body, and that then God appears as a third thing, outside both—that He is not the Notion of unity, no. are the two elements themselves Notion. We must not however forget that Descartes says that both those original elements are created substances. But this expression ‘created’ pertains to the ordinary conception only and is not a determinate thought; it was Spinoza, therefore, who first accomplished this return to thought.

2. SPINOZA.

The philosophy of Descartes underwent a great variety of unescapulative developments, but in Benedict Spinoza a direct successor to this philosopher may be found, and one who carried on the Cartesian principle to its furthest logical conclusions. For him soul and body, thought and Being, cease to have separate independent existence. The dualism of the Cartesian system Spinoza, as a Jew, altogether set aside. For the profound unity of his philosophy as it found expression in Europe, his manifestation of Spirit as the identity of the finite and the infinite in God, instead of God’s appearing related to these as a Third—all this is an echo from Eastern lands. The Oriental theory of absolute identity was brought by Spinoza much more directly into line, firstly with the current of European thought, and then with the European and Cartesian philosophy, in which it soon found a place.

First of all we must, however, glance at the circumstances of Spinoza’s life. He was by descent a Portuguese Jew, and was born at Amsterdam in the year 1632; the name he received was Baruch, but he altered it to Benedict. In his youth he was instructed by the Rabbis of the synagogue to which he belonged, but he soon fell out with them, their wrath having been kindled by the criticisms which he passed on the fantastic doctrines of the Talmud. He was not, therefore, long in absenting himself from the syna-

gogue, and as the Rabbis were in dread lest his example should have evil consequences, they offered him a yearly allowance of a thousand guilden if he would keep away from the place and hold his tongue. This offer he declined; and the Rabbis thereafter carried their persecution of him to such a pitch that they were even minded to rid themselves of him by assassination. After having made a narrow escape from the dagger, he formally withdrew from the Jewish communion, without, however, going over to the Christian Church. He now applied himself particularly to the Latin language, and made a special study of the Cartesian philosophy. Later on he went to Rhynsburg, near Leyden, and from the year 1664 he lived in retirement, first at Voorburg, a village near the Hague, and then at the Hague itself, highly respected by numerous friends; he gained a livelihood for himself by grinding optical glasses. It was no arbitrary choice that led him to occupy himself with light, for it represents in the material sphere the absolute identity which forms the foundation of the Oriental view of things. Although he had rich friends and mighty protectors, among whom even generals were numbered, he lived in humble poverty, declining the handsome gifts offered to him time after time. Nor would he permit Simon von Vries to make him his heir; he only accepted from him an annual pension of three hundred florins; in the same way he gave up to his sisters his share of their father’s estate. From the Elector Palatine, Carl Ludwig, a man of most noble character and raised above the prejudices of his time, he received the offer of a professor’s chair at Heidelberg, with the assurance that he would have liberty to teach and to write, because “the Prince believed he would not put that liberty to a bad use by interfering with the religion publicly established.” Spinoza (in his published letters) very wisely declined this offer, however, because “he did not know within what limits that philosophic liberty would have to be confined, in order that he might
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not appear to be interfering with the publicly established religion." He remained in Holland, a country highly interesting in the history of general culture, as it was the first in Europe to show the example of universal toleration, and afforded to many a place of refuge where they might enjoy liberty of thought; for fierce as was the rage of the theologians there against Bekker, for example (Bruck. Hist. crit. phil. T. IV. P. 2, pp. 719, 720), and furious as were the attacks of Voetius on the Cartesian philosophy, these had not the consequences which they would have had in another land. Spinoza died on the 21st of February, 1677, in the forty-fourth year of his age. The cause of his death was consumption, from which he had long been a sufferer; this was in harmony with his system of philosophy, according to which all particularity and individuality pass away in the one substance. A Protestant divine, Colerus by name, who published a biography of Spinoza, inveighs strongly against him, it is true, but gives nevertheless a most minute and kindly description of his circumstances and surroundings—telling how he left only about two hundred thalers, what debts he had, and so on. A bill included in the inventory, in which the barber requests payment due him by M. Spinoza of blessed memory, scandalizes the parson very much, and regarding it he makes the observation: "Had the barber but known what sort of a creature Spinoza was, he certainly would not have spoken of his blessed memory." The German translator of this biography writes under the portrait of Spinoza: characterem reprobationis in cultu gerens, applying this description to a countenance which doubtless expresses the melancholy of a profound thinker, but is otherwise mild and benevolent. The reprobatio is certainly correct; but it is not a reprobation in the passive sense; it is an active disapprobation on Spinoza's part of the opinions, errors and thoughtless passions of mankind.¹

