

SPINOZA AND MONISM

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C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by Miss. Joyanti Paul, that the contents of this thesis did not form a basis of award of any previous degree to her, or, to the best of my knowledge , to anybody else, and that the dissertation had not been submitted by her for any research degree in any other university.

In habit and character Miss. Joyanti Paul is a fit and proper person for the degree of M. Phil.

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III

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C H A P T E R - I

C H A P T E R - I

INTRODUCTION

Benedict De Spinoza was born into the Jewish community of Amsterdam on November 24, 1632. And he died in 1672. During his short life his intellectual energy went into service of his philosophy. His earliest philosophical work (re-discovered (1862) in translated Dutch manuscript) was a Short Treatise on God, Man and His Well - Being. It is chiefly valuable for the insight it gives into the workings and development of Spinoza's mind. His magnum opus is Ethics. The Ethics was the product of prolonged and critical toil. But ^{just} ~~first~~ how prolonged it is difficult to say. For already as early as 1665 almost four fifths of the Ethics seem to have been written. It has been learnt from the letters which had been written by Spinoza to one of his friends promising him to send the " third - part " of philosophy of Ethics up to the eighteenth proposition. From this letter it has been found that during that time the Ethics was divided into three parts not five as it is now. And some of the chief conclusions of his philosophy was published in Tractatus - Theologico - Politicus.

The only book Spinoza published in his own lifetime in his own name was his Principles of Descartes'

Philosophy Geometrically Demonstrated with an appendix of Cogitata Metaphysica which he had dictated a youth (one " Coesarius ") "to whom (he) did not wish to teach (his) own opinions openly". The only other book Spinoza published in his life - time was the Tractatus Theologico Politicus.

The book Descartes' Principle throws a helpful light on Spinoza's own thinking. Though its content is Cartesian doctrine, which Spinoza confessedly does not accept. In the Metaphysical Thoughts which, although it has Spinoza more often speaking for himself. But in its preface it carries a claim to "express the opinions of Descartes' which are not always Spinoza's. These two works were published only at the urging of his friends.

Spinoza's masterpiece Ethics consists of five parts. Ethics which has been written in geometrical order. He choose it because his fundamental philosophic aim was to establish ethics on a thoroughly tested scientific foundation; and geometry of all mathematical science, most completely embodied, at that time, the highest scientific deal. Man, Spinoza held, is a part of Nature, and Nature is governed by eternal and immutable laws. He applied the mathematical method to man as it applies to matter. He prefers the idea of science because it would be easy

to determine, what things are good for man and what means he has for attaining them.

Spinoza started his Ethics by definitions and axioms and proceeding from proposition to proposition in geometrical method. According to Spinoza geometry was an ideal science. Because for Spinoza, the essence of logical method consists in starting out with ideas that are of utter simplicity. Then, if the ideas are understood at all, they can only be clearly and distinctly understood. He says that the absolutely simple we can either know or not know. If it is absolutely simple then there will not be any confusion about it. And according to Spinoza, the ideas which are clearly and distinctly understood must be necessarily true.

Spinoza's eminence as a philosopher can hardly be over-emphasized. He has been called the "philosopher's philosopher"¹. All subsequent philosopher have been influenced deeply by him. Schelling and Hegel ~~are~~ held that in order to be a philosopher one must first be a Spinozist; and their philosophy may be conceived and — perhaps they themselves so conceived it as a development from Spinozism, providing a corrected version of it".²

¹ Sen Sanat Kumar - A study of the Metaphysics of Spinoza. Page - XII Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, March 1966.

² Sen Sanat Kumar - A study of the Metaphysics of Spinoza. Page XIV. Visva Bharati, Santiniketan. March 1966.

Spinoza's thought influenced on poets and literature also. Shelly had been so greatly influenced by Spinoza's thoughts that he had actually begun a translation of his Tractatus Theologico Politicus. Havelock Ellis, who was a scientist writes in his book "My confession" that "If we take a sufficiently wide and lofty survey of the great philosophers we may perhaps conclude that ultimately there are two who dominate the rest. In the ancient world there was Plato. In the modern world there is Spinoza."³

Spinoza is one of the very few philosophers who have worked almost all of the main problems of philosophy. His philosophical system, in a sense, is thorough and complete.

Spinoza's philosophy generally is thought to be nothing but a development of cartesian doctrine. This means that he only followed Descartes' principles. And what ever is there in Descartes' philosophy is to be found in Spinoza's philosophy. Therefore, it is believed that he has nothing new to say. But such a conception about him is

³ Ellis Havelock - My confession. Page 185
1934.

mistaken, because there is hardly any proof that Spinoza had ever been in his life a cartesian. More-over, he is regarded as a critic of Descartes' theories. The difference between the doctrine of Spinoza and that of Descartes' is very significant. Spinoza is a monist and Descartes a dualist, where Spinoza says that there is only one substance that is God, here Descartes says that there are three substance that is God, Mind and Matter. Spinoza's substance and that of Descartes are one only in name.

The central controlling idea of Spinoza's philosophy is that all things are necessarily determined in Nature. While he conceives to be an absolutely infinite unified and uniform order. According to Spinoza God is identical with the universe and must be act according to eternal and necessary laws. God and Nature is identical there is no dichotomy. God is only one. And He is supremely perfect because he is absolutely real.

In part-I of the Ethics Spinoza says that God is the immanent cause of all things. He is also the free cause. He defines "freedom" in Ethics Part - I Def. 7 "That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its own

nature alone". From this definition it has been understood that God and nothing else, can be called "free" for God alone is completely self dependent. He exists and "acts from the laws of his own nature only, and is compelled by no one.

Spinoza's concept of "freedom" is unique and is liable to misunderstanding because his notion of freedom is exact opposite of the ordinary notion of freedom. He vehemently criticises the common view which makes "freedom" consists in the so - called "free-choice" or indifferent exercise of the will.

Spinoza says that "Freedom" does not consist in free decision, but in free necessity."⁴ Freedom is not opposed to necessity but to chance and indeterminism⁵. So that "freedom" and "necessity" are not only ^{not} ~~not~~ incompatible with each other but, on the contrary, have necessary mutual implication, God is a free cause, and therefore, a necessary cause. Freedom entails necessity; it excludes external constraint.

⁴ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt.I. of Epistola - 58.

⁵ Spinoza - Ethics Pt. I. of Epp - 54 and 56.

Spinoza considers God abstract. That is the reason his philosophy is known as abstract Monism. By the term Monism we mean that this philosophical way which tries to solve the problems about the reality on the basis that only one reality underlies all things and living being is called Monism. According to it, the entire universe is made of this ultimate reality. Monism, in fact, is based on human beings fundamental tendency to seek unity in diversity he sees all round.

Such a philosophical theory is found in the philosophy of Spinoza. According to this philosophy, all the variety and multiplicity seen in the world is nothing but the appearances or the manifestations of one ultimate reality. Thus, there is no plurality of dualism in the world. It is also the psychology of the man to act unity in multiplicity. He feels that the uniform system in the universe also testifies the truth that the ultimate reality is the basis of everything. An example of this uniform system man finds in himself. He sees that whatever happens in the mind influences the body. This proves the fact that there is one identical substance underlying both the body and the mind.

"The mind and the body are one and the same thing". The unity of the one substance is incompatible with any dualism, and Spinoza's theology therefore, attacks the dualism of God and the created world. The second great dualism under attack from Spinoza is that of body and mind. In this respect Spinoza's philosophy is totally different from that of Descartes. Though it is certainly true, that the study of Descartes is essential for to study the philosophy of Spinoza.

Spinoza gives a monistic explanation of the relation between mind and body. He believes that the mind and the body are two rays of the same light or two spokes of the same wheel. Whatever happens in the one certainly influences the other though they never meet each other. Mind and matter conscious and unconscious are independent of each other and do not cause each other. They are, in fact, attributes of God and exist together in Him. Their activities are determined by Him. Spinoza, therefore, believes that the events of the world are unchangeable and determined like the laws of mathematics. He also believes the order of God, is definite and

fixed like mathematical principles. Multiplicity is the manifestation of that ultimate reality.

Pluralist assert that there are many substances, while monism assert that there is only one substance. Therefore, it is diametrically opposed to the thesis of pluralisms. Monist systems generally been backed up by arguments of a kind that may be called "rationalist". Because always they turn on a priori considerations. By contrast pluralism seems to be characterised by its strong^{er} affinity with the common sense view of the reality.

Let us confine our attention to the opposition between substance - monists and substance pluralists. Monist generally relies upon a priori consideration in arguing his views. Spinoza starts from the premise that if substance is to be primary it must be its own rationale. And therefore, it cannot depend on anything else; it is causa sui . From this starting point Spinoza argues that ~~the~~ substance must be unlimited by anything else. Hence, it is infinite. And for that very reason substance is one. But, he does not, however, say that our ordinary view of the world is totally false.

He says that the ordinary things are the modes of the one infinite substance, which is God or Nature. In this regard we can say that our ordinary view of the world constitutes appearance, since reality consists of the one substance with infinite attributes. And what we ordinarily take to be substances are really the modes.

F. H. Bradely also accepts the same view. He says that the possibility of a plurality of things depends on there being relations between them. And if the relation is only the relation of difference. If relations are incoherent and irrational, then there will be pluralism. And the ordinary view of a world of many things must therefore constitute a view of appearance only. Bradely does not, however, think that appearance is totally false. According to him, reality must somehow include appearance, since a complete explanation of reality must also explain why there is appearance and why it is as it is.

Spinoza is known as "substantial monist" as well as "abstract monist". By "substantial monism" we mean the theory that the apparent multiplicity of substances is really a manifestation of

only a single substance is different states or from different points of view. Ethics is the classic exposition of substantival manism, where he proved that there can be only one - self subsistent and independent thing, Spinoza considers God as abstract. That is the reason his philosophy is known as abstract Manism. He says God is abstract because to him God is not an individual object. Nor He is the normal subject matter of thought. According to his description, God cannot be "individuated" because it is something like stuff, or matter.

Spinoza rejects the attributive manism, which maintains that all the substances that there are, whether one or many, are ultimately of a single kind.

Both Spinoza and Bradely say that the plurality of substances, is one that cannot rationally be sub**st**ained. There must be only one substance. In an absolute sense reality is one and simple.

Spinoza's magnum opus Ethics consists of five parts. The first concerning "God" which is

the version of his ontological argument. And also in this chapter he says that God is not distinct from the world, but immanent within it. The second part is "Concerning the nature and Origin of the mind". This part gives a fascinating summary of his physics, where he discussed the major problem of Cartesian philosophy, that is, the relation between mind and body, Descartes argues that mind is a separate substance from matter whereas Spinoza argues that there cannot be interaction between substances. The third part is "on the origin and nature of the emotions". This part gives a detailed description of Spinoza's account of human nature. The fourth chapter is "Human servitude and the strength of the emotion". Here he describes the enslaved condition of Humanity compelled by passion, opinion and imagination. And in the final part, Spinoza describes "The power of the intellect or human freedom". Here he shows how a person may achieve freedom and happiness through the exercise of reason. He also describes in this chapter how a man may attain the absolute knowledge of the world, which is the blessedness of God.

