*) God's nature enjoys infinite perfection accompanied (*by 2p3*) by the idea of itself, i.e. (*by 1p11 and 1def1*) by the idea of its own cause, and that is what in 5p32c we said intellectual love is.

Proposition 36

*The intellectual love of the mind for God is the very love of God with which God loves himself, not insofar as he is infinite but insofar as he can be explained through the essence of the human mind considered from the vantage of eternity, i.e. the intellectual love of the mind for God is a part of the infinite love with which God loves himself.*

Proof

This love which the mind has must be related to the mind's actions (*by 5p32c and by 3p3*); it is accordingly the action by which the mind thinks about itself, accompanied by the idea of God as cause (*by 5p32 and its corollary*), i.e. (*by 1p25c and 2p11c*) the action by which God, insofar as he can be explained through the human mind, thinks about himself with the accompanying idea of himself. And therefore (*by the previous proposition*) this love of the mind is a part of the infinite love with which God loves himself. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that insofar as God loves himself, he loves human beings, and consequently that the love of God for human beings and the mind's intellectual love for God are one and the same thing.

259 Scholium

We clearly understand from all this what our salvation *or* blessedness *or* freedom consists in, namely in a constant and eternal love for God *or* in the love of God for human beings. This love, *or* blessedness is called glory in the holy Scriptures, and appropriately so.<sup>86</sup> For whether this love is related to God or to the mind, it can rightly be called contentment of spirit, which in truth is not distinguished from glory (*by DOE25 and DOE30*). For insofar as it is related to God, it is (*by 5p35*) joy (if we may still use that word) accompanied by the idea of himself, as it is also insofar as it is related to the mind (*by 5p27*).

<sup>86</sup> Examples include *Psalms* 16: 8–11; *Psalms* 73, 24.

Then, the essence of our mind consists solely in cognition, whose beginning and foundation is God (*by 1p15 and 2p47s*), and from this it becomes quite clear to us how and in what manner our mind, with respect to both essence and existence, follows from the divine nature and constantly depends upon God. I thought it worthwhile to mention this here in order to show by this example how much more potent is the cognition of particular things which I have called intuitive cognition, or cognition of the third kind (*see 2p40s2*), and how much more effective it is than universal cognition which I called cognition of the second kind. For although I showed generally in the first part that all things (and consequently also the human mind) depend upon God in respect to both essence and existence, nevertheless although that proof is correctly deduced and beyond the possibility of doubt, it does not affect our minds so much as when the conclusion is drawn from the very essence of any particular thing which we say depends upon God.

Proposition 37

*There is nothing in nature which is contrary to this intellectual love or which can take it away.*

Proof

This intellectual love necessarily follows from the nature of the mind insofar as it is considered as eternal truth through the nature of God (*by 5p33 and 5p29*). If therefore there were any thing which was contrary to this love, it would be contrary to the truth, and consequently anything that could take away this love would make that which is true to be false, and this (*as is self-evident*) is absurd. Therefore there is nothing in nature, etc. *Q. E. D.*

260

Scholium

The axiom of part four concerns particular things insofar as they are considered in relation to a certain time and place, and I think no one has any doubts about it.

Proposition 38

*The more things the mind understands with the second and third kind of cognition, the less it is acted on by emotions that are bad and the less it fears death.*



Proof

The essence of the mind consists in cognition (*by 2p11*). Therefore the more the mind knows with the second and third kind of cognition, the greater the part of it that remains (*by 5p23 and 5p29*), and consequently (*by 5p37*) the greater the part of it that is not touched by emotions that are contrary to our nature, i.e. (*by 4p30*) that are bad. Therefore the more things the mind understands with the second and third kind of cognition, the greater the part of it that continues unharmed, and consequently the less it is acted on by emotions, etc. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

From this we understand what I touched on in 4p39 and which I promised to explain in this part, namely that the greater the mind's clear and distinct cognition is, and the more the mind in consequence loves God, the less harmful death is. Then, because (*by 5p27*) the highest contentment there can be arises from the third kind of cognition, it follows that the human mind can be of such a nature that what of it we have shown to perish with the body (*see 5p21*) is of no importance in comparison with what of it remains. But I will discuss this more extensively shortly.

Proposition 39

*Anyone who has a body that is capable of very many things has a mind whose greatest part is eternal.*

261 Proof

Anyone who has a body capable of doing very many actions is least assailed by emotions that are bad (*by 4p38*), i.e. (*by 4p30*) by emotions that are contrary to our nature. Therefore (*by 5p10*) he has the ability to order and connect the affections of his body in accordance with the order of the intellect and consequently of ensuring (*by 5p14*) that all the affections of his body are related to the idea of God. The result of this will be (*by 5p15*) that he is affected by love for God, which (*by 5p16*) must occupy *or* constitute the greatest part of the mind; and accordingly (*by 5p33*) he has a mind whose greatest part is eternal. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

Because human bodies are capable of very many things, there is no doubt that they can be of such a nature as to be related to minds which have great cognition of themselves and of God, and whose greatest *or* most important part is eternal and therefore that they scarcely fear death. But to understand things more clearly, we must notice here that we live in continual change, and we are said to be more or less happy as we change for better *or* for worse. An infant or a child who has passed into being a corpse is said to be unhappy, and conversely it is called happiness if we have been able to spend the whole course of our lives with a healthy mind in a healthy body. And in truth anyone who, like an infant or a child, has a body that is capable of very few things and is very much dependent on external causes, has a mind which, considered in itself alone, is barely conscious at all of itself or of God or of things. Conversely, anyone who has a body that is capable of very many things, has a mind which, considered solely in itself, is very conscious of itself and of God and of things. In this life therefore we primarily endeavor that the infant body develops into a different body, as far as its nature allows and is conducive to it, a body which is capable of very many things and is related to a mind that is very much conscious of itself and of God and of things, and this in such a way that all that is related to its memory or imagination will be of scarcely any importance in relation to its intellect, as I have already said in 5p38s.

Proposition 40

262

*The more perfection each thing has, the more it acts, and the less it is acted on; and conversely, the more it acts, the more perfect it is.*

Proof

The more perfect a thing is, the more reality it has (*by 2def6*), and consequently (*by 3p3 with its scholium*) the more it acts and the less it is acted on. This proof works in the same way in reverse order, from which it follows that conversely, a thing is the more perfect, the more it acts. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary

It follows from this that the part of the mind that remains, however great it may be, is more perfect than the rest. For the eternal part of the mind

(*by 5p23 and 5p29*) is the intellect, through which alone we are said to act (*by 3p3*). That part which we have shown to perish is the imagination itself (*by 5p21*) through which alone we are said to be acted on (*by 3p3 and the general definition of the emotions*). Therefore (*by 5p40*) the former part, however great it may be, is more perfect than the latter. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

These are the points that I set out to prove about the mind, insofar as it is considered without relation to the existence of the body. It is clear from this and at the same time clear from 1p21 and other passages, that insofar as our mind understands, it is an eternal mode of thinking which is determined by another eternal mode of thinking, and this again by another, and so on *ad infinitum*; so that all of them together constitute the eternal and infinite intellect of God.