¹ Collectanea de vita B. de Spinoza (addita Operibus ed. Paulus

Spinoza used the terminology of Descartes, and also published an account of his system. For we find the first of Spinoza's works entitled "An Exposition according to the geometrical method of the principles of the Cartesian philosophy." Some time after this he wrote his Tractatus theologico-politicus, and by it gained considerable reputation. Great as was the hatred which Spinoza roused amongst his Rabbis, it was more than equalled by the odium which he brought upon himself amongst Christian, and especially amongst Protestant theologians—chiefly through the medium of this essay. It contains his views on inspiration, a critical treatment of the books of Moses and the like, chiefly from the point of view that the laws therein contained are limited in their application to the Jews. Later Christian theologians have written critically on this subject, usually making it their object to show that these books were compiled at a later time, and that they date in part from a period subsequent to the Babylonian captivity; this has become a crucial point with Protestant theologians, and one by which the modern school distinguishes itself from the older, greatly pluming itself thereon. All this, however, is already to be found in the above-mentioned work of Spinoza. But Spinoza drew the greatest odium upon himself by his philosophy proper, which we must now consider as it is given to us in his Ethics. While Descartes published no writings on this subject, the Ethics of Spinoza is undoubtedly his greatest work; it was published after his death by Ludwig Mayer, a physician, who had been Spinoza's most intimate friend. It consists of five parts; the first deals with God (De Deo). General metaphysical ideas are contained in it, which include the knowledge of God and nature. The second part deals with the nature and origin of mind (De natura et origine mentis). We see

thus that Spinoza does not treat of the subject of natural philosophy, extension and motion at all, for he passes immediately from God to the philosophy of mind, to the ethical point of view; and what refers to knowledge, intelligent mind, is brought forward in the first part, under the head of the principles of human knowledge. The third book of the Ethics deals with the origin and nature of the passions (De origine et natura affectuum); the fourth with the powers of the same, or human slavery (De servitute humana seu de affectuum viribus); the fifth, lastly, with the power of the understanding, with thought, or with human liberty (De potentia intellectus seu de libertate humana).\(^1\) Kirchenrath Professor Paulus published Spinoza’s works in Jena; I had a share in the bringing out of this edition, having been entrusted with the collation of French translations.

As regards the philosophy of Spinoza, it is very simple, and on the whole easy to comprehend; the difficulty which it presents is due partly to the limitations of the method in which Spinoza presents his thoughts, and partly to his narrow range of ideas, which causes him in an unsatisfactory way to pass over important points of view and cardinal questions. Spinoza’s system is that of Descartes made objective in the form of absolute truth. The simple thought of Spinoza’s idealism is this: The true is simply and solely the one substance, whose attributes are thought and extension or nature: and only this absolute unity is reality; it alone is God. It is, as with Descartes, the unity of thought and Being, or that which contains the Notion of its existence in itself. The Cartesian substance, as Idea, has certainly Being included in its Notion; but it is only Being as abstract, not as real Being or as extension (supra, p. 241). With Descartes corporeality and the thinking ‘I’

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1 Collectanea de vita B. de Spinoza, pp. 629-641; Spinoza Ethic. (Oper. T. II.) pp. 1, 3 et not., 33.
mind and its absolute foundation. The difference between our standpoint and that of the Eleatic philosophy is only this, that through the agency of Christianity concrete individuality is in the modern world present throughout in spirit. But in spite of the infinite demands on the part of the concrete, substance with Spinoza is not yet determined as in itself concrete. As the concrete is thus not present in the content of substance, it is therefore to be found within reflecting thought alone, and it is only from the endless oppositions of this last that the required unity emerges. Of substance as such there is nothing more to be said; all that we can do is to speak of the different ways in which Philosophy has dealt with it, and the opposites which in it are abrogated. The difference depends on the nature of the opposites which are held to be abrogated in substance. Spinoza is far from having proved this unity as convincingly as was done by the ancients; but what constitutes the grandeur of Spinoza's manner of thought is that he is able to renounce all that is determinate and particular, and restrict himself to the One, giving heed to this alone.