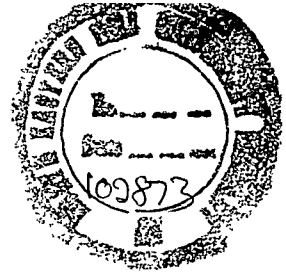
I believe that there is a need to do research on Spinoza for following reasons. Firstly, Spinoza happens to be one of the most neglected philosophers and secondly he happens to be one of the most misunderstood philosophers. He uses deductive geometrical method of exposition. I undertook the study of Spinoza without any prior adverse attitude and tried to follow his reasoning sympathetically. I do not make the absurd claim that I have understood all his ~~px~~ speculations. I find that he dealt with genuine problems of philosophy in a remarkably original way and with great intellectual rigour and depth.

C H A P T E R - II

MONISM'S CONCEPT OF SUBSTANCE

In this chapter, I would critically examine Spinoza's position as regards the concept of substance. Spinoza is well-known for his opposition to cartesian dualism. He argues that the cartesian definition of substance logically leads to monism, that is, there is only one substance. Though he accepts the cartesian definition of substance, he does not accept the cartesian conclusion, that there must be dualism. It is interesting to note that though he advocates monism, he holds the view that there must be infinity of attributes, each distinctly conceivable from the others. And this interesting position of Spinoza would be considered in all its ramifications.

In traditional philosophy, a substance is a thing that exists independently and persists through change. But the notion of substance has been developed in different ways by different philosophers. The notion of substance originates from the Greek philosophy especially from the



philosophy of Aristotle.

The concept of substance has been used first in Greek. The Greek word ousia is sometimes translated as "substance". And this principal term "ousia" is used by earlier Greek writers to refer to "property", in the legal sense of the word, that which is owned. The word ousia also occurs in philosophical writings before Aristotle as a synonym for the Greek word physis. This term physis, means either the origin of a thing, its natural constitution or structure, the stuff of which things are made, or a natural kind or species. The English term substance has been derived from the Latin word substantia. This word is a literal translation of the Greek word hypostasis which means "standing under". Plato and Aristotle use the term "substance" in a non-technical way to signify being in the sense of "essence", being in the sense of "existence", and being as opposed to becoming. The beginning of the technical usage now rendered by "substance" is to be found in Aristotle's categories.

In philosophy, the word "category" was first used as a technical term by Aristotle. In his

short treatise called categories, Aristotle holds that every uncombined expression refers to one or more things falling in at least one of the following ten classes. Substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, posture, state, action and passion.

Each of these ten classes of entities signified constitutes a category, or genus of entities. What is essential to Aristotle's theory of category consists in the following distinctions. Property must be distinguished from accidents, and essential predication from accidental predication.

Though the term category properly means "predicate", Aristotle's categories can occur either as the subject or as the predicate of a sentence. In chapter five of the categories Aristotle distinguishes within the category of substance between "primary substance" and "secondary substance". And his account of substance has been the most influential in the history of philosophy. He says, substance, in the truest and primary and most definite sense of the word is that which is neither predicated of a subject nor present in a subject,

for instance, the individual man or horse. But the substance in the secondary sense can^{it} occur as the predicable of a subject as well as can be present in a subject. For example, the individual man is included in the species, "man" and the genus to which the species belongs is "animal". Therefore, the species "man" and the genus "animal" are turned secondary substances. Everything except primary substance is either predicable of a primary substance or present in a primary substance. This becomes evident by reference to particular instances which occur. "Animal" is predicated of the species "man" therefore, of the individual man, for if there were no individual man of whom it could be predicated it could not be predicated of the species "man" at all. Again, colour is present in body, which means that it is present in the individual body. And if there were no individual body in which it was present, then it could not be possible to be present in body at all. Thus everything except primary substances is either predicated of primary substance or is present in them.

In secondary substances, the species is more truly substance than the genus, which is more nearly related to primary substances. For if anyone should render an account of what a primary substance is, he would be able to render a more instructive account to the subject.

Primary substance is neither present in a subject nor predicated of a subject. But the secondary substance is not present in a subject. For instance, "man" is predicated of the individual man, but it is not present in any subject for the manhood is not present in the individual man. In the same way "animal" is predicated of the individual man, but is not present in the individual. Again, when a thing is present in a subject though the name may quite well be applied to that in which it is present, the definition cannot be applied. But in the secondary substances, not ~~only~~ the name but also the definition, applies to the subject. This means that ~~we~~ should have to use both the definition of the species and that of the genus with reference to the individual man. Thus substance cannot be present in a subject.

If primary substance cannot be predicated of anything, then it can never form the predicate of any proposition. But in the case of secondary substances, the species is predicated of the individual, the genus both of the species and of the individual.

The notion of substance cannot be discussed in a meaningful way without discussing the cartesian notion of substance. Therefore, a discussion of cartesian notion of substance follows. In the works of Descartes, the notion of substance is associated with these of conscious self and its states, and the problem of substance becomes associated with the problem of personal Identity. He gives a formal definition of substances as follows. "Everything in which there resides immediately as in a subject, or by means of which there exists anything that we perceive that is any property quality, or attribute of which we have a real idea is called a substance; neither do we have any other idea of substance itself, precisely taken, then that it is a thing in which this something that we perceive or which is present

objectively in some of our ideas, exists formally or eminently, For by means of our natural light we know that a real attribute cannot be an attribute of nothing,"¹ Descartes holds that mind and body as possessing the essential attributes of substance. Thought is the essential attribute of mind, and extension is the essential attribute of matter. But he does not explain what a substance is apart from its essential property. What a mind is apart from thinking or what matter is apart from extension. In another place, he defines substance, as follows, which is just a reformulations of his original definition, "Really the notion of substance is just this --- that which can exist by itself, without the aid of any other substance."² Descartes postulates three types of substances; material body, mind and God. But the material body and mind depend on God for their existence. This is why he calls them relative

¹ Haldane and Ross - Philosophical works Translated.
 2d.ed. Cambridge 1931.
 Vol II. P.33.

² Ibid - P.101.

substances. He calls God as absolute substance since God does not depend on anything else other than Himself for his existence.

Descartes makes a categorial distinction between mind and matter. Mind is immaterial, it is conscious, and it is characterised by thinking. Since it is a substance it cannot be destroyed except by God, who is the only non-dependent substance. Mind is a spiritual substance. Thinking, feeling and willing are essential to the mind. The principal criteria for a physical substance, are Extension, figure and motion. Though mind and body are different from one another, yet they are causally connected or there is a causal interaction between them.

When we think, there is no limitation of time and space. But the body is limited within time and space. There is another difference, the body is gross but the mind is subtle. The body is subject to inspection but the mind is subject only to introspection. The knowledge of this basic difference between the material things and the living things led the philosophers to advocate

the philosophy of dualism. According to this philosophy, the universe is made of dual realities since there are two kinds of realities, namely mind and body.

The first modern dualistic philosopher in the west is Descartes. Descartes has given a very powerful argument in support of dualism. He holds the view that substance is that which is in itself and is conceived through itself. It can be conceived independently of the conception of anything else. According to him, the substance is that which is self-dependent and free. The existence of the substance does not depend on anything else. He remarks that by this standard, God only counts as a substance, because he says that everything else owes its existence to the creator who could take it away. He also uses the term "substance" in a different sense according to which a substance is a thing that depends causally on nothing except itself and God. According to Descartes, there are two created substances the mind and the body. The mind is the thinking substance, and the body which is

extended. And they are completely different and independent of one another.

Descartes believes that both these substances have mutually contradictory characteristics. The matter has extension as its main characteristic. The main attribute of the mind is thought. Because of its quality of extension, the matter occupies space. But the mind is not limited by space. It is conscious, and therefore, it is in time only.

Descartes also believes that both the mind and the matter interact though they are independent of each other.

The division of the matter or the body is possible but not that of the mind. Again, the matter is unconscious and the mind conscious. One may ask how these two different substances interact. Descartes explains it by saying that the interaction is possible through the pineal gland which unites the mind and the body.

Spinoza is a monist. And he was very familiar with the works of Descartes. And Spinoza

developed some of Descartes' ideas. Reflecting on Descartes' account of substance Spinoza showed that if by "substance" we mean according to Descartes' definition "that which is in itself and conceived through itself", then it is easy to show that there can be only one such being, the whole universe. Thus Spinoza equated substance with God and nature. But Spinoza is a monist and Descartes a dualist. So Spinoza's substance theory differs from that of Descartes. And this brings out the fundamental difference between Descartes and Spinoza. And the fundamental difference consists in the fact that the former is a dualist while the latter is a monist.

Leibniz is another important rationalist philosopher, who makes the concept of substance fundamental to his philosophical system. He uses two of the Aristotelian criteria of substance, namely the substance as a centre of change and substance as a logical subject. But in it he adds the concept of simplicity. The basic element of Leibniz's metaphysical system were what he called monads. In his masterpiece

Monadology he defines "monad" as nothing but a simple substance without parts.

Descartes and Leibniz, like Plato are mathematicians, and Spinoza shared with them the belief that a metaphysical system should exhibit the deductive reasoning and the logical necessity that characterise mathematics. His principal work, inadequately entitled Ethics, was composed, as he puts it, in a geometrical manner. Its metaphysical propositions were set out in the form of definitions, axioms and theorems.

Descartes' account of substance as that which is capable of independent existence, was further taken up and developed by Spinoza, in his Ethics. Reflecting on the concept of substance, he deduces that there could be only one substance, to which he gave the name of "God or Nature".

The concept of substance is central in Spinoza's metaphysics. The concept of substance is historically very much attached with the conception of scientific knowledge. It is attached with the conception of scientific knowledge for

the discovery of the essential nature and for the real definitions of the various natural kinds of entity existing in the universe.

In Ethics Spinoza's definition of substance imposes just such a restriction. "I understand substance to be that which is in itself and is conceived through itself". "I mean that, the conception of which can be formed independently of the conception of another thing."³ The full meaning of this definition emerges in proposition II, III and VI, which depend upon it. "Two substances, which have different attributes have nothing in common between them."⁴ "Of two things having nothing in common between them, ~~are~~ cannot be the cause of the other."⁵ "One substance cannot be produced by another."⁶ For as Spinoza writes in supporting Prop VI "if a substance can be produced from anything else, knowledge of it would depend upon know-ledge of its cause,"⁷

³ Spinoza - Benedict - Ethics Pt.I Def.III translated by W. Hale White, revised by A.H. Stirling. 1899.

⁴ Spinoza - Ethics - Part 1 Prop. II. Page-3.

⁵ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I Prop. III. Page-3.

⁶ Spinoza - Ethics - Part I Prop-VI. Page- 4.