#### Proposition 41

*Even if we did not know that our mind is eternal, we would still hold that piety and religion, which, as we showed in part four are related to spiritedness and generosity, are of the first importance.*

#### Proof

263 The first and only foundation of virtue *or* of the manner of living rightly (*by 4p22c and by 4p24*) is to pursue what is useful to oneself. But in determining what things reason tells us are useful, we took no account of the eternity of the mind, which we have only now come to know in this fifth part. For even if at that time we did not know that the mind is eternal, we still held that those things that we showed to be related to spiritedness and generosity were of the first importance. Therefore even if we did not know this now, we would still hold that the same precepts of reason are of the first importance. *Q. E. D.*

#### Scholium

The usual conviction of ordinary people seems to be different. For most people seem to believe that they are free insofar as they are allowed to obey their lust, and that they are giving up their right insofar as they are obliged to live by the precepts of divine law. Therefore they believe that

piety and religion and absolutely everything related to fortitude of spirit are burdens that they hope to throw off after death and to receive a reward for their servitude, i.e. for their piety and religion. And it is not by this hope alone that they are induced to live by the precepts of the divine law insofar as their weakness and their powerless spirit allow, but also, and especially, by fear – the fear of being punished with cruel tortures after death. If human beings did not have this hope and this fear, but believed to the contrary that their minds perished with their bodies, and there was no possibility for the poor wretches, worn out with the burden of piety, to live longer, they would return to character and let lust run it all, and obey fortune rather than themselves. These things seem to me no less absurd than if someone, because he does not believe that he can feed his body with good foods into eternity, should prefer to stuff himself with poisons and deadly substances, or if because he sees that the mind is not eternal *or* immortal, he should choose to go mad and live without reason. These things are so absurd that they scarcely deserve to be mentioned.

#### Proposition 42

*Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself; and we do not enjoy it because we restrain lusts; on the contrary we are able to restrain lusts precisely because we enjoy it.*

#### Proof

Blessedness consists in love for God (*by 5p36 and its scholium*), a love which arises from the third kind of cognition (*by 5p32c*). Therefore this love (*by 3p59 and 3p3*) must be related to the mind insofar as it acts; and accordingly (*by 4def8*) it is virtue itself. That is the first point.

264

Then, the more the mind enjoys this divine love *or* blessedness, the more it understands (*by 5p32*), i.e. (*by 5p3c*) the greater the power it has over its emotions and (*by 5p38*) the less it is acted on by emotions that are bad. Therefore because the mind enjoys this divine love *or* blessedness, it has the ability to restrain lusts. And because a person's power to restrain emotions lies in the intellect alone, no one enjoys blessedness because he has restrained his emotions; on the contrary the ability to restrain lusts arises from blessedness itself. *Q. E. D.*

Scholium

With this I have completed everything I wanted to prove about the power of the mind over the emotions and about the freedom of the mind. It is clear from this how potent a wise person is and how much more effective he is than an ignorant person who is driven by lust alone. For apart from the fact that an ignorant person is agitated in many ways by external causes and never has true contentment of spirit, he also lives, we might say, ignorant of himself and of God and of things, and as soon as he ceases to be acted on, at the same time he also ceases to be. Conversely, a wise person, insofar as he is considered as such, is scarcely moved in spirit, but being conscious of himself and of God and of things by some eternal necessity, he never ceases to be, but always has possession of true contentment of spirit. Now if the way that I have shown to lead to this looks extremely arduous, it can nevertheless be found. It must certainly be arduous because it is so rarely found. For if salvation were easily available and could be found without great labor, how could it happen that nearly everybody ignores it? But all noble things are as difficult as they are rare.

THE END

## Glossary

**abstraction:** a universal conception of things. When based on the imagination abstractions are misleading or confused.

**a priori:** an a priori proof demonstrates an effect from a cause.

**a posteriori:** an a posteriori proof demonstrates a cause from an effect.

**absolute:** unconditional, completely, without exception.

**act:** according to Spinoza's definition, to act is to be an adequate cause of an effect. See **cause**, **adequate**. Consequently, acting is different from simply doing something. It is also different from being active, because a thing can be active by contributing partially to an effect. Spinoza does not always stick to this strict definition.

**action:** the product of acting. 'Action' does not refer narrowly to the sort of intentional and volitional action that is often identified with human actions. See **act**.

**actuality:** things can be actual in two different ways. First, things can exist actually. See **existence**, **actual** and **essence**, **actual**. Second, things can be actual in the sense that they are contained in God and follow from the divine nature (see 5p29s). Whereas the first kind of actuality involves being determined to exist in space and time, the latter does not.

**adequate idea:** see **idea**, **adequate**.

**affection:** Spinoza regards this term as equivalent to a mode. The term does not refer to the emotion of affection.

**agreement:** things may be said to agree when they are similar, when they work together to bring about some effect, or when they share a common quality or characteristic.

- ambition:** an immoderate desire for the praise of others. Ambition can lead us to dominate others by inculcating our desires in them as a way of earning their praise.
- appetite:** a particular instance or expression of a thing's endeavor. As such, an appetite has both mental and bodily aspects. The Latin '*appetitus*' also has a verb form (*appetere*), which is translated as 'seek' or sometimes 'want,' depending on the context.
- attribute:** an essential quality of a substance. In Cartesian metaphysics, extension is the attribute of bodily substances and thought is the attribute of mental substances. In Spinoza, the one substance possesses an infinite number of attributes, though we only know extension and thought.
- averse:** movement away from something or the disposition to do so. The opposite of appetite.
- aversion:** the emotion of sadness accompanied by an idea of something that is accidentally its cause. See **cause**, **accidental**.
- axiom:** in a proof, an axiom is a proposition that serves as a first principle, that is, is presumed to be true without proof. Axioms are necessarily true, but may not be self-evident and for this reason are not the same as common notions.
- bad:** what is an obstacle or hindrance to obtaining some good. Generally things are bad for individuals to the extent that they diminish or restrain one's power of action.
- base:** what is inimical to friendship. The Latin '*turpis*,' as popularized by Cicero, refers to what is morally bad or wrong. In Spinoza and Cicero, it is opposed to honor. See **honor**.
- being, formal:** formal being is contrasted to objective being. In Descartes, who originated the distinction, formal being or reality is a thing's reality simpliciter. 'Formal reality' is often used to describe the reality that an idea possesses as an idea, considered without regard to its object or content. In Spinoza, formal being is also the being that an idea or mind possesses as an idea or mind, considered without regard to object or content.
- being, objective:** objective being is contrasted to formal being. In Descartes, who originated the distinction, objective being or reality is the reality possessed by an idea in virtue of its object or content. For example, in Descartes the idea of God has infinite objective reality because its object, God, has infinite reality. In Spinoza, the objective