1. Spinoza begins (Eth. P. I. pp. 35, 36) with a series of definitions, from which we take the following.

a. Spinoza's first definition is of the Cause of itself. He says: "By that which is causa sui, its own cause, I understand that whose essence (or Notion) "involves existence, or which cannot be conceived except as existent." The unity of existence and universal thought is asserted from the very first, and this unity will ever be the question at issue. "The cause of itself" is a noteworthy expression, for while we picture to ourselves that the effect stands in opposition to the cause, the cause of itself is the cause which, while it operates and separates an "other," at the same time produces only itself, and in the production therefore does away with this distinction. The establishing of itself as an other is loss or degeneration, and at the same time the negation of this loss; this is a purely speculative Notion, indeed a fundamental Notion in all speculation. The cause in which the cause is identical with the effect, is the infinite cause (infra, p. 263); if Spinoza had further developed what lies in the causa sui, substance with him would not have been rigid and unworkable.

b. The second definition is that of the finite. "That thing is said to be finite in its kind which can be limited by another of the same nature." For it comes then to an end, it is not there; what is there is something else. This something else must, however, be of a like nature; for those things which are to limit each other must, in order to be able to limit each other, touch each other, and consequently have a relation to each other, that is to say they must be of one nature, stand on a like basis, and have a common sphere. That is the affirmative side of the limit. "Thus a thought is" only "limited by another thought, a body by another body, but thoughts are not limited by bodies nor" conversely "bodies by thoughts." We saw this (p. 244) with Descartes: thought is an independent totality and so is extension, they have nothing to do with one another; they do not limit each other, each is included in itself.

c. The third definition is that of substance. "By substance I understand that which exists in itself and is conceived by itself, i.e. the conception of which does not require the aid of the conception of any other thing for its formation (a quo formari debeat);" otherwise it would be finite, accidental. What cannot have a conception formed of it without the aid of something else, is not independent, but is dependent upon that something else.

d. In the fourth place Spinoza defines attributes, which, as the moment coming second to substance, belong to it. "By attribute I understand that which the mind perceives as constituting the essence of substance;" and to Spinoza this alone is true. This is an important determination; the
attribute is undoubtedly a determinateness, but at the same time it remains a totality. Spinoza, like Descartes, accepts only two attributes, thought and extension. The understanding grasps them as the reality of substance, but the reality is not higher than the substance, for it is only reality in the view of the understanding, which falls outside substance. Each of the two ways of regarding substance—extension and thought—contains no doubt the whole content of substance, but only in one form, which the understanding brings with it; and for this very reason both sides are in themselves identical and infinite. This is the true completion; but where substance passes over into attribute is not stated.

e. The fifth definition has to do with what comes third in relation to substance, the mode. "By mode I understand the affections of substance, or that which is in something else, through the aid of which also it is conceived." Thus substance is conceived through itself; attribute is not conceived through itself, but has a relation to the conceiving understanding, in so far as this last conceives reality; mode, finally, is what is not conceived as reality, but through and in something else.

These last three moments Spinoza ought not merely to have established in this way as conceptions, he ought to have deduced them; they are especially important, and correspond with what we more definitely distinguish as universal, particular and individual. They must not, however, be taken as formal, but in their true concrete sense; the concrete universal is substance, the concrete particular is the concrete species; the Father and Son in the Christian dogmas are similarly particular, but each of them contains the whole nature of God, only under a different form. The mode is the individual, the finite as such, which enters into external connection with what is "other." In this Spinoza only descends to a lower stage, the mode is only the foregoing warped and stunted. Spinoza's defect is therefore this, that he takes the third moment as mode alone, as a false individuality. True individuality and subjectivity is not a mere retreat from the universal, but merely something clearly determinate; for, as clearly determinate, it is at the same time Being-for-itself, determined by itself alone. The individual, the subject, is even in being so the return to the universal; and in that it is at home with itself, it is itself the universal. The return consists simply and solely in the fact of the particular being in itself the universal; to this return Spinoza did not attain. Rigid substantiality is the last point he reached, not infinite form; this he knew not, and thus determinateness continually vanishes from his thought.