⁷ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I Axioms - IV page-2.

and consequently it would not be a substance. He defines substance as "that which is in itself and is conceived through itself; in other words, that the conception of which does not need the conception of another thing from which it must be formed."⁸ It is the ultimate self - dependent Being. It follows from the definition that the substance is a self dependent Being. It follows that there can be only one such Being. Though immediately it may not seem that there cannot be plurality of substances. But he argues that there is one such Being which is self-dependent. And this substance is not produced by any external cause. It is self - existent.

Spinoza identifies this one substance with God. And again he identifies God with Nature. That is they are one and the same, although from different points of view.

⁸ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I def. 3.

The definition of substance is contrasted with that of his definition of mode. He defines mode in the following way. "Mode is the affection of substance, or that which is in another thing through which also it is conceived."⁹ Though the substance and mode are two different concepts both of them mutually help to clarify the meanings of each other. The relation between substance and its modes is unique.

The relation between substance and its modes is asymmetrical. The dependence is not mutual, rather one-sided. Substance, by the very definition of Spinoza's, that "which is in ~~xx~~ itself and conceived through itself". But mode cannot exist or conceived without substance.

Spinoza says that the primary substance is something "conceived through itself", He explains the meaning of "conceived through itself" as follows : the concept of it does not have to be formed from the concept of something else. That is what he says in Ethics". The conception of which does not need the conception of another

⁹ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I def. 5.

thing in order to its formation"¹⁰ Spinoza holds the view that the principal substance is infinite, indivisible, unique, free and eternal.

The "infinity" of substance follows from its definition. In the definition of substance he says that the substance is "in itself"; that is not dependent for its essence or existence anything except itself. Before we discuss how the substance according to Spinoza is infinite we should know what he means by finite. Spinoza defines "finite" as that which can be limited. He gives an example, that the body is called finite, because there are greater things than body. And the body is not self-existent. But to substance there is no limitation. It is complete in-itself. It is completely self-existent. That is to say, absolutely independent of anything external. Substance is all - inclusive Reality.

Spinoza, however, gives a demonstration that "in nature there cannot be two or more substances of the same nature or attribute."¹¹ Then the question may arise whether it is true

¹⁰ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I def. 3.

¹¹ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I Prop. 5.

that there is only one substance. If one says that the substances can be distinguished from one another, on what basis do we make this distinction, is it on the basis of attributes or modifications ? Spinoza says that the attributes constitute the nature of substance. So substance cannot be differentiated by their attributes. And that no two substances can have the same nature or attribute. And since substance cannot be limited by anything else of the same nature, it cannot be finite, Therefore it must be infinite.

Spinoza speaks of two kinds of "infinite"; absolutely infinite and infinite in its own kind. By absolute infinite he means that substance which is identical with God. And by infinite in its own kind he means the attributes which constitute the essence of substance. Spinoza writes, " of whatever is infinite only in its kind ("in suo genere"), we can deny infinite attributes; but to the essence of that which is absolutely infinite pertains whatever expresses essence and involves no negation."¹² An attribute is "infinite

¹² Spinoza - Ethics-Pt. I Def. 6.

in its own kind" only because there are other Attributes besides it. But there is no substance other than it, and so it is "absolutely infinite".

The substance according to Spinoza must be infinite in its nature, because every finite thing has its limited boundary. And if the substance were finite, there could be supposed something outside or other than it, which limits it or constitutes its boundary. Therefore, a substance must be essentially infinite. And this in fact amounts to saying that it possesses an infinite number of attributes each of which is itself infinite. Spinoza uses the word "infinite" which by definition means unlimited or ~~un~~bounded.

In Ethics Prop. 14 Spinoza writes that "there is only one substance in Nature". To prove it Spinoza holds that the substance is identical with God. Because the substance is "absolutely infinite" and since God alone is "absolutely infinite". And all the attributes must belong to him. Because if any attribute will outside His nature, He would not be absolutely infinite. And since substance is infinite in its character,

Therefore, it can say that there is only one substance and that it is God.

It is Spinoza's fundamental argument in part I of the Ethics that there can be only one substance which is cause sui "cause of itself". And also he says that this single substance must be identified with the universe conceived as a whole. This substance is unique, all inclusive totality. Therefore, he calls it "God or Nature".

Spinoza holds that nothing can exist independently of, or distinct from this single substance. He means to say that everything which exists must be conceived as an attribute or modification of, or they are in some way inherent in this single substance. And so, he identified this substance with Nature. Because the Nature is conceived as a whole or as the totality of things. In other words, substance identified with Nature, is conceived as an intelligible whole. Substance we know, is "in itself" and has no external cause. Therefore, it exists necessarily; that means the cause or reason for its existence is contained in its nature or definition.

Since substance has no external cause, we can conclude that there is only one substance, which is God. He is the only substance - the completely, self dependent all inclusive Reality. And there is nothing outside Him.

Spinoza's conception of God is an immanent cause, by which he holds God as the eternal cause of all things, Spinoza by saying that God is the immanent cause of all things, he means that everything must be explained as belonging to the single and all inclusive system which is Nature. Therefore, it is impossible to conceive any cause, which is somehow outside or independent of the order of Nature. Since, Nature or God is the eternal cause of all things, it is the cause of itself. And it is self sufficient. Therefore, Spinoza holds that it must be conceived to be free in its self creative activity. Because a thing is said to be free, only when it exists by mere necessity of its own nature and is determined in its own actions by itself alone. This is applied only to God or Nature as a whole, and cannot be applied to something else.

God or Nature according to Spinoza is conceived as a free and originating cause. By the word free he does not mean "voluntary", that is, when we speak about a human action as "free", which generally does mean voluntary. But according to Spinoza, to describe God as acting either voluntarily or involuntarily is meaningless. God or Nature is free only because it is self determined.

There is nothing over and above and beyond God. Therefore, everything follows from God. And, since substance or God is an all inclusive whole, an all pervading principle of the universe, he concludes that Nature is identical with God. God is immanent ground, the source of all reality. He is Natura Naturans means "unique creator". Every individual things are cause by the Nature only.

Spinoza not only believes that there is only one substance, but also argued that the thing which is not itself a substance, must be a property of substance. That is the thing which is not God is either an "attribute" or a "mode" of God.

An attribute he defines in Ethics as that "which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance"¹³. Infinite substance, for Spinoza, entails infinite number of attributes. Each one of this infinite attributes is infinite and eternal in essence. But out of this infinite attributes thought and Extension can only be perceived by the human mind. These two attributes do not limit each other. And, moreover, each of them is infinite in its own kind.

Substance, though it has infinite Attributes, yet it is absolutely indivisible. The indivisibility of substance follows from its infinity. Because the Infinite does not admit of parts, "It is impossible to conceive parts in an infinite nature, since by their nature all parts are finite".¹⁴

Spinoza says "No substance can be divided"¹⁵ which means substance cannot be consisted of parts.

¹³ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I Def. IV.

¹⁴ Spinoza - Short Treatise on God, Man and His well being 1, Chap. 2.

¹⁵ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I Prop - 3.

A substance could not have parts which were substances, or the parts which ~~were~~ not substances, and for this a substance could not have any parts. If a substance were divisible into non-substances, then the parts of this division would be an annihilation, of its existence. If a substance can be divided into parts, then at the start there would be an ultimate subject of predication, but at the end there would be none. Therefore, a substance must be conceptually independent of everything else. But a thing always depends upon its parts.

In proposition 12 in the Ethics Spinoza refers to the indivisibility of Substance. In proposition 12 he says that "No attribute of substance can be truly conceived from which it follows that substance can be divided".¹⁶ Spinoza says that if we suppose that the substance could be divided, he argues, the substance would be divided the parts into which it would

¹⁶ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. 12.

divide will not retain the nature of substance. And if one thinks that it will retain, then it follows that from one substance many substances could be produced. And there will be plurality of substances of the same nature. But this is absurd. Because, there cannot be two substances of the same nature. And if there cannot be two substances of the same - nature, then how there can be two or more substances ? And, since, there cannot be two or more substances having the same nature or attribute we can say that substance can never be divisible. And a substance cannot be produced by another substance. For two absolutely disperate entities cannot be related as cause and effect.¹⁷ In the other case, that is, if the parts do not retain the nature of Substance, this would mean that Substance, which "exists in itself and is conceived through itself", would lose its nature, or what is the same thing, would cease to exist. But as we know that substance exists from the self sufficiency of its own nature. Its essence involves existence, and it cannot be conceived except as existing.

¹⁷ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I, Axiom 4 and 5.

Spinoza says in Ethics that "It pertains to the nature of substance to exist."¹⁸ and he also holds that "God or substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists."¹⁹ These two propositions demonstrated that "There is nothing by which substance can be produced. Therefore, it will be the cause of itself. That is its essence necessarily involves existence. Or in other words it pertains to its nature to exist.

God or nature as eternal, self creating and self created possesses infinite attributes. God and all the attributes of God are eternal. Out of this infinite attributes we know only two attributes, thought and Extension.

These infinite attributes appear in specific ways or modes. Spinoza defines modes as "the modification of substance, or that which exists in and is conceived through something other than itself."²⁰ Modes are the individual things

¹⁸ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. 7.

¹⁹ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. 11.

²⁰ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. def. V.

of our experience. The substance can exist without these modes but the modes can never exist without this substance, since nothing can exist without God. Therefore, every mode is within God. He believes that whatever is finite and has a determinate existence, cannot be produced by the absolute of any attribute of God. Because from the absolute nature of God only attribute is infinite as well as eternal. Therefore, he argues that every mode which exists necessarily and infinitely must necessarily follow either from the absolute nature of some attribute of God, or from some attribute modified by a modification, which exists necessarily and infinitely. Thus, these are two ways of viewing modes. Modes are said to be actual in - sofar as they exist at a certain time and place, and in this sense modes do not follow from God. However, modes are said to be real when they are conceived under the form of eternity. In this sense modes are viewed to follow from God.

In Spinoza's view everything is either a mode of mind or a mode of matter. Particularly, any finite object and mind are not direct effects of God. Because every finite thing has its finite cause in another finite thing, and so en ad infinitum. Any particular thought or body is not necessary for the existence of God. But, yet no single thought or body could exist without the substance. Thus, while Descartes regards thought and extension to be two distinct substances, Spinoza regards these thought and extension to be the two essential attributes or modes of the infinite substance. According to him mind and body constitute two parallel systems. Which have an intimate relation in one substance or God. In his view, there is no ontological distinction between God as the infinite substance and God as Nature.