- being of a thing is the being of the idea representing the thing or taking the thing as its object. See **being, formal**.
- being, of reason:** a thing that is only in our understanding. As such, beings of reason are not real.
- blame:** the sadness with which we are averse to someone's action.
- blessedness:** equivalent to the highest happiness, though blessedness has more religious connotations. See **happiness, highest**.
- body:** a mode of the attribute of extension. Since extension is an attribute of God, bodies express God's essence in a particular, determinate way.
- cause:** the reason for some effect or thing. Causes explain their effects and render their effects intelligible.
- cause, accidental:** a cause that brings about an effect not directly from its own nature, but rather through another cause, with which it has become coincidentally associated.
- cause, adequate:** a cause is adequate with respect to an effect when the effect can be conceived through the cause alone. An adequate cause is also the sole or independent cause of an effect.
- cause, efficient:** in the Aristotelian tradition, an efficient cause initiates some change or effect. In Spinoza, the efficient cause is what makes an effect happen. Among the moderns, including Spinoza, efficient causes play an increasingly important role in explaining all changes and effects.
- cause, final:** in the Aristotelian tradition, the final cause is the purpose for the sake of which something happens. Spinoza is highly critical of final causes.
- cause, formal:** a cause that is an idea or mind considered as an idea or mind without regard to its object or content. See **being, formal**. Spinoza's notion of formal cause is not related to the Aristotelian notion of formal cause.
- cause, inadequate:** a cause is inadequate with respect to an effect when conceiving the effect requires conceiving some other cause or causes. An inadequate cause is also a partial cause of an effect.
- cause, of itself:** a cause of itself provides the reason for its own existence. Only God is the cause of himself, since his essence implies his existence.
- cause, through itself:** a cause that brings about an effect from the nature of the cause, rather than by accident. See **cause, accidental**.



**certainty:** certainty is both a psychological state of confidence about something and an understanding of the reasons or justification for this confidence.

**character:** one's personality, which includes typical ways of thinking and acting, as well as one's emotional profile, that is, typical ways of being emotionally affected. Spinoza's notion of character does not necessarily imply the common conception of character as moral habits that are developed through patterns of action or training.

**characteristic, extrinsic:** the agreement of an idea with its object.

**characteristic, intrinsic:** a quality that an idea possesses in and of itself, independently of its relationship to external things.

**cognition:** the mental state by which one represents, grasps, conceives or, most generally, is mentally aware of something. Cognitions may be false, mutilated or confused. Spinoza recognizes three kinds of cognitions. See **imagination, reason and intuition**.

**cognition, from random experience:** conceives universal things or categories of things through abstraction from haphazard and random experienced associations. A kind of imagination. See **common order of nature**.

**common notions:** ideas that are self-evident and common to all minds. Common notions also represent qualities that are common or shared, often by all things. In Spinoza's time, this term commonly referred to axioms, though Spinoza does not regard axioms as necessarily self-evident and universally known.

**common order of nature:** to conceive things according to the common order of nature is to conceive them as ordered according to our experienced associations, rather than ordered by the logical relationships among them. In conceiving things in this way, the mind is determined by external causes. Consequently, conceiving things in this way necessarily involves inadequate ideas.

**commonwealth:** a state, either its government or the body of the state, including all of the citizens that compose it.

**conceive:** the activity by which the mind grasps or understands things.

**conceive through:** to conceive some thing *x* through some thing *y* is to conceive of *x* in relation to *y*, usually as logically entailed by *y* or as caused by *y*.

**constancy:** a firm, unwavering commitment or purpose. The Latin '*constantia*' is a virtue that is important to the Stoics and was popularized by Lipsius.

**contingent:** a thing is contingent if its essence neither implies nor excludes its existence.

**crowd:** a multitude or large number of ordinary people.

**definition:** a definition of a thing sets forth its inmost essence, from which its various properties are deducible.

**desire:** a kind of appetite. Desires are often or characteristically appetites of which we are conscious.

**dictates of reason:** practical principles prescribed by reason for preserving and augmenting one's power of action. The dictates of reason are derived from human nature and apply to all people. Spinoza also refers to the dictates of reason as divine laws. Spinoza suggests parallels between the dictates of reason and natural laws, as they were traditionally conceived.

**distinction, modal:** Spinoza appears to accept Descartes's definition, according to which two things are modally distinct when one can be understood independently of the other, but not vice versa. This is called a modal distinction because it is the relationship between a substance and a mode: a substance can be understood independently of a mode, but a mode cannot be understood independently of a substance. This is not a real distinction. See **distinction, real**.

**distinction, real:** following Descartes, Spinoza holds that two things are really distinct if each can be understood independently of the other. Whereas Descartes held that mental and bodily substances are really distinct from one another, Spinoza allows for only one substance.

**distress:** the form of sadness where one part of the body is affected more than the other parts. Nearly all sadness qualifies as distress.

**doubt:** the state of mind that results from wavering, usually between ideas about the existence of things in time. See **wavering**.

**duration:** existence understood as an abstract temporal quantity. In other words, things have duration to the extent that we understand them as existing for some quantity of time. Understanding things as possessing duration is inconsistent with understanding them entirely from essences. See **eternity**.

**emotion:** according to Spinoza's definition, these are transitions in a thing's power of action. There are three categories of emotions: joy, sorrow and desire. Emotions can be active or passive. See also **passions**.

**endeavor:** the power by which any particular thing perseveres in its being. Endeavor is the actual essence of particular things. See **essence, actual**.

**essence:** according to Spinoza's definition, an essence is what is both necessary and sufficient for the being or conception of a thing. Spinoza also holds that things are necessary and sufficient for the being or conception of their essences. For instance, just as God cannot be or be conceived independently of his essence as infinite power, infinite power cannot be or be conceived independently of God. It is not clear that Spinoza always conceives of essences strictly in accordance with this definition.

**essence, actual:** the essence of a particular thing, as it exists actually. See **existence, actual**.

**essence, formal:** the essence of a thing, as it is within God's attributes and is conceived by the divine intellect. Within God's attributes, things follow from God's essence directly, rather than from an infinite series of causes, as actually existing things do. It follows that formal essences are also eternal and do not exist in time, as actually existing things do.

**eternity:** existence understood as following necessarily from the essence of an eternal thing (namely God) without regard to time or duration. Things are eternal to the extent that we understand their existence in this way. See **duration**.

**eternity, from the vantage of:** to understand things from the vantage of eternity is to understand them as following necessarily from an eternal essence (namely God's) without regard to time or duration.

**exemplar:** an ideal or model of some kind or species. Nature does not have exemplars in the sense that God does not create things in accordance with exemplars. Nevertheless, humans set exemplars for themselves and these exemplars may be based in an understanding of the natures of things. Spinoza's ethics assumes that people set an exemplar of human nature before themselves (4pref).

**existence:** not obviously identical to being or reality, since Spinoza allows for beings of reason and beings of the imagination (*iapp*), which are beings that do not exist. Spinoza also allows for modes

and ideas of modes that do not exist (2p8). It seems that such non-existing modes are beings, since all modes and ideas of modes are beings, insofar as they inhere in substance. Finally, Spinoza distinguishes two kinds of actuality (5p29s), one of which involves reality, but not actual existence. See **actuality**.

**existence, actual:** the actual existence of a mode is its existence as it is determined by particular modes, which, in turn, are determined by other particular modes, and so on, *ad infinitum*. It follows that actually existing things cannot be understood as following directly from God's essence, which means that they cannot be understood as eternal, but rather must be understood as existing in time.

**extension:** quantity in space. Extension is an attribute of God. It is also the essence of bodies.

**false:** falsity is a privation. Because all of God's ideas are true, ideas are false only in particular minds to the extent that the ideas do not contain some content of God's true ideas. Only inadequate ideas are false.