f. In the sixth place, the definition of the infinite is also of importance, for in the infinite Spinoza defines more strictly than anywhere else the Notion of the Notion. The infinite has a double significance, according as it is taken as the infinitely many or as the absolutely infinite (infra, p. 263). "The infinite in its kind is not such in respect of all possible attributes; but the absolutely infinite is that to whose essence all belongs that expresses an essence and contains no negation." In the same sense Spinoza distinguishes in the nine-and-twentieth Letter (Oper. T. I. pp. 526-532) the infinite of imagination from the infinite of thought (intellectus), the actual (actu) infinite. Most men, when they wish to strive after the sublime, get no further than the first of these; this is the false infinite, just as when one says "and so on into infinity," meaning perhaps the infinity of space from star to star, or else the infinity of time. An infinite numerical series in mathematics is exactly the same thing. If a certain fraction is represented as a decimal fraction, it is incomplete; † is, on the contrary, the true infinite, and therefore not an incomplete expression, although the content here is of course limited. It is infinity in the incorrect sense that one
determined. As all differences and determinations of things and of consciousness simply go back into the One substance, one may say that in the system of Spinoza all things are merely cast down into this abyss of annihilation. But from this abyss nothing comes out; and the particular of which Spinoza speaks is only assumed and presupposed from the ordinary conception, without being justified. Were it to be justified, Spinoza would have to deduce it from his Substance; but that does not open itself out, and therefore comes to no vitality, spirituality or activity. His philosophy has only a rigid and unyielding substance, and not yet spirit; in it we are not at home with ourselves. But the reason that God is not spirit is that He is not the Three in One. Substance remains rigid and petrified, without Boehme's sources or springs; for the individual determinations in the form of determinations of the understanding are not Boehme's originating spirits, which energize and expand in one another (supra, pp. 202, 203). What we find regarding this particular then is that it is only a modification of absolute substance, which, however, is not declared to be such; for the moment of negativity is what is lacking to this rigid motionlessness, whose single form of activity is this, to divest all things of their determination and particularity and cast them back into the one absolute substance, wherein they are simply swallowed up, and all life in itself is utterly destroyed. This is what we find philosophically inadequate with Spinoza; distinctions are externally present, it is true, but they remain external, since even the negative is not known in itself. Thought is the absolutely abstract, and for that very reason the absolutely negative; it is so in truth, but with Spinoza it is not asserted to be the absolutely negative. But if in opposition to Spinozism we hold fast to the assertion that Spirit, as distinguishing itself from the corporeal, is substantial, actual, true, and in the same way that freedom is not some-thing merely privative, then this actuality in formal thought is doubtless correct, yet it rests only upon feeling; but the further step is that the Idea essentially includes within itself motion and vitality, and that it consequently has in itself the principle of spiritual freedom. On the one hand, therefore, the defect of Spinozism is conceived as consisting in its want of correspondence with actuality; but on the other side it is to be apprehended in a higher sense, I mean in the sense that substance with Spinoza is only the Idea taken altogether abstractly, not in its vitality.

If, in conclusion, we sum up this criticism that we have offered, we would say that on the one hand with Spinoza negation or privation is distinct from substance; for he merely assumes individual determinations, and does not deduce them from substance. On the other hand the negation is present only as Nothing, for in the absolute there is no mode; the negative is not there, but only its dissolution, its return: we do not find its movement, its Becoming and Being. The negative is conceived altogether as a vanishing moment—not in itself, but only as individual self-consciousness; it is not like the Separat or we met with in Boehme's system (supra, p. 206). Self-consciousness is born from this ocean, dripping with the water thereof, i.e. never coming to absolute self-hood; the heart, the independence is transfixed—the vital fire is wanting. This lack has to be supplied, the moment of self-consciousness has to be added. It has the following two special aspects, which we now perceive emerging and gaining acceptance; in the first place the objective aspect, that absolute essence obtains in self-consciousness the mode of an object of consciousness for which the "other" exists, or the existent as such, and that what Spinoza understood by the "modes" is elevated to objective reality as an absolute moment of the absolute; in the second place we have the aspect of self-consciousness, individuality, independence. As was formerly the case with respect to Bacon and Boehme, the former aspect is here taken up by
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