In Spinoza's view, Nature is the totality of all things --- that is, that we can think of Nature as a physical system, or system of things extended in space, and also as a system of minds or thoughts. This extension and thought

are taken to be all pervasive characteristics of the self creating universe. The universe can be conceived either as a system of extended bodies, an infinite spatial system, or as a system of thought. And both these conceptions of universe are complete in themselves. But one conception is not reducible from other conception - that is, we cannot conceive thought as a modification of extension, or extension as a modification of thought. This doctrine is difficult to understand without referring to Descartes. Descartes' distinction between Extension and Thought which is generally implied in ordinary usage, when we distinguish between what is mental and what is physical, that is, for Descartes, Extension and Thought are two different substances. But according to Spinoza, Thought and Extension are only the ordinary associations of the words mind and body. In his view, thought and extension are not the two separate events, that is, mental and physical as ordinarily imagined to be or which Descartes regarded as two separate entities. But according to Spinoza

they are same order of causes in the same substance, they are conceived under two different attributes of this substance. Thinking substance and extended substance are one and the same substance. Whatever we think of Nature under the attribute of Extension or under the attribute of Thought or under any other attribute, we shall discover one and the same connexion of causes. The union of individual human minds with individual human bodies is for Spinoza only a special case of the general identity of the order of connexion of causes in Nature.

Spinoza ~~says~~ "If substance is that which needs nothing other than itself to exist if God is the substance and everything else is dependent upon Him, then, obviously there can be no substance outside of God. Then thought and Extension cannot be attributes of separate substances, but are merged in God. They are attributes of one single independent cause and bearer of qualities and events,

the one principle in which all things find their being". It is clear here that he strongly criticises the dualism of Descartes for it creates a number of difficulties.

Descartes admits that the ultimate reality is independent but he believes that there are two relative realities, one the matter and the other the mind. But at the same time, he admits that God is above these relative realities. He is absolute and the matter and mind are relative substances.

Spinoza refutes the argument of Descartes and says that if a substance is called relative, it is a contradiction in terms. According to him, the matter and the mind are not two separate substances, but attributes of the one and the same substance, and ultimate reality that is God. Thus God Himself is without attributes. We see attributes in Him. God cannot be called attributes because He then becomes limited and imperfect. God is infinite and eternal.

According to Spinoza, the worldly things are the modes of the material attributes of God. In the same way, all the living beings are the modes of the conscious attributes of God. And God is in the end the ultimate reality, who is attributeless, formless, unmodified, detached, absolute, and infinite.

Spinoza considers God to be abstract. That is the reason why his philosophy is known as abstract monism. He believes that our limited mind cannot have complete knowledge of God. The only way of knowing Him is to merge the self in His infinity. The world is the appearance of God, Who is immanent everywhere, Everything is God and God is everything. Thus, Spinoza propounds his theory of pantheism.

Spinoza tries to provide a monistic explanation of the relation between mind and body. He presents a parallelistic theory in this connection. He believes that the mind and the body are two rays of the same light or two spokes of the same wheel.

Whatever happens in the one certainly influences the other though they never meet each other. It follows therefore, that every physical phenomena has physical repercussions. From the bodily point of view, the same phenomenon is physical while from the mental point of view, it is mental. Thus, mind and matter, conscious and unconscious are independent of each other and do not cause each other. They are, in fact, attributes of God and they exist together in Him, Their activities are determined by Him. Spinoza, therefore, believes that the events of the world are unchangeable and determined like the laws of mathematics. He also believes the order of God is definite and fixed like mathematical principles. Multiplicity is the manifestation of that ultimate reality.

Reality for Spinoza, consists of substance and its modes. The "cause of itself" is that whose 'essence involves existence'. Here 'essence' is the cause, and 'existence' is the effect, The Real as "essence" is the cause of itself as

"existent". The causal process from essence to its actuality is not a process in time but is eternal, the identity of the Real is not lost in the process. And it is only thus that Real can be described as "self caused". For if existence were totally different from essence, and cause from its effect, nothing could significantly be called 'cause of itself'. When Spinoza says that "the existence of God and His essence are one and the same thing", he emphasizes the aspect of their identity, so that something can validly be the cause of itself. Thus Spinoza says "In the same sense in which God is said to be the cause of Himself, He must be called the cause of all things."²¹ He is the cause of himself, His essence is the cause of Himself. His essence is expressed in infinite ways in infinite determinations. Thus, Spinoza identified God with Nature.

Spinoza's theory that substance is one is opposed to Descartes' view that there are three substances, that is God, mind and matter. Spinoza's definition of substance is almost same as

²¹ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. 25.

that of Descartes. But Spinoza defines substance more strictly and seriously. Only difference is that Descartes holds mind and body to be two separate entities while Spinoza they are the same order of causes in the same substance.

Spinoza's notion of substance to differ from that of Leibniz's conception of substance. Because Leibniz assumes that there is a plurality of substances. Leibniz's system is called the Spiritual Pluralism. He believes that monads are particular, independent, and self - sufficient ultimate substances. In spiritual pluralism of Leibniz, monads are ultimate substances and spiritual atoms. Like Spinoza's substance. it is also eternal, without beginning and permanent. They are without any parts. They are conscious and cannot be divided. Each monad has its own separate existence, and they are conscious of energy.

According to Leibniz, an ultimate substance must necessarily be simple, that is without parts. But he assumes that there are plurality of substance. And he holds that the nature of substance

is the sum of its predicates.

Spinoza's theory of substance is open to some criticisms. In the demonstration of the 15th proposition of the first part of the Ethics, the statement claims "Besides substances and modes there is nothing."²² Now the question arises, does this mean that God's attributes are nothing real, for they are defined as what the intellect perceives of substance as constituting its essence? Are they only ways of thinking or are they real differentiations within God's essence? There has been much controversy over this point. It becomes complicated, because Spinoza's contention that the attributes of God are infinite in number. Some have alleged that the attributes are purely subjective ways of conceiving the essence of substance. But at the same time others reject this subjective interpretation and maintain that attributes are "extra intellectum" (outside of the intellect).

²² Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. vi.c and Ep-IV.

Caird argues that Spinoza fails to explain the diversity of the world by any principle intrinsic to the nature of substance. Caird says that the unity of God, remains ultimately blank, without means of explaining the infinite diversity. But according to Spinoza, it necessarily follows from it, Caird contends that Spinoza uses the finite human intellect as an extraneous source of diversity. The attributes are the ways in which it perceives the essence of substance. Caird then says that the human intellect is only a finite mode in one of God's attributes that of Thought. And so it could not possibly be the source of the attributes themselves. Nor could it be the source of the infinite intellect of God. Because that too is only a mode of thought, though an infinite one, and so cannot be the source of the attributes of which Thought is only one.

Extension, Spinoza declares, is indivisible. But his critics find him to be at fault for alleging that God could have extension as an

attribute, and thus might be divisible. They argue that because extension is divisible it could not be infinite. But Spinoza seeks to turn their argument against themselves by saying that extension is indivisible and so it must be conceived as infinite.²³ The same moreover, must apply to all the attributes. It must surely be obvious that Spinoza, while excluding partition did not exclude distinction within substance. That which has infinite attributes, has in each of which infinite modes. Both in the Ethics and in the short Treatise he says that, conceived as substance extension (or space) cannot be divided, but if conceived as "variously affected" then its parts are distinguished modally only, but not in reality.²⁴ The modal differentiations, however, are not themselves the product of our imagination. They are real in that and so far as they follow necessarily from the infinite nature of God.

Commentators like Caird and Joachin criticise Spinoza for providing no principle of

²³ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. cf. XV.

self differentiation in the nature of substance which will adequately explain how the infinite unity of God issues in the infinite variety of his attributes and modes.

The chief conclusions on this topic Spinoza sums up thus : "that God necessarily exists; that He is one God; that from the necessity alone of His own nature He is and acts; that He is, and in what way He is, the free ca-use of all things; that all things are in Him, and so depend upon Him that without Him they can neither be nor can be conceived; and, finally, that all things have been predetermined by Him, not indeed from freedom of will or from absolute good pleasure, but from His absolute nature or infinite power."²⁴

²⁴ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. I Appendix.

C H A P T E R - I I I

PLURALITY OF ATTRIBUTES

We have seen in the first chapter that to rightly fulfill the function assigned to it as the first principle of knowledge. Spinoza's "substance" must be so conceived as to be, not only the pre-supposition, but the productive source of all finite beings. It is the ideal origin and explanation of things. It is also which transcends them, we not only find in it the unity which is above all differences, but also find in it that from which all differences are evolved. In other words, the transition to the finite world must lie in the very nature of substance.

Spinoza holds that substance is causa sui which means cause of itself. It is ~~xxx~~ a unity which differentiates itself, first into "infinite attributes" then into "infinite modes", This "infinite - modes" again are modified by an infinite number of "finite - modes".

In Spinoza's view, "substance" or "God" "consists of infinite attributes, of which each

expresses the eternal and infinite essence"¹ within these infinite attributes he says we can know only two that is "thought" and extension. Because thought and extension can be cognisable by human intelligence.

Spinoza demonstrated in the fifteenth proposition of the first part of the Ethics, that "Besides substances and modes there is nothing."² Now the question arises "Does this statement mean that God's attributes are nothing real"? Because the attributes are defined as what the intellect perceives of substances as constituting its essence. Or, are they only ways of thinking or are they real differentiations within God's essence ? This point is very complicated because Spinoza's contention that the attributes of God are infinite in number. Some interpret attributes as "extra-intellectum", that is, outside of the intellect.

Spinoza defines "attribute" as "that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essential

¹ Spinoza - Ethics Pt.I def. 6. Translated by W. Hale white, revised by A.H. Sterling 1899.

² Spinoza - Ethics - Part-I. ef VI. And Ep.IV.

nature of substance"³. "Each attribute of the one substance must be conceived through itself"⁴.

"God or a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists."⁵

Spinoza holds that God or Nature is a unique substance. And the unique substance which is God or Nature is all inclusive or infinite. And he says that essential nature of God cannot in principle be conceived. Because God is attributes cannot be exhausted in any finite list of attributes because He is infinite having infinite attributes. According to him, to conceive God or Nature who is all - inclusive and infinite is the same, to conceive God as possessing infinite attributes. The attributes of substance or God are simply the essential nature of God as conceived by our intellect. In Spinoza's language, they "are called, 'attributes' because to conceive God or substance intellectually is to "attribute" such and such a nature to God or substance."⁶

³ Spinoza - Ethics - Part-I. Def. IV.

⁴ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. X.

⁵ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. XI.

⁶ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Letter - IX.

But as God's essential nature is infinite, and so there is infinite ways in which He can be conceived by the intellect. And therefore, Spinoza holds that there must be infinity of attributes. Secondly, he says, each attribute which presents itself to the intellect, should be infinite. Because each attribute is the essential nature of God or substance. If the attributes would not be infinite in its own kind, then it could not be an expression of the essential nature of God, who is infinite. Therefore, one is compelled to speak of an infinity of attributes, each of which is in itself infinite.