**fancy:** something that is supposed without a firm foundation, perhaps capriciously or whimsically.

**finite:** limited.

**finite in its kind:** a thing is finite in its kind when it can be limited by something of the same nature or attribute. For example, a body that can be limited by another body is finite in its kind.

**form:** the form of an individual thing is a union of bodies; in other words, a particular bodily composition. The form determines the identity of individual bodies. See **individual**.

**fortitude:** the actions and tendencies to action that follow from the mind insofar as it understands. As such, this is Spinoza's closest analogue to the notion of a virtuous character. Fortitude is divided into generosity and spiritedness.

**free:** according to Spinoza's definition, a thing is free when it is absolutely self-determining, that is, the sole cause of its existence and actions. This definition implies that only God is free, though Spinoza recognizes that humans can also be free to the extent that they are self-determining.

**free person:** an example that Spinoza considers in assessing what is good and bad in emotion and reason's practical requirements. A free person is guided by reason alone and lives solely by the dictate of reason.

- generosity:** the desire to benefit and befriend others that arises from a dictate of reason alone, rather than from pity or a passion. Generosity is the aspect of fortitude that is concerned with the welfare of others. Generosity was also the principle virtue of Descartes's ethics.
- glory:** the praise of others and the pleasure arising from it. Unlike Spinoza's notion of honorability, glory is connected with any sort of praise, not necessarily the praise of those who follow the guidance of reason. See **honorable**.
- God:** an absolutely infinite being. This means a substance possessing infinite attributes.
- good:** what is useful to a thing. Things are generally good for an individual to the extent that they augment or aid the individual's power of action. Things are also good to the extent that they help us to approach nearer to the exemplar of human nature.
- good, highest:** traditionally the highest good is that which is valued for its own sake and for the sake of which all other things are valued. Spinoza identifies our highest good with perfecting the intellect by having intuitive knowledge of God. Attaining our highest good provides the highest happiness and blessedness.
- happiness:** happiness involves the flourishing or success of one's power of action, which is necessarily accompanied with positive emotional states.
- happiness, highest:** the self-contentment that arises from augmenting one's power of action through the intuitive knowledge of God and recognizing oneself as the cause of this change. See **good, highest**.
- hate:** sadness combined with the idea of an external cause.
- honor:** the desire by which one following the guidance of reason unites others to oneself in friendship. The Latin '*honestum*,' as popularized by Cicero, refers to what is morally good and choiceworthy for its own sake. Usually opposed to base.
- honorable:** what is approved by those who live by the guidance of reason.
- human nature:** the collection of essential traits that are shared by human beings. The dictates of reason are based on what is good for human nature.
- idea:** a conception of a mind and a mode of the attribute of thought. Since thought is an attribute of God, ideas express God's essence in a particular, determinate way.

**idea, adequate:** an idea that has all the internal characteristics of a true idea. An idea is adequate in a mind if it is caused by other ideas in the mind.

**idea, clear and distinct:** an idea that is properly understood, not confused. Clear and distinct ideas in a mind are true and adequate in that mind.

**idea, confused:** an idea of a thing is confused when it is incomplete, often when it does not comprehend the causes of the thing. Only inadequate ideas are confused.

**idea, inadequate:** an idea is inadequate in a mind if the idea is caused partly by ideas external to the mind.

**image:** physical impressions in the brain that are caused by the senses and external things. The mind represents external bodies as present to us through ideas of images.

**imagination:** the first of Spinoza's three kinds of cognition. Imagination conceives things on the basis of bodily images. It includes all cognition from experience and sensory perceptions, as well as memory. Imagination is the source of all inadequate, confused and false ideas. Imagination also conceives things according to the common order of nature. See **common order of nature**.

**imitation of emotions:** the mind's tendency to experience the emotions that we observe in individuals that we regard as like ourselves.

**in:** to be in a thing is to inhere in the thing and, thus, to depend on the thing for existence. For example, the quality of roughness inheres in the sandpaper.

**indefinite:** what cannot be determined through the nature of existing things or their causes.

**individual:** a single thing. Spinoza distinguishes simple and composite bodily individuals. The identity of simple individual bodies (i.e. without components or parts) is determined by their location and motion. The identity of composite bodies is determined by fixed spatial relations or proportions among their components. Individual bodies can be parts of composite bodies.

**infinite:** unlimited, unbounded.

**intellect:** the faculty or power responsible for understanding, reason and intuition.

**intuition:** the third kind of cognition. Intuition conceives the essences of particular things as following from God's essence. Intuition is

- immediate (non-inferential) and consists of adequate ideas. Intuitions are the only cognitions that Spinoza describes as *scientia*, the most certain knowledge.
- joy:** positive emotion consisting of a transition to a greater power of action.
- justice:** rendering to each what is due. What is due depends on the requirements of society as determined by common consent. Consequently, justice can only be conceived in a state with laws.
- longing:** Spinoza defines this as the desire or appetite to possess a thing, strengthened by memory. However, he often uses this term broadly to refer to the category of all appetites and desires.
- love:** joy together with an idea of an external cause.
- lust:** Spinoza defines 'lust' as the desire and love for sexual union, but he often uses it to refer generally to strong desires, particularly base desires.
- memory:** a connection or association among our ideas, which is determined by experience and, consequently, by external things. See **common order of nature**.
- merit:** acting in ways that are beneficial given the requirements of society as determined by common consent. Merit can only be conceived in a state with laws.
- mind, human:** a complex or composite idea, representing the composite human body. See **individual**.
- mode:** a quality of a substance that does not belong to its essence. A mode is in or inheres in a substance. Modes are logically entailed by the essence of a substance.
- mode, finite:** a mode that is limited. Finite modes include all particular individuals, such as a person, table, body, and so forth.
- mode, infinite:** modes that follow from the absolute nature of God. Consequently, they are eternal and exist necessarily. They are also infinite, which means that they are universal features of all modes of an attribute. For instance, the property of being at motion or at rest is an infinite mode that is common to all modes of extension, that is, all bodies. Infinite modes must either follow directly from God's nature or indirectly from other infinite modes.
- mutilated:** confused ideas are mutilated in that they are incomplete so as to misrepresent things, their causes and the conceptual relations among them. See **false**.

**nature:** this term refers either to the essence of a thing, or to everything that is. In the latter sense, nature is equivalent to God.

***natura naturans:*** literally nature naturing. Nature or God understood as free, self-determining and active. God's essence and attributes belong to *natura naturans* because they are purely self-determining.

***natura naturata:*** literally nature natured. The product or result of God's activity. All modes belong to *natura naturata* because they are externally determined.

**objective:** having the status of being an idea. See **being, objective and being, formal.**

**operate:** to be active or to do something. Spinoza tends to use 'act' (*agere*) to refer to free activities and 'operate' (*operari*) to refer to compelled or determined activities.

**particular:** a finite thing that has a determinate existence. Multiple particular things may jointly form a single particular thing when they jointly bring about an effect.

**passion:** a passive emotion. Since there are active emotions, not all emotions are passions. Passions can also be understood, at the mental level, as kinds of inadequate ideas. Passions can be good or bad depending on whether they assist or hinder one's endeavor.

**passive:** a thing is passive when it is an inadequate or partial cause of an effect. This means that things are passive not only when they are acted on, but also when they contribute to an effect along with other causes.

**perfection:** Spinoza defines perfection as equivalent to reality. According to this metaphysical notion of perfection, all things are perfect. Spinoza recognizes a second notion of perfection as a thing's power of action. According to this notion, things become more or less perfect as their power of action is augmented or diminished. Spinoza recognizes a final notion of perfection when he claims that a thing is perfect when it is completed according to a plan or purpose. Spinoza's ethical theory judges human perfection with respect to an exemplar of human nature, a plan or purpose that we set for ourselves. See **exemplar.**

**piety:** the desire to do good, generated from living under reason's guidance. Spinoza sometimes pairs piety and religion as ethically good traits. This echoes Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which treats religion and piety as paired ethically good traits that arise from true knowledge of God.



**possible:** we call something possible if we do not know the causes that determine it to be.

**power:** a thing has power to the extent that it exerts itself causally toward bringing about some effects. Unlike the Aristotelian conception of power, Spinoza's powers are not potentials or capacities.

**power of action:** the degree of strength of a thing's endeavor.

**praise:** joy at an action of one who aims to please us.

**privation:** a lack or absence.

**property:** a quality that is necessary to a thing, but does not belong to its essence.

**purpose:** the reason for which something is done, usually some desired outcome. Spinoza conceives purposes as determined by or identical to appetites. He also denies that God acts with purposes.

**quantity:** this can be conceived in two ways. Conceived by the imagination, quantity is finite, divisible and made of parts. Conceived by the intellect, quantity is substance, which is infinite, indivisible and not composed of parts.

**reality:** what is; beings. Reality is equivalent to a kind of perfection. See **perfection**. Reality is not necessarily the same as existence. See **existence**.

**reason:** the second kind of cognition, which conceives things on the basis of common notions and adequate ideas of the properties of things. Ideas of reason are all adequate and true. Spinoza also uses 'reason,' in a different sense of the term, as equivalent to cause.

**religion:** this term does not usually refer to organized religion or religious institutions. Rather, it refers to all actions and desires that are caused by our ideas or knowledge of God. As such, Spinoza's conception of an ethical life necessarily involves religion. This notion of religion echoes Calvin's *Institutes*, which asserts that religion and piety arise from true knowledge of God.

**remorse:** Spinoza defines 'remorse' (*conscientia morsus*, literally sting of conscience) in a deflationary or subversive way as equivalent to disappointment, that is, the sadness that accompanies the idea that something happened contrary to expectations.

**repentance:** sadness accompanied by the idea of an internal cause, specifically a free decision.

**sadness:** negative emotion consisting of a transition to a lesser power of action.

- self-contentment:** joy accompanied by the idea of an internal cause, specifically one's power of action. The Latin term, *acquiescentia in se ipso*, is a neologism, originating in the Latin translation of Descartes's *Passions of the Soul*.
- self-love:** the joy that arises from thinking about oneself, which is the source of pride.
- sense:** to sense is to have mental awareness, as when we perceive or conceive something. For Spinoza, sensing refers to all mental awareness, not just awareness of external things through the bodily senses.
- servitude:** this term can be negative when it refers to our being rendered powerless by opposing passions. It can also be positive when referring to service to piety and religion.
- sin:** acting contrary to the requirements of society as determined by common consent. Sin can only be conceived in a state with laws.
- soul:** this term (the translation of '*anima*' and sometimes '*animus*') refers to a religious conception of the mind as something that is immortal and survives the body in the afterlife. The term often refers to Descartes's characterization of the mind along these lines.
- sovereign:** popularized by Hobbes, this term refers to the ruling power (whether an individual, body or office) in a commonwealth. The Latin, '*summa potestas*,' means literally greatest or highest power.
- spirit:** this term (the translation of the Latin '*animus*') refers to mind, though it often refers specifically to the strength of one's mind, its emotions or character.
- spiritedness:** the desire to preserve one's own being arising from the dictate of reason alone. Spiritedness is the self-interested aspect of fortitude. See **fortitude**.
- state of nature:** this term, popularized by Hobbes, refers to the condition in which men live without a commonwealth or sovereign. See **sovereign**.
- substance:** what is in itself and is conceived through itself. Since conceiving a thing involves conceiving its causes, this definition entails that a substance is also caused by itself. See **cause, of itself**.
- thought:** an attribute of God. The essence of ideas.
- transcendental:** abstractions of imagination, including 'being' and 'thing,' which are confused in the highest degree. In Aristotelian philosophy, the transcendentals are properties of being as such. They include 'one,' 'true,' and 'good.'

**true:** true ideas agree with their objects.

**universe:** Spinoza often uses the famous Latin expression '*rerum natura*' (the nature of things) to refer to the sum of all things, which we translate as universe.

**vice:** the Latin '*vitium*' refers foremost to a fault or shortcoming, usually in a person, and is translated primarily as 'fault.' 'Vice' is used where Spinoza refers specifically to ethical faults, usually when using '*vitium*' as a contrast term to a more ethical notion of virtue.

**virtue:** Spinoza understands virtue foremost as equivalent to power. See **power**. According to this notion of virtue, it is not necessarily connected with morality or ethics; a strong wind has virtue. But Spinoza also recognizes more specific notions of virtue, which are more obviously ethical. See **virtue of spirit** and **virtue, true**.

**virtue of spirit:** equivalent to fortitude. See **fortitude**.

**virtue, true:** living by the guidance of reason alone. This notion of virtue is more ethical than virtue generally because it is connected to acting in accordance with reason's dictates, which are practical and often ethical principles.

**volition:** a particular mode of thinking, which contains the power responsible for voluntary activity, such as choice and action.

**wavering:** oscillation or vacillation between two or more, usually opposed, ideas of the imagination. It is related to doubt and wavering of the spirit. See **doubt** and **wavering of the spirit**.

**wavering of the spirit:** the state of mind that results from wavering between contrary emotions.

**will:** the faculty usually supposed to be responsible for voluntary activity or volitions. Spinoza denies that there exists a will apart from our particular volitions.

## Index

- abjection, 150, 199–201, 218
- absolute
- faculties, 85
  - freedom, 32
  - ideas, 73
  - infinity, 3
  - thought, 29
  - virtue, 175–176
  - will, xxiv, 20, 85
- acted on, 95
- actions
- motivated by passions or reason, 203–204
- acts
- always good, 215
  - and adequate ideas, 95, 100, 215
  - definition, 94
- actual existence, 53–54, 62, 68, 237, 240
- Adam and Eve, 210
- adequate cause, 94–95
- adequate ideas, xxx. See also reason
- and common notions, 75
  - definition, 44
  - entail adequate ideas, 76
  - in the human mind, 73
  - of God's essence, 83
  - true, 73
- adulation, 148, 150, 195
- affirmation, 87
- agreement in nature, 178–180, 216
- akrasia, 98, 157, 171
- ambition, 117, 119–120, 125, 139, 151, 154, 192, 226, 231
- anger, 126, 153, 193–194
- animals, 140, 183, 186, 216
- and agreement in nature, 186
  - sentience, 186
- appetites, 103. See also desires and desire, 143
- approval, 112, 148, 197
- Aquinas, Saint Thomas, 33
- Aristotelian philosophy, xi
- Aristotle, xix, 183
- Ashariya, 34, 38
- assurance, 110, 147, 187, 195
- attributes
- and reality, 9–10
  - Cartesian conception of, xx
  - conceived through themselves, 9
  - definition, xxi, 3
  - include extension, 45
  - include thought, 44
- avarice, 36, 125, 139, 154, 160, 192, 231
- aversion, 146
- bad
- and capability of being affected, 188
  - and sadness, 124
  - and the exemplar of human nature, 159
  - common conceptions of, 39
  - definition, 160
  - merely ways of thinking, 159
  - varies by person, 40, 159
- base, 150, 186, 193, 212, 214
- Bayle, Pierre, xxxvi
- beauty, 40, 217
- being
- formal, 46, 61
  - objective, 49
  - of reason. See reason, beings of
- benevolence, 116, 153
- blame, 117, 136, 198