In one of his letters, after defining substance, he adds something to the definition of attribute. "By attribute I understand the same-thing, only that it is called attribute with reference to the understanding attributing a certain nature to substance."⁷ In other passages of his writings Spinoza expressly teaches that the ~~tree~~ or absolute nature of God is something that lies beyond our all conceptions

⁷ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt.I. Ep-27.

formed of Him by finite intelligence. He says in Ethics "If the will be supposed infinite, it must be determined to exist and act by God, not in so far as He is absolutely infinite substance, but in so far as He has an attribute which expresses the infinite and eternal essence of thought".⁸

Spinoza says in Ethics, 1 Prop.19 "God is eternal"⁹ or in other-words, "all His attributes are eternal." Eternity is essential existence. Now the question may arise, if the attributes are eternal, can it be that they lack real existence ? Spinoza defines God as substance "consisting of" infinite Attributes. If the attributes really had no place in God, could He be defined as a "Being which consists of infinite attributes" ?¹⁰ In the Short Treatise Spinoza writes, "The idea of infinite attributes in the perfect being is no fiction. We have so far not been able to discover more than two only."¹¹

⁸ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I - Ep. 32.

⁹ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop-9.


¹⁰ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt.I. Prop-10.

¹¹ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt.I. Ch. I note.

"As regards the attributes of which God consists" he writes, "they are only infinite substances, each of which must of itself be infinitely perfect. He holds that attributes are as real as substance itself. Attributes are not the fictitious characterisations of substance. But they constitute the essence of substance.

The attributes are not the characters ascribed to substance by the finite mind. They constitute the essence of the substance.

Spinoza speaks of God as "Being absolutely infinite". He also holds that "substance consisting of infinite attributes." Since God is the only substance God has infinite attributes. Since he holds that substance is infinite and eternal, and that the attributes express its essence. Therefore, the attributes are also infinite and eternal. But they are not absolutely infinite as substance is.

In the view of Spinoza "infinite attributes" not only means the infinity of each Attribute, but also their infinite number. 

And since, substance is infinite in its nature, no finite number of Attributes can express its essence. He says "Nothing in nature is clearer than that each being must be conceived under some attribute, and the more reality or being it has the more attributes it possesses expressing necessity or eternity and infinity. Nothing consequently is clearer than that Being absolutely infinite is necessarily defined as Being which consists of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses a certain essence, eternal and infinite"¹².

Though God has infinite Attributes, we know only two, that is, Thought and Extension. Why man cannot know any other attributes except these two ? He answers this question in Ethics as follows, "The human mind can only get to know those things which the idea of an actually existing body involves, or what can be inferred from this idea But this idea of the Body neither involves nor expresses any other attributes of God than Extension and Thought

¹² Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. 10.

Moreover, no other attributes or from their modifications. Therefore, I conclude that the human mind cannot attain to knowledge of any attribute of God except these two."¹³

Spinoza says that though we can know only two attributes within these infinite attributes we can affirm that there are infinite number of Attributes. Because God who is absolutely infinite cannot be constituted only by these two Attributes. God's infinite nature always expresses in infinite ways. Therefore, God must be conceived as having infinitely many attributes though within these attributes we are able to know only two attributes that is Thought and Extension.

In the view of Spinoza to think about God or Nature is to conceive a substance as possessing some attributes. Since all propositions are assumed to attribute a predicate to a subject, it is no more than to say that to think about God or Nature is to entertain some proposition of which God or Nature is the subject. Any proposition of which God is the subject is necessarily

¹³ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Ep.64.

true, That is, such that its denial is self - contradictory. It follows that we cannot make God the subject of any negative proposition, unless we mean to say that the possession of one attribute is incompatible with the possession of some other attribute. God possesses all positive attributes, or is perfect. It is impossible to say that such and such are the only attributes which God possesses. If we will say that God possesses only attributes, it would make God the subject of a simple negative proposition. However, the intellect may conceive God and with whatever propositions we may describe God's power and activity, we can never say that these propositions exhaust God's power, or that God cannot be conceived in any other way. God is all inclusive and infinite, and therefore, we cannot make any such simple negative statements. Because by doing this we would be setting limits to God's power or perfection.

The ascription of attributes to God does not imply any tampering with the absolutely

indeterminate unity of the divine nature. It is in ~~as much~~ as they do not characterise the nature in itself. Finite intelligence cannot rise above itself. Man is himself a being at once spiritual and corporeal - in Spinoza's language, a "mode" or modification of thought and extension. We can know God, only under these two aspects or attributes. But we cannot conceive of the infinite nature as exhausted by our ways of apprehending it. In Spinoza's statement. "The more reality or being anything has, the attributes belong to it."¹⁴ Again he says that "A being absolutely infinite, therefore is necessarily defined as being which consists of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses a certain essence eternal and infinite."¹⁵ Though, to us God is expressed only under the two attributes of "thought" and "extension", the divine nature would reveal itself in different ways, and to an infinite number of minds or to an infinite understanding in an infinite number of ways or by an infinite

¹⁴ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop. 9.

¹⁵ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. def. 8.

diversity of attributes. Spinoza says in Ethics, "The infinite ways whereby each particular thing is expressed in the infinite understanding cannot constitute one and the same mind of a singular thing, but infinite minds, seeing that each of these infinite ideas has no connection with the rest."¹⁶

By yet another expediency does Spinoza find it possible to ascribe attributes to the infinite substance without infringing its purely indeterminate nature by means of the distinction between what is "absolutely infinite" and what is only "infinite in its own kind." Here he tries to avoid the implication that by attaching predicates to substance, we necessarily introduce an element of finiteness or negation into it. And therefore, he tries to conceive of predicates which express something not negative but positive, not finite but infinite.

¹⁶ Spinoza - Ethics- Pt. I. Ep. 68.

And which therefore limit neither the infinite substance nor each other. Such predicates are the infinite attributes of God. All finite distinctions disappear in the infinite. So whatever distinctions we conceive are not finite, as the finite thing disappears in the infinite. We can conceive of distinctions which are not finite, in this sense that no one of them is limited either by the rest or by anything within its own sphere. We call a thing finite when it is bounded by another thing of the same kind. As for example, one piece of matter by another. But the things of different kinds do not limit each other. Mental things are not limited by material, nor vice - versa. Ideas do not occupy space. Bodies are neither inside nor outside of minds. If therefore, we can think of the attribute of extension as that which has no limit within its own sphere its infinitude is not violated by the existence of another attribute of a wholly different kind, such as thought. There is no limitation of infinite extension that it cannot think. And nor there is no limitation of infinite thought

that it is not extended. This way we may conceive an infinite number of such attributes. Each attribute is infinite in its own kind. Though the attributes are infinite in their own kind, yet their infinite diversity implies no reciprocal limitation. We may say that if we conceive of an infinite number of such attributes as together constituting the nature of a being where each of them can express only a part of that nature, and therefore each must be regarded as a limitation of its infinitude. But Spinoza objects to this sort of criticism. His answer is that, it would be a valid objection if we conceive of infinite substance as made up of thought, extension, and other attributes. When we think of a thing as an aggregate or combination of qualities, we are thinking of a part of the whole. It necessarily follows that each part is less than the whole. And whatever it will express it would be a limitation of nature. But the absolutely infinite substance is not the sum or totality of its attributes. According to his peculiar conception, each of the different attributes should express the same infinite

reality, and the whole of that reality. If each of the different attributes would not express the same infinite reality, then it would be difficult to become an absolute whole.

Spinoza says that the attributes are not complimentary properties. The omission of any one of which leaves the whole imperfect. But each the same perfect whole contemplated in a different aspect. Thought does not contain more or less of God than extension. But the content of both "thought" and "extension" and of an infinite number of other attributes is absolutely the same. He says "Each attribute of one substance must be conceived through itself."¹⁷ Again, he adds "It is obvious that though two attributes are conceived as distinct that is, the one without the aid of the other yet we cannot therefore, conclude that they constitute two different entities or substances. For it is of the nature of substances. For it is of the nature of substance that each of its attributes is conceived through itself (since all the attributes which

¹⁷ Spinoza -~~Ethics~~ - Pt. I. Prop. 10.

it has have existed simultaneously in it), nor could are be produced by another; but each expresses the reality or being of substance. It is therefore, by no means absurd to ascribe a plurality of attributes to one substance,"¹⁸ From this point of view, we can say that Spinoza is enabled to combine the notions of absolute indeterminate unity with endless difference, or he is enabled to conceive of an infinite multiplicity of attributes without tampering with the unconditioned unity of substance. He holds that though the attributes are said to be infinite each in its own kind, they are not really different in kind from each other.

The content of each and every attribute is precisely the same as that of any other attribute. Sometimes we think that there are differences in the attributes. But Spinoza says that there is no difference. The difference which occurs is only a difference in our way of looking at it. He says that the difference in kind is nothing more than a difference of aspect.

¹⁸ Ibid - School.

From this point of view we can say that Spinoza's reconciliation, about the diversity of attributes with absolute self-identical unity of substance, is simply that the diversity is a purely subjective one.

In the doctrine of Spinoza there is a relation between "Mode" and substance, He defines mode in the following way, "I understand affections of substance or that which is in another through which also it is conceived."¹⁹ "Modes can neither exist nor be conceived without substance, therefore they can exist only in the divine nature, and can be conceived only through it."²⁰ "Besides substance and modes nothing but affections of the attributes of God."²¹ Further, he identifies finite modes with individual things and thus he says that "they are nothing but affections of the attributes of God, or modes by which the attributes of God are expressed in a certain definite manner."²²

¹⁹ Spinoza - Ethics Pt.I. def. 5.

²⁰ Spinoza - Ethics. Pt. I dem. 15.

²¹ Spinoza - Ethics. Pt.I. 28 dem.

²² Spinoza - Ethics. Pt.I. Cor. 25.

In order to understand the relation between God's attributes and His modes we must know Spinoza's identification of perfection, or reality with power. A thing exerts more power of existence only when it will have more perfection. And for this reason God is one who has infinite perfection, and who exists necessarily, has an infinite power. Therefore, God's essence, existence and power are all one and the same. And by this attributes God expresses His essence, or we can say that this is the way by which God's power is exercised. This exercise of power issues in the production of infinite modes. He says "From the necessity of the divine nature, infinite things, in infinite modes, (that is everything that can fall under the infinite intellect) must follow."²³

The attributes are the real and operative forms of God's potency. Every mode (or modification) of any attribute is identical in substance with a corresponding mode of every

²³ Spinoza - Ethics. Pt.I. Ax-XVI.

other attribute. And therefore, Spinoza repeatedly tells us, that the order and connexion of modes in one attribute (e.g. ideas) is the same as the order and connexion of modes in any other (e.g. bodies).

Spinoza insists that substance is indivisible and is not divided by or among its attributes. Spinoza seems to be saying that no attribute is divisible in its own kind. He says that Extension is indivisible and so also thought. sometimes we think confusedly "Extension" and "Thought" as a "whole" and a "part". But according to him it is absolutely indivisible. He says that the infinite things never consist of parts. Infinite is absolute whole and if consists of parts, then it will be finite. Because the parts by their nature must, be finite. So the parts of finite thing cannot constitute an infinite whole. Extension, for example, is infinite and everywhere the same. Since it is infinite, it cannot be augmented or reduced in quantity. It never requires anything to add to it or anything increased with it, because it is,

already infinite in extent. Since it is an infinite whole it cannot be reduced in quantity because that would imply a limit and something beyond it. There is nothing other than extension which could limit or "extend" beyond extension itself. And if one could divide it, the parts would be separable. But there is nothing that could separate it except the extension itself. Therefore, we can say that it remains always indivisible. And if divisible into parts, then each part would be independent of the rest. And as it would be independent of the rest, so it could be understood without the rest. So we can say that one might be destroyed without affecting the others. But this is impossible, so far the extension as such is concerned. Because no part of Extension is intelligible without extension as a whole and none could be able to destroy it. He says that any "part" of space is a system of spatial relations. And any spatial relation between points involves and implies similar relation to other points, and these again to others, and so on ad-infinitum. Thus,

every "part" is conceivable only in relation to all the rest. And when we consider things as modes of extension they appear to be divisible and are said to consist of parts.

It must surely be obvious that Spinoza, while excluding partition does not exclude distinction within substance. That which has infinite attributes, in each of which infinite modes issue from the boundless potency of substance is indeed infinitely diversified and variegated. Both in the Ethics and in the Short Treatise he says that, conceived as substance, extension (or space) cannot be divided. What Descartes calls "principal attribute" is used as a synonym by Spinoza for "attribute". By "principal attribute" Descartes says that "the one principal property of each substance which constitutes its nature and essence, and to which all others are referred."²⁴ But Spinoza says that attribute is not a property or quality. Descartes holds that property or quality of a substance constitutes its essence, it does not

²⁴ Descartes Principia Philosophic - 1.53.
(Adam and Tannery eds ocuverse de Descartes).

presuppose any other property or quality. The property having a shape cannot be a principal attribute according to Descartes. Because it presupposes that the property is extended in length, breadth, and depth.

Descartes' view is that Thought and Extension are two created substances. But Spinoza says that these cannot be created substances, because they do not exist solely by virtue of their own essence. And if they are not substances, then they must be attributes of substance, God has infinite power of existence. And so He manifests himself in infinite ways, that is, by these infinite attributes. Each attribute specifies itself according to its special nature. The first question which may be asked in this connection is "why is it necessary to assign infinite attributes to God?" Spinoza answers this question by saying that we must attribute an infinity of attributes to God because God is infinite absolutely. Attributes are mutually exclusive. But they

cannot be infinite absolutely. They can only be conceived as God's attributes. He says that if any attribute could exist by its own sufficiency we should, a fortiori to say that there is an absolutely infinite being which must exist of its own sufficiency. For otherwise we should imply that something less than the absolutely infinite has a greater power of existing than what is infinite without qualification.

Human beings are bodies, that is, extended things, and of every mode of extension there is an idea in God's intellect. Spinoza asserts that the idea of human body is the idea of human mind. Thus we can say that the human mind is aware of its body and through that it is aware of **Extension**. And since every idea involves an idea of itself, the human mind is aware of itself and so of the attribute of Thought. Spinoza asserts that it is a matter of experience. And he accepts this as sufficient ground. He says we are not directly aware of any other attribute, and it is only by logical inference from our knowledge of God's infinity that an

infinity of attributes is postulated.

According to Spinoza there is only one substance, which is God. Thus, the human mind or soul, is not a substance, nor is it a mere mode or part of God. Thought, however embraces all things and God is aware of all things. And all things are in Him, including man's consciousness. There is no limitation on God's power. And Thought and Extension are assigned to God as attributes expressing his eternal essence.

Descartes speaks of human souls and of all kinds of bodies as "substance". Leibniz holds that there is only one genuine substance which is God. Descartes holds that Extension and Thought are the created substance by God. But according to Leibniz it is a mistake to think that a mind or a body is first created by God, and thereafter continues to exist and to pursue its adventures without any further action on God's part. ~~He~~ He says that unless God actively intervenes at every moment to maintain it,

any created thing would at once cease to exist. A created thing persists only in so far as God continuously re-creates it from moment to moment. He says that God is the only existent which does not need to be kept in existence from outside itself, and in that sense he is the only genuine substance.

The basic elements of Leibniz metaphysical system are what he called monads. In his Mona-
dology he defines "monad" as "nothing but a simple substance". By "simple" it means without parts. That there are such simple substances follows, for Leibniz, from the admitted fact that there are compound things, which can be nothing but collections of simple things. His monads, are supposed to be immaterial) substances, which are in the centres of change and thus subjects of predicates. He also says that the monads are centres of activity.

Since Spinoza assumes that there are infinity of attributes, then we may call him a pluralist. But God according to Spinoza is a union of substances of one attribute. A set

of substances of one attribute, each infinite in its kind. Therefore, we cannot take him as a pluralist.

There are some criticisms against the Spinoza's doctrine of attributes. He holds that the God has infinite attributes. An objection may be raised at this point. That God has infinitely many attributes.²⁵ It may be asked "Is not the concept of an "infinite member" self-contradictory according to Spinoza ? To him number like Time and Measure is nothing real, but only an 'aid to the imagination Spinoza points out that the space between two eccentric circles, one within the other, cannot be explained by any de-finite number. By its very nature number cannot be infinite. "For otherwise number would not be number."²⁶ Such being the nature of Number, it would seem that it could not be rightly applied even to a single attribute. What justification then, can there be, one

²⁵ Short Treatise - 1 Chap-I note.

²⁶ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt.I. Ep-12.

may reasonably doubt for speaking of "infinite number in referring to all the Attributes together.

The reasoning on which Spinoza's doctrine of the infinity of Attributes is based is, as Hallett²⁷ points out, metaphysical in character, and not merely based on experience. On the basis of experience, no more than two Attributes of Thought and Extension can be derived, for man consists of modes of these two Attributes only. To say that Attributes are infinite in number it is denied that the attributes are numberable. The attributes are neither one nor many but they are infinite.

Of the various objections urged against Spinoza's theory of Attributes, one is concerned with the relation of Substance to its attributes. The question is the Attributes are infinitely many; but substance is one or unique. How can the one substance have infinite Attributes ?

²⁷ Hallett *W.B.de - Elements - P.281.*

Spinoza answers this question in Ethics . He writes "that each of its attributes is conceived through itself, since all the attributes, which substance possesses were always in it together, nor could one be produced by another; but each expresses the reality or being of substance In nature only one substance exists and that it is absolutely infinite,"²⁸ that is, it consists of infinite attributes.

To conclude : Spinoza asserts that all the Attributes are united in the one substance. Spinoza conceives Reality as dynamic and active. It is the nature of the absolute infinite Power to manifest itself "in infinite ways". The Attributes are these "infinite ways". But they manifest the self same power and as such are identical in and with it.

²⁸ Spinoza - Ethics - Pt. I. Prop - 10 Sch.

C H A P T E R - IV

C H A P T E R - I V

PROBLEM OF FREEDOM

The problem of freedom in Spinoza's philosophy cannot be discussed without discussing Spinoza's notion of substance. Because of the fact that he discusses "freedom" within the framework of his "substance". It describes the essential nature of substance.

The problem of freedom is one of the perplexing problems of philosophy. It is a problem in which almost everyone is interested - the scientist, the theologian, and the moralist, as well as the philosopher and the man in the street. This problem arises because there seems to be an apparent conflict between beliefs based on two different groups of facts (1) On one hand, certain facts of moral experience convince most of us that we are accountable for our actions. For example, we praise and blame one another on the basis of observed behaviour, and we accept praise and blame from others; for our own acts. This means that we believe ourselves to be morally responsible. And if we are morally

responsible, then we must be free, because moral responsibility seems to presuppose moral freedom.

Many Philosopher is of the opinion that the basis of Ethics is the freedom of the will. Kant says that the freedom of the will is the chief postulate of Ethics. Freedom is the very basis of morality, we can make our own choice only when we are free. It is only in this state of living that we can decide whether we have to do a particular thing or not.

The freedom of the will means responsibility, for one's own actions. If a man is not free to act independently he cannot be held responsible for some bad acts. It is his freedom that makes him responsible for his behaviour, character, voluntary actions and decisions. The moral decision of a person depends on the freedom.

Freedom lies in self determinism. It can never mean indeterminism. Every decision taken by the individual is selected by self. An

individual's nature is reflected in all his independent actions, and since they emerge from his self, he is responsible for them. If on the other hand he is co-erced into doing them, he cannot be held responsible for them.

(2) On the other, there is another group of facts which seems to support universal determinism. According to this theory, every event in the universe is an inevitable consequence of an antecedent cause. It seems self evident to many people, for example, that "every event must have a cause". Every scientific inquiry seems to presuppose that the phenomena under investigation are governed by some laws and that these laws are capable of being discovered and stated with mathematical precision.

But these two types of views, encounter a serious problem. How can ~~we~~ we be free in the way required to render us morally responsible, if every event in the universe is an inevitable consequence of antecedent causes ? Or, if we are indeed free in the sense required to render

us morally responsible, then how can every event be an inevitable consequence of an antecedent cause ?

We must begin this inquiry by understanding what Spinoza means by "freedom". Spinoza's concept of freedom is the key to his political philosophy. This aspect of him makes him different from Hobbes. It may be noted here that the concept of freedom does not have any role to play in Hobbsean political philosophy.

In Ethics 1, def. 7. Spinoza gives a metaphysical definition of freedom. "That thing is said to be free, which exists by the mere necessity of its own nature, and is determined in its actions by itself alone."¹ Here he means that the thing is said to be necessary, or rather compelled, when it is determined in its existence by something else in a certain fixed ratio. This definition of freedom by Spinoza is different from that of Hobbes or indeed the utilitarians.

¹ Spinoza - Ethics-Pt.I def. 7.

Both of them hold that by freedom we mean a lack of constraint or what has been called a negative liberty.² Now the question may arise what could Spinoza mean by "the necessity of its own nature," and "determined in its action by itself alone" ?

In order to answer these questions we must first understand what Spinoza means by "nature". In its most general sense Spinoza says that the nature is one substance (or God). He says that each individual that exists must in some way be connected with all other individuals. This connection is manifested in everything's participation in the same lawful order. Thus, each individual has as its nature those particular laws of the universe which govern its action."³ As a part of nature, man must be subject to the same laws as the rest of nature and have his own peculiar connection to nature as a whole and its laws."⁴

² Si Isaiah Berlin - Four Essays on liberty.

³ Spinoza - Ethics - IV - preface - III.

⁴ Spinoza - Ethics - IV - Prop - 4.

By stating this Spinoza means to say that no human is a special case in the order of the nature, but is bound by all the same natural laws as all other parts of the universe. He says that man is bound by certain special natural constraints, for example, he cannot breathe water, fly by flapping his arm etc. These constraints would not limit our freedom. However, there is one general law of nature which, when applied to humans, has special relevance to Spinoza's idea of freedom, and that is self - preservation.

A person is morally responsible for his or her actions, then only if, and insofar as, he or she is the original cause of them. Moral freedom is called the freedom that is a condition of moral responsibility. Moral responsibility includes the natural freedom of self determination. Without this self - determination and without free will there is no moral responsibility.