- blessedness, xxxiii, 92, 174, 199, 215, 224, 241, 249
- bodies. See also human bodies
- agreement, 56
  - composite, 58–60
  - constitution, 142, 156
  - definition, 43
  - form of, 58–59
  - how distinguished, 56
  - law of collision, 57
  - simple, 55–58
- Buridan's ass, 89
- Calvinism, xiii
- Cartesian philosophy, xii
- causation
- adequate. See adequate cause
  - and conception, xix
  - by accident, 18, 106
  - cause must differ from effect, 21
  - efficient, 18, 25, 46, 159
  - final, 36–37, 158
  - first, 64, 142
  - free, 19, 28, 30
  - immanent, 21
  - mind-body, xxvi, 96
  - self, 3
  - transitive, 21
- certainty, xxx, 87
- character, xxxii, 119, 139, 185, 216
- characteristic, 44
- extrinsic, 155
  - intrinsic, 44
- chastity, 139
- cheerfulness, 104, 144, 191–192
- children, 120, 137, 190, 216, 228, 247
- Cicero, 154
- citizens, 187
- clarity and distinctness
- and adequate ideas, 55, 75
  - and associations of ideas, 232
  - and the love of God, 233
- clemency, 142, 153
- cognition, xxix
- from random experience, 78
  - of affections of the body, 69, 232
  - of duration, 71
  - of external bodies, 68–69
  - of good and bad, 165, 169–171, 177
  - of one's own mind, 67
  - of parts of the body, 67
  - of the body, 65, 69
  - of the duration of external things, 72
  - of the first kind. See imagination
  - of the second kind. See reason
  - of the third kind. See intuitive knowledge
  - of what is bad, 207–208
  - three kinds, 78–79
- cognitive therapy, xxxv
- collegiants, xiii, xv
- common notions, xxx, 8, 84
- and other notions, 78
  - definition, 75
  - do not belong to the essence of particular things, 74
  - only conceived adequately, 75
  - proper to the body and shared by other bodies, 75–76
- common order of nature, 70–71, 164, 201, 215
- commonwealth, 187–188, 190, 193, 213
- foundations of, 186
- compassion, 120, 148, 216
- compatibilism, xxiii
- conatus doctrine, xxvii
- concord, 190, 217–218
- confusion, 39
- and inadequate ideas, 73
- consciousness, 118, 143–144, 158, 165, 231, 250
- consideration, 142, 154, 218
- constant spirit, 212
- consternation, 134, 153
- contempt, 148, 195
- contentment, 220, 244, 250
- highest, 230, 239, 242. See also happiness, highest
- contingency
- and emotions, 167–168
  - as product of the imagination, 81
  - belongs to nothing in nature, 28
  - definition, 31, 160
  - of particular things, 72
- corruption, 72
- courage, 153
- blind, 211
- cowardice, 133, 153
- cruelty, 127, 153
- da Costa, Uriel, xiv
- danger, 211
- de Espinoza, Gabriel, xiii
- de Espinoza, Hanna, xii
- de Espinoza, Michael, xii
- death, 189, 246–247
- decisions. See mental decisions
- definition
- as essence, xviii, 18
  - entails properties of a thing, xviii, 18
  - true, 8

- delight, 104, 144, 191–192  
 derision, 135, 146, 193  
 Descartes, René, xi, 16, 33–34, 40, 52, 74,  
     86–88, 94, 101, 143, 222–224  
*Descartes's Principles of Philosophy*, xii, 17, 22  
 desires, xxviii  
     can be excessive, 192, 220  
     definition, 103, 143  
     different from will, 86  
     from joy, 171  
     from reason, 205  
     from sadness, 171  
     from true cognition of good and bad, 170  
     highest, 215  
     nature of, 139  
     of contingent things, 170  
     to exist, 174  
 despair, 110, 147, 195  
 devotion, 135, 146  
 dictates of reason, xxxv  
     and agreement in nature, 182  
     and the free person, 213  
     cannot lead to conflict, 184  
     conceive things from the vantage of eternity,  
         205  
     direct us to good of humans only, 218  
     motivated by love, 218  
     summary, 172–173  
     to desire the good of others, 184  
     to preserve one's being, 175  
     to seek according to judgment of good,  
         173  
 disdain, 114, 135, 145, 193–194, 196  
 disgust, 143, 194  
 distress, 104, 144, 191, 202  
 doubt, 82  
 drunkenness, 139, 141, 154  
 duration  
     and the human mind, 237  
     as determinate existence, 23  
     definition, 44  
     not involved in the essence of finite things,  
         25  
     not possessed by anything following from  
         God's absolute nature, 23  
     of the human body, 71  
 Ecclesiastes, 171  
 egoism, xxxv  
 emotions  
     active, 141  
     and disturbance of spirit, 225  
     and ideas, xxix  
     associated by experience, 106  
     contrary, 160  
     contrary to our nature, 229  
     definition, xxviii, 95  
     from reason, 228  
     only restrained by emotions, 165  
     receive power from causes, 228  
     remedies for, xxxiv, 235  
 emulation, 115, 152  
 endeavor, xxvii, 101  
     and power of action, 116  
     and reason, 176  
     and sickness, 129  
     as actual essence, 102  
     for God's love, 234  
     highest, 238  
     involves indefinite time, 102  
     of the mind, 103  
 Enlightenment, xxxvii  
 envy, 113, 120–121, 125, 137, 148, 151–152,  
     193, 201, 235  
     of virtue, 137  
 equanimity, 92, 216–217, 220, 231  
 equity, 217–218  
 error  
     and imagination, 74  
     different from ignorance, 73  
     from misapplication of terms, 84  
     sun example, 74  
 essences  
     and eternal truth, 21  
     and natures, 161  
     causing effects, 34  
     definition, xxi, 43  
     formal, 20, 49  
     inmost, xviii  
     of finite modes, 25  
     of human beings, 44, 51, 143, 161  
     of human body, 55  
     of ideas, 87  
     of individuals, 140  
     of words and images, 88  
 eternity  
     and intellectual love, 243  
     common opinions of, 243  
     definition, 4  
     of attributes, 22  
     of whatever follows from God's absolute  
         nature, 23  
 ethics, xvii  
 Euclid, xi, xviii, 49, 79  
 exemplars, 34, 158  
     and human nature, 159  
     and universal notions, 158  
 extension, xx