The word "freedom" can have many different meanings. It can refer simply to the lack of physical constraints. It can ~~also~~ also mean the absence of external social pressures and demands. Or it can signify that state in which an individual is able to create his own life - and, in a real sense, his own self - through his choices.⁵

The freedom which is determined oneself by one's own choice, that which is most proper to human being. And this is the freedom with which ethics is mostly concerned.

The most simple kind of freedom is that the absence of physical coercion and constraint. This type of freedom is called "physical freedom". It is this kind of freedom which can be typically enjoyed by the wild animals (Born free) and by infants. Physical freedom corresponds to the simplest kind of action. As far

⁵ Beyond the New - Morality. The Responsibility of Freedom - Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw - Page-1.

example A dog chases a rabbit. A baby goes across a room to get a red ball. By contrast a prisoner in a cell does not have freedom in this kind. There is some one who always forces him to perform him some actions in the cell.

"Freedom" can also mean doing as one pleases. That means the absence of social demands and restrictions. A slaves' basic condition is not one of freedom in this sense. Because whatever he does or does not is not done according to his own choice. Whatever he does is determined by some one else that is his master. ^{Sometimes} Freedom consists in the actions' done as a means to an end. At this level of action one is free to do as he pleases to do. That is he desires to achieve the end. This kind of freedom leads people to do as one pleases, it is opposite of doing as one is required to do. And if everyone will go in his own way, and does his own thing then the society will collapse.

"Freedom" also refers to self-determination. The shaping of one's own life, by one's own

self, that is by one's own choices. This is the kind of freedom which is close to morality.

In order for "a person to be morally responsible, ~~he~~ must be a free agent - an agent whose actions are under his own control. For, if the actions he performs can be neither right nor wrong, then there is nothing to credit or discredit him with.

It is apparent that a correct understanding of "moral freedom" is imperative. By moral freedom we mean that freedom which is a condition of moral responsibility. Now the question may arise what is the nature of this freedom? Is such freedom consistent with universal determinism or not?

By the term determinism we mean that everything that happens is determined. In ordinary usage "to be determined" is roughly synonymous with "to be resolved". But in the context of the problem of human freedom "to be determined" is synonymous with "to be caused". Given this view, the determinism

becomes the view that everything that happens has a cause. A theory about the universe, a theory that every even in the universe is an inevitable consequence of antecedent causes. According to this theory, the state of the universe at any given moment determines in every-detail what it will be like at any future moment. So, according to this theory an 'omniscient' scientist could predict with perfect accuracy each and every detail of the future. Precisely when each organism would come into being, every detail of its life, the exact moment of its death, and so on.

"But if every event is determined (Caused)", the objection arises, "how is human freedom possible ? And if our every action is caused, then how can it be free ? To answer this question we need to examine determinism from the view point of fatalism. From the view point of Fatalism, determinism is true. That is to say that Fatalism does not deny that everything that happens has a cause. It also holds that the human beings

do not have the power to change the course of events. Therefore, according to Fatalism whatever is going to happen is going to happen, no matter what anyone does. However, fatalism is not a particularly useful concept in attempting to understand the free-will-determinism problem.

Indeterminism is simply the denial of determinism. Like determinism, it is a theory about the universe. Indeterminism denies that everything that happens has a cause. It asserts that the universe is so constituted that some events occur that are not the inevitable consequences of antecedent causes but are, rather, uncaused, spontaneous, original. An indeterminist readily admits that there are vast areas of the universe in which events are not only theoretically predictable but actually predictable. Determinist says freedom is possible only when determinism is true. They say only these things are acts when they are caused by us. If they are not caused at all, they are cut off from all roots. That is to say that they just

come into existence from nowhere. And these things could not even be called acts of or by person who performed them.

Determinist says that in fact, he would not be doing them, since doing them means causing them to happen. They would just happen to him, Determinist gives an example, suppose we have a friend whom we have known for years and learned to trust completely. Now suppose that his next act were cut off from all causal conditions - that he were seized with an attack of the indeterminists freedom. (lack of causality) there would be no reason to trust him anymore, for what would happen next would not be his act, because it would not be caused by him, which is simply impossible, because every act is caused by a person himself.

So we come back again to determinism. Because "I caused my actions" is the motto of freedom. "My actions are caused by me", is that of determinism. Determinism is not only compatible with human freedom, but human freedom is

possible only on the assumption that determinism is true.⁶

There are two different meanings which are often conveyed by the single word "freedom". In its negative sense it means the absence of constraint. Here the freedom means we are free to do anything according to our will. We are free means no one is forcing us to do something against our will. That is if we live in a tyrannical dictatorship in which most of our acts are forced upon us. Here our acts are forced in response to an order. In such a situation we are acting under compulsion which is opposite to freedom. We are free only when our acts are uncompelled.

And in the positive sense freedom roughly means the same as ability. In this sense we are free not from restraints, but to do certain things. In this sense we are free to do certain things only if we choose to do so.

⁶ R.E. Hobart. "Free-will as involving Determinism and Inconceivable without it."

The degree of freedom in which we are free are vary from person to person and from place to place. Now, the question concerns the relation of freedom to determinism. Is determinism incompatible with freedom ?

Determinism only says that what ever happens has some cause, or other. So we see that there is no restriction so far as determinism is concerned. Our freedom can never be restrained by any doctrine of universal causality. Our freedom may be restricted by the actions of other people and environmental conditions. It may also be restrained by the conditions within ourselves.

But how can we be free, if every event is caused ? Are our decisions also caused ? According to determinist, "our decisions are caused" usually mean what we desire or prefer. As for example, I prefer cake to ice-cream, so I decide to order it for dessert. So there is no lack of freedom.

In one sense freedom means "the opportunity to do, what we want to do". In this sense

we have the freedom to do whatever we are not hindered from doing by external constraints or natural limitations. This type of freedom is called the "circumstantial freedom of self-realisation." The circumstantial freedom of self-realisation is a necessary condition of moral responsibility.

If the freedom is necessary for moral responsibility, then this freedom is to be determined by the True and the Good. The condition of freedom cannot be stated in purely metaphysical terms. For we cannot know which capacities and circumstances are necessary for freedom unless we know which capacities and circumstances will enable us to form the right values and perform the right actions.

The problem of freedom cannot be a purely metaphysical one. Because for being determined by the True and the good is very different from being determined by causes. Because for to be determined by the good is not to be determined by the past. And when one

does something he does the thing because he has been determined to do it. He has done it not that one has been taught to do it. That means, one will go to do whatever it is right to do. It seems that one will do the right action whether or not one has been taught. And if one is going to do whatever one has been taught to do, then it seems one will do it whether or not it is right.

In order for an agent to be morally free, an agent must be capable of being determined by the good. And the determination by the good is, as it were, the goal we need freedom to pursue. To have the freedom, our actions must be determined by the good. And if this is the case, then freedom to be or to become the sorts of persons whose actions will continue to be so determined. Here in this point of view we can say that an agent is free only if he is the sort of agent whose actions are not causally determined at all. Then it is clear that in no standard incompatibilist view's about the conditions

of moral responsibility can be right.

Then we can say that the freedom consists in the ability to be determined in a particular way. And this is the view of compatibilist. For insofar as an agent is determined in the right way, the agent can be said to be acting freely. Then one can claim that whether an agent is morally responsible depends not on whether but on how that agent is determined. It seems that an agent can be both determined and responsible only insofar as he performs actions that he ought to perform. Then on the other hand, if an agent performs morally bad actions, then his actions cannot be determined in the appropriate way. So if an agent is ever to be responsible for a bad action, it must be the case that his action is not psychologically determined at all. According to this view, then in order for both moral praise and moral blame to be justified then the psychological determinism must be false. By psychological determinism here we mean that an agent's action is determined by his interest - that is

his values or desires - and his interests are determined by his heredity or environment.

According to Spinoza, there is only one free cause, and that is God. He says that, other causes like the human intellect may be considered free, only in a derivative sense, Derivative in the sense that in so far human activities and expressions are "parts" of God's power. By free cause he means that an adequate cause of its effect. That is the cause which does not require to explain its effect.

Compulsion, however, must not be confused with determination. Because the action which is free may very well be determined without being compelled. In Spinozistic language God is not determined by anything outside himself. God's power issues forth in free-activity. His power is identical with his intellect, and his intellect is absolute and complete. There is nothing in this universe to conceive what God can produce and what he cannot produce. According to Spinoza, God's consation is both free and determinate.

Everything that he produces is determined. God is in no way compelled to do anything.

Spinoza points out in a letter of 1674, "I call a thing free which exists and acts from the pure necessity of its nature, and I call that unfree, of which the being and action are precisely and fixedly determined by something else." So we can give an example, though the notion of God involve the notion of necessity, is free because he exists only through the necessity of his own nature. Similarly, God cognises himself and all else freely. Because it follows solely from the necessity of his nature that he cognises all. Therefore, we can say that freedom consists not in free decision but in free necessity.

But there are created things which are all determined by external causes to exist and to act in a fixed and definite manner. Consider a stone for an example. Stone receives an external cause to act in a certain quantity of motion. The continued motion of the stone is due to compulsion, not to the necessity of

its own nature. Because to act in a certain manner it requires external causes.

The necessity by which a stone makes a definite movement as the result of an impact. Likewise, it is said to compel a man to carry out an action when impelled by any reason, we can say this because man is conscious of his actions and that he thinks himself to be its originator. According to Spinoza, man not only is conscious of his action, but he also may become conscious of the causes which guide him. He says that nobody will deny that the child is unfree when he desires milk, or the drunkard when he says things which he later regrets.

According to some philosophers, human will depends on two chief factors, the motives and the character. If one bears in mind that a man adopts an idea, or mental picture, as the motive of his action only if his character is such that this mental picture arouses a desire in him. Then this type of action appears as determined from within and not from without.

Now from this we can say that he first adopts a mental picture as a motive given to him, from without. A man believes he is free. He thinks he is free only because he is independent of external impulses. Hartmann says in his book the "Phaenomenologie" . "Even though we ourselves first adopt a mental picture as a motive. We do so not arbitrarily, but according to the necessity of our ~~a~~characterological disposition that is, we are anything but free."⁷

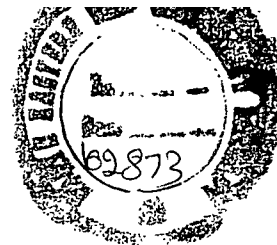
It has been said that man is free when he is controlled only by his reason and not by his animal passions. Or we can say that to be free means to be able to determine one's life and action by purposes and deliberate decisions. We can say in another way that to be free means to be able to do as one wills. But to be free does not mean to be able to want as one wills.

Man can certainly do as he wills. But he cannot want as he wills. He would not want

⁷ Phaenomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins.
P. 451.

because his wanting^o is determined by motives. That means freedom of will means without motive. But without a determining motive the will is an empty faculty. Now one may ask the question "How only through the motive an action ~~became~~ real and unreal?" Now we have to say that the human will is free when it is determined by the strongest motive. By strongest here means that a motive by which we are compelled to act on. If I am forced by the motive to do it then it seems that the freedom ceases to have any meaning.