- falsity, 72  
  and true ideas, 161  
  as a form of error, 73  
  definition, 73  
  different from true ideas, 80–81
- fame, 202
- fate, 34
- fear, 110, 146, 195, 199, 211  
  of death, 245, 247, 249  
  requires hope, 147
- finite, 3
- flattery, 217
- fluidity, 58
- fortitude, xxxii, 138, 142, 211, 214, 249
- fortune, 92, 157, 195, 231, 249
- free person, xxxiii  
  always acts from dictates of reason, 213  
  always faithful, 213  
  and concepts of good and bad, 210  
  cannot be born free, 210  
  declines dangers, 210  
  declines offers of the ignorant, 211  
  definition, 209  
  grateful, 212  
  lives by common laws, 213  
  thinks of life not death, 209
- free will. See absolute, will
- freedom, xvii  
  and spontaneity, xxiv  
  as absolute will, 32  
  definition, xxiii, 4  
  highest, 92  
  human, xxiv, 36, 221  
  human ideas of, 35, 73  
  not the ability to refrain, 19  
  of decision, xxiv, 99–100  
  of spirit, 217  
  to suspend judgment, 90
- friendship, 186, 216–218
- Gassendi, Pierre, 40
- generosity, 142, 155, 194, 200, 214, 216, 248
- geometrical method, xi, xvii–xviii
- Gersonides, xxxiv
- gladness, 231
- glory, 118, 120, 125, 192, 196, 198, 202, 231  
  and blessedness, 244
- gluttony, 139, 154, 160
- God  
  a thinking thing, 44  
  acts by laws of his nature, 19  
  all things are in, 14  
  as first cause, 18  
  cause of being of things, 25, 52  
  cause of essence and existence of things, 21  
  common conceptions of, xxiv, 15  
  definition, xxii, 3  
  entails infinite things in infinite ways, 18  
  essence of, 34  
  eternal, 22  
  idea of, 232  
  identical in essence and existence, xxvi, 22  
  immanent cause, 21  
  immutable, 23  
  love of, 242  
  love of himself, 243  
  love of humans, 244  
  most certainly known, 12  
  necessarily existing, 10  
  no freedom of will, 30  
  no intellect or will, 19–20  
  not acted on, 18  
  omnipotence, 20  
  only free cause, 19  
  only substance, 14  
  self-caused, xxvii, 25  
  unique, 14  
  without passion, joy or sadness, 233
- Góngora, Luis de, 190
- good, 157  
  and agreement in nature, 179  
  and capability of being affected, 188, 219  
  and joy, 124  
  and other human beings, 182  
  and the exemplar of human nature, 159  
  as what contributes to understanding, 176, 215  
  as what promotes common society, 190  
  common conceptions of, 39  
  definition, 160  
  highest, 177, 183, 202  
  judgments of, 103  
  merely ways of thinking, 159  
  varies by person, 40, 159
- gratitude, 127, 152, 212, 217  
  lack of, 127
- happiness, 125  
  highest, xvi, xxxiii, 92, 215
- hardness, 58
- harmony, 40
- hatred, 106, 193–194  
  countered by love, 128  
  definition, 146  
  how to destroy, 225  
  of God, 233  
  of nation or class, 130  
  of things imagined to be free, 131

- Heereboord, Adriaan, 27, 38  
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, xxxvii  
herem, xiii–xiv  
highest good, xvi–xvii, xxxiii. See also  
    blessedness and happiness, highest  
    as love of God, 234  
Hobbes, Thomas, xii, 88  
honor, 185, 202, 217–218  
honorable, 150, 152, 186, 202  
hope, 110, 146, 195, 199  
    requires fear, 147  
horror, 135  
human bodies, 60  
    composite, 60  
    dependent on external bodies, 60  
human kindness, 117, 154  
human minds  
    as ideas of particular things, 53  
    as ideas of the body, 54  
    capability of, 60  
    eternal part of, xxxiv, 237, 246  
    ideas of, 66  
    power of, 236  
    power over the emotions, 227, 235  
human nature, 182, 186, 197, 215. See also  
    agreement in nature  
human power  
    and adequate causation, 163  
    and endeavor, 163  
    and God's essence, 163  
    limited, 162, 220  
Hume, David, xxxvii  
humility, 137, 149, 151, 198–199  
Huygens, Christiaan, xiv
- ideas  
    adequate. See adequate ideas  
    as cognition, 65  
    clear and distinct, 8  
    definition, 43  
    form of, 66  
    ideas of, 67  
    inadequate. See inadequate ideas  
    independent of modes of thinking, 44  
    innate, 144  
    mutilated and confused, 71, 73  
    not images, 86, 88  
    not words, 88  
    true, 4, 8, 29, 44, 72–73, 80–81, 161  
identity  
    of composite bodies, 58–59  
    of simple bodies, 56  
ignorance, 37–39, 73, 142, 199, 211–212, 250  
    of causes, 158  
images, 63  
    and clear and distinct understanding,  
    232  
    strengthened by associations, 231  
imagination, 41. See also inadequate ideas  
    beings of, 41  
    definition, 63, 69  
    depends on bodily persistence, 236  
    limitations, 160  
    only source of falsity, 79  
    regards things as contingent, 81  
    simply, 227  
*imperium in imperio*, 93  
impulse, 99, 143–144, 152, 185, 204  
inadequate ideas, 53  
    as privation of cognition, 73  
    follow by necessity, 74  
    of affections of the human body, 69  
    of external bodies, 68  
    of ideas of the body, 70  
    of the duration of external things, 72  
    of the duration of the human body, 71  
    of the human mind, 70  
    of the parts of the human body, 67  
    only in particular minds, 74  
inclination, 146  
indignation, 112, 148, 197, 218  
infinite, 16  
ingratitude, 212  
intellect  
    actual, 29, 33  
    definition, 29  
    infinite, 46  
    potential, 29, 33  
    same as will, 87  
intellectual love of God, 242  
    same as God's self-love, 244  
intrepid, 133  
intuitive knowledge, xxx  
    and desire, 239  
    and endeavor, 238  
    and highest contentment, 239  
    and the love of God, 242  
    as source of blessedness, 215  
    definition, 78  
    depends on mind as formal cause, 241  
    eternal, 242  
    necessarily true, 79  
    superior to reason, 245  
jealousy, 121, 155, 235  
joy, xxix, 144  
    definition, 104  
    goodness, 190



## Index

- judgment  
  and emotion, 133  
  variable, 133  
justice, 188, 193, 214, 217–218  
Justinian, 188
- Koerbagh, Adriaan, xii
- laughter, 193, 196
- laws  
  civil, 187  
  divine, 248  
  of nature, 41, 196  
Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, xxxvii  
Leviticus, 186  
logic, 221  
longing, 123–124, 152, 197  
love, 194, 201  
  can be excessive, 192  
  combats hate, 214  
  combined with hate, 108, 126  
  common view of, 145  
  definition, 106, 145  
  how to destroy, 225  
  of freedom, 231  
  of God, 233–234  
  of nation or class, 130  
  of things imagined to be free, 131  
lust, 139–140, 154, 192, 202, 212, 217,  
  248, 250
- madness, 114  
Maimonides, Moses, xvii, 7, 34, 38–39, 48,  
  91  
manner of living, 93, 194. See also right,  
  manner of living  
Marranos, xiii  
marriage, 217  
mechanism, xi, xx  
medicine, 221  
melancholy, 104, 144, 183, 191, 193  
memory, 64, 130, 167  
  and mental decisions, 99  
  and right manner of living, 230  
  joy from, 130  
mental decisions  
  and bodily determination, 99  
  and dreaming, 100  
  as appetites, 99  
  freedom of. See freedom, of decision  
  not free, 100  
merit, 188  
Mersenne, Marin, 34  
mind-body union, xxv, 55, 223
- modes  
  as affections, 26–27  
  Cartesian conception of, xxi  
  clear and distinct concepts of, 225  
  definition, 3  
  finite determined by other finite modes, 26  
  infinite, 24  
  of thinking, 44  
  that do not exist, 49, 63  
modesty, 151  
money, 219  
motion and rest, 55  
  ratio of, 58–59, 189
- natura naturans*, xxii, 28–29  
*natura naturata*, xxii, 28–29  
natural philosophy, xii  
natural right. See right, of nature  
nature. See also God  
  as an individual thing, 60  
  law-governed, 94  
Neander, 201  
necessitarianism, xxiii  
necessity  
  and emotions, 167  
  definition, 4, 31  
  of all things, 31–32  
New Netherlands, xiii  
Newton, Isaac, 101
- omens, 132  
order, 39  
  of the affections of the human body, 64, 224  
  of the intellect, 64, 229–230  
Ovid, 7, 98, 119, 157, 171
- pantheism, xxiii  
parallelism, xxv–xxvii, xxxiv  
particular things  
  definition, 26, 44  
  necessarily involve the essence of God, 83  
parts and wholes, xxii  
passions, xxxi  
  and agreement in nature, 179–180  
  and inadequate ideas, 96, 100, 215  
  as expressing affecting objects, 138, 215  
  as the source of human conflict, 180, 216  
  definition, 95, 155  
  depend on the persistence of the body, 243  
  essence of, 164  
  how to transform into actions, 225  
  involve negation, 100  
  power of, 164  
*pathema*, 155

## Index

---

- Patriarchs, 210  
perfection, xvii, xxxi, 157–159  
  and acting, 247  
  and being, 159  
  and power of action, 159  
  as completion, 157  
  as reality, 44, 160  
  highest human, 239  
  of God's production, 32  
philosophers, 141  
piety, 214, 217–218, 226, 248–249  
pineal gland, 74, 86, 222–224  
pity, 112, 115, 120, 148, 196, 201, 217  
pleasure, 193  
Ploekhoy, Pieter, xiii  
*Political Treatise*, xxxii, xxxvi  
possibility  
  and emotions, 168  
  definition, 31, 160  
poverty, 217, 231  
power  
  as God's essence, 34  
  as virtue, 161  
  human. See human power  
  of action, xxxi, 95, 156  
  of effects, 224  
  of emotions, 228  
powerlessness, 93, 174, 180, 186, 199, 215, 218  
  human, 157, 171  
  in spirit, 172, 193, 195, 199, 201, 217, 231, 249  
  of the human mind, 236  
praise, 136, 151, 198  
prejudice, 35  
presence of mind, 142  
pride, 114, 150–151, 195, 199–201, 218, 226  
principle of inertia, 101  
principle of sufficient reason, xliii, 10  
proof  
  a posteriori, 12  
  a priori, 12  
properties  
  and reality, 18  
  definition, xviii  
Psalms, 244  
purposes  
  and imagination, 40  
  definition, 161  
  divine, 35–39, 158  
  human, 36  
  in nature, 158  
quantity, 17  
*quantum in se est*, 101  
rationalism, xviii, xx  
real distinction, 10  
reality. See also being and actual existence  
  definition, 44  
reason  
  avoids bad indirectly, 207  
  beings of, 41, 91  
  command of, 207–209  
  definition, 78  
  necessarily true, 79  
  not led by fear, 206  
  power of, 221–224  
  regards things as necessary, 81  
  sees things from the vantage of eternity, 82  
relief, 110, 147, 195  
remorse, 110, 147, 195  
repentance, 118, 134, 149, 199  
reverence, 199  
Revius, Jacobus, xii  
right  
  and wrong, 149  
  manner of living, 93, 214, 230, 248  
  of nature, 187, 216  
  political, 187  
sadness, 144  
  badness of, 190  
  definition, 104  
salvation, xxxiv, 244, 250  
satiety, 143  
savagery, 153  
scepticism, 40  
scorn, 145  
second notions, 77  
self-contentment, 118, 134, 149, 197–198  
self-love, 137, 150  
Seneca, 174  
sense, 44  
servitude, 157, 217  
shame, 118, 125–126, 151, 202, 218  
sickness of spirit, 231, 236  
sin, 37, 158, 187, 199  
slave, 209  
sobriety, 139, 142  
sociability, 183  
sorrow, xxix  
sovereign, 197  
spiritedness, 142, 155, 211, 214, 248  
state of nature, 187–188  
Stoics, xxxi, 221  
substance. See also God  
  Aristotelian, xix  
  Cartesian, xx, xxv  
  corporeal, 15

## *Index*

---

- substance. (cont.)  
  definition, xx, 3  
  indivisible, 13, 16  
  necessarily existing, 6  
  necessarily infinite, 7  
  only one, xxi  
  self-caused, 6, 12  
suicide, 174  
sun example, 162  
superstition, 36, 193, 207, 220  
  origin of, 132  
sympathy, 107, 114
- Tacitus, 199  
temperance, 139, 142  
Terence, 40, 94, 99, 171, 193, 199, 216, 218  
theologians, 38, 183  
*Theological-Political Treatise*, xv, xxxvi  
theology, xii  
timidity, 125, 133, 153, 155, 207  
Toland, John, xxxvii  
transcendental terms, 77  
*Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*, xvi,  
  xviii, xxxiv  
true religion, 214, 217–218, 248  
truth  
  eternal, 4, 8, 21–22, 245  
  existing objectively in divine intellect, 20
- ugliness, 40  
universal notions, 77–79, 85, 90–91, 137, 158,  
  245
- vacuum, 17  
vainglory, 202  
van den Enden, Franciscus, xiii  
vantage of eternity  
  and actual existence, 240  
  and blessedness, 242  
  and God's ideas, 237  
  and reason, 82  
  and the dictates of reason, 205  
  arises from considering the essence of the  
    body, 240  
  conceives things without reference to time,  
    83  
  definition, 241  
  veneration, 134, 137, 145  
  vengeance, 126, 153, 193, 216  
virtue, xvii, xxxi  
  and self-preservation, 174  
  and understanding, 175  
  definition, 161  
  foundation of, 175  
  highest, 177, 238  
  intrinsically valuable, 92  
  of spirit, 211  
  true, 186  
Voetius, Gisbertus, xi  
volitions, 144. See also will  
  definition, 86  
voluntarism, 33
- waverings of imagination, 82, 154–155,  
  225  
waverings of spirit, 108–109, 118  
will, xxix, 143  
  as particular volitions, 86  
  definition, 86, 103  
  not a free cause, 30  
  same as intellect, 87  
wise person, 194, 221, 250  
women, 122  
wonder, 39, 78, 134, 137, 144, 146, 218
- Zabarella, Giacomo, 77

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