In any particular act of will we must take into account the motive and the driving force, because motive is a factor by which a human character or a mental picture adopts. And the driving force is the will factor. This will factor is belonging to the human organisation and directly conditioned by it. Motive is the momentary determining factor of the will of an individual. But the driving force is the permanent determining factor of the individual. Motive of a will affects a human being and



determines him to act in a certain direction. He acts in a particular way because he gives to his life a definite moral or ethical stamp.

If we want to understand how a man's action arises from his moral will, then we must first study the relation of this will to the action. When we observe the action we must be very careful to observe whether the actions are in determining factor or not. While I am performing the action I am influenced by a moral maxim. I perform the action because I have grasped the idea of it, I am influenced by a moral maxim to do the action. And this morality can live in me intuitively. When I perform an action, it is because I find a ground in myself for my action. That is my love of the action. When we perform an action we do not work out mentally, that is, whether my action is good or bad. We perform this action because we love it. According to Spinoza, an action will be "good" if the intuition is stupid (percipious)

in love. And it will be "bad" if it would not be the case.

Now the defender of moral standard might ask the question, 'If everyone does what he pleases, then how would we distinguish between good deed and crime' ? Because every corrupt impulse that lies within us has as good a claim to express itself as has the intention of serving the general good. By merely conceiving the idea of an action we cannot determine a moral being. To determine a moral being we have to judge good or evil.

To answer this question one can say that, if we want to understand the nature of the human will, then we must distinguish between the paths which lead to this will, and the character by which the will assumes this goal. This goal consists of the realisation of moral aims, which are grasped by pure intuition.

Man is free in so far as he is able to obey himself in every moment of his life.

Our life is made up of free and unfree actions. Nature makes of man merely a natural being. Society makes of him a law-abiding being. And he himself can make him a free man.

According to the Monistic view, man may act unfree - when he obeys some perceptible external compulsion. And a man's act is free when he obeys none but himself.

According to Monistic view, the man's action is partly free, and partly unfree. In their view, man finds himself to be unfree in the world of percepts, and he realises within himself the free-spirit.


According to Spinoza, human action is always determined. There is no human action which is far from being undetermined. But the human action is never independent of efficient causes. It is because men, while aware of their desires, are ignorant of their causes. Human being believe themselves to have free-will. But they pursue their ends towards which their desires are directed. And the end

the men pursue are not isolated objects or events. Because this is the event which is still unrealised, and which plays a mysterious causal influence upon them.

Spinoza says that every particular thing and event is to be explained in the light of the whole system. It means that nothing can be conceived without God or substance or Nature. God is the immanent cause of all particular finite events. God is the infinite mode of the relevant attribute. He is the perfect cause which determines all finite events in the physical world.

By saying this he is not rejecting human responsibility or human freedom. But he rejects the view that men are to be held responsible for their passions and to be blamed for the behaviour that they cause. Because, Spinoza says that man is a natural being, and men's conduct is always determined. But it is wrong to believe that his determination is always on the same level. We do not blame a horse for

being a horse. Same-way wickedness is not committed by free will. A man acts from passion, and behaves under the influence of external causes. It is merely the practical expression of imagination. It is that action which is a mental aspect caused by outside cause and which effects upon the body. This type of behaviour is neither free nor responsible. Man is conscious being, and what he acts, acts from the necessity of their own nature alone. Such action is free, though not ~~undetermined~~^{he}. In the same sense God is a free cause, and acts as freely and as necessarily as he thinks.

In the considered opinion of the moralist that an action being voluntary, or the agent's acting freely, is a necessary and sufficient condition for the action being classed as "moral". Now if ~~we~~ take an example, that a man acted freely, that is to say that the cause of his action was an 'inside' cause. That is he himself is  responsible for his action. Not something outside is responsible

for his action. Thus on the moralist point of view, that a man's action comes into moralist category only if the causes of his action are "inside" him. According to them, this type of action can be blameable or praiseworthy.

But there are many actions, which arise from inside causes - and the action is free action. But this cannot be described as moral action. If we take an example, a man acted in a certain way, and the causes of his action are unknown to us. This means that we do not know whether it has been caused by "outside" or "inside" causes. And also we are unable to know whether man has done it freely or not. But if the action can be praiseable, we are entitled to say that the action was a moral action. Because when a man steals, murders, then we feel at a loss to account for or explain why a man does those things, without counting his 'inside' or 'outside' causes we give no sphere in morality. If we consider that the acting freely is a necessary condition for morality, then murdering or stealing would

have fallen in the sphere of morality.

It is true that one can only blame a person if he is responsible for his actions, otherwise, one would not be blaming the person, but something 'outside' the person. We can perfectly well categorise an action as moral or non - moral or we can praise an action as moral without knowing who had done the action.


Spinoza is, a rigid determinist. He regards "freedom" in the sense of indeterminism is meaningless. Spinoza holds that the word "free" can intelligibly be used in opposition to the word "constrained". An action is free in this sense in so far as the cause of it is wholly contained in the nature and past history of the agent. He says that it is constrained when some essential factor in its total cause lies outside the agent.

Spinoza holds that the ordinary analysis of choice and voluntary decision which most determinists would accept, is radically mistaken. In the view of determinist we contemplate

various possible alternatives. And finally the balance of attractiveness in one alternative that determines our choice in its favour. But according to Spinoza, we desire things, not because the prospect of certain things attracts us but because we already have an impulse towards them. And he says the prospect of other things repels us because we already have an impulse against them. The decision and the action are completely determined by the impulses. We do the action, whether we are aware of them or not.

But in another way he is a rigid determinist. Because he claims that all men pursue their own interests or his assertion that all events have causes, that is, the actions are determined by his own interest. But that his interest are not determined by anything external to himself. For if we require that his actions not to be determined by his interests, then this type of action cannot be determined by his moral interest.

An agent who performs right actions,

we imagine or take it for granted that agent had done the right actions, because he is rightly determined to perform the action. The action is determined by the right sort of interest. And his interest is determined by the right sorts of reason. Spinoza says it is the nature of  all men to pursue their own interests and seek to extend their own power.

He says man is a part of Nature and the will belongs not to the universe as a whole, but only to certain finite parts - such as men.

C H A P T E R - V

C H A P T E R - V

C O N C L U S I O N

It may be worth reiterating that my first chapter is entitled "Monism's Concept of Substance". Needless to say that Spinoza is opposed to Cartesian dualism. His opposition is based on the following logic. Given the Cartesian definition of substance, there must be only one substance, therefore, we can talk only of Monism.

I have carefully examined the notion of substance, the traditional philosophy especially in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. It may be mentioned here that both Plato and Aristotle used the term substance to refer to "essence".

I have examined Aristotle's position thoroughly. According to him substance in the truer sense of the term can be predicated of a subject nor can it be present in a subject.

The notion of substance cannot be discussed in a meaningful way without discussing

the Cartesian's notion of substance. Therefore, it is imperative on my part to discuss the Cartesian notion of substance albeit briefly. According to Descartes, a substance is a thing that can exist by itself without the aid of any other substance. It is obvious that Descartes defines substance in terms of independent existence. However, he talks about three different substances, namely God, mind and body, of these three, the first one is considered to be absolute, and the other two to be relative. God is taken to be absolute because he does not depend on anything else, other than himself for his existence. Mind and body are terms as relative substances because they depend on God for their existence, though they do not depend on anything else. It is a well known fact that Descartes makes categorial distinction between mind and matter. This distinction is too familiar. I would not, therefore, make a detailed study of this.

In this chapter, I have also discussed the position of Leibniz as regards the concept

of substance. Leibniz rejects the Cartesian definition and defines the concept of substance in terms of independent action. He comes to the conclusion that there must be an infinite number of substances, which are known as "monads". It follows from this that Leibniz advocates pluralism.

Spinoza borrows the cartesian definition of substance and develops it in its magnum opus, Ethics, why this work called Ethics ? It is called Ethics probably because of the reason that it contains three elements that are associated to "Ethics" in some normal sense of the term. This three elements are as follows.

(1) This is a thesis in the metaphysics of morals, there are no properties of goodness and badness and states of affairs can inherently possess, and that no properties of rightness or wrongness that can ~~in~~ wherein action.

(2) This is an account of what is actually going on when the common man judges things to be good or bad it may be stated here that, in the opinion of Spinoza, common men wrongly

thinks that goodness or badness are objectively out there in the world.

(3) This is an account of Spinoza's theory of human motivation.

According to Spinoza a substance is an ultimate self-dependent thing. Spinoza identifies this substance with God or Nature. He talks about ~~attrib~~tributes and Modes of this substances. I shall not discuss a problem of attribute here, since I have discussed that in my second ~~ch~~apter. But I may say a word or two regarding the relation between its substance or modes. The scheme of Spinoza, the relation between the substance and its modes is asymmetrical, this means that there is no mutual dependence, that is, modes depend on the substance, while substance does not depend on mode. Spinoza is certain that the substance is infinite. It means that it is not limited by anything at all. This is why we come to the conclusion that it is logically impossible to talk about two or more substances. Spinoza speaks of two kinds of "infinite" namely

"absolute infinite" and "infinite in its own kind". I have tried to bring out the distinction between as satisfactory as possible.

According to Spinoza, there is nothing over and above and beyond God, therefore, everything follows from God. Since substance or God is an all inclusive whole, Spinoza argues, God is the source of all reality. Thus he is Natura Naturans. He also believes that a substance is absolutely indivisible. This goes to show that substance cannot have parts.

I have tried to criticise Spinoza's concept of substance. Spinoza claims that God has infinite number of attributes. What are these attributes ? Are they purely subjective ways of conceiving the essence of substance ? Or, are they extra intellectum (outside of the intellect) ? Some philosophers give subjective interpretation of the attributes while some others give objective interpretation of them. The criticism of John Caird are worth mentioning here. He has given his own criticism in the book Spinoza. He contents that Spinoza has

failed to give a satisfactory explanation as to the diversity of the world by any principle. That is intrinsic to the nature of substance. And in his considered opinion Spinoza's God remains ultimately vacuous. His contention is that Spinoza uses not any intrinsic principle of the substance but uses the finite human intellect as an extrinsic source of diversity. In my opinion, this criticism is valid, because Spinoza advocates only abstract Monism.

Spinoza claims that extension is indivisible. How can extension be indivisible ? ~~It~~ appears that it is impossible to conceive of extension without being capable^{of} division. Spinoza's principle of unity is abstract unity without any principle of differentiation. Thus, the identify of substance becomes suspect.

My second chapter is entitled Plurality of Attributes. In this chapter I have carefully examined Spinoza's position regarding attributes. He opines that though the substance is a unity it differentiates itself, first into

infinite attributes and then into infinite modes and this infinite modes are further differentiated into an infinite number of finite modes. According to him of the infinite attributes & the human intellect is able to know only two attributes namely Thought and Extension, what is exactly the cognitive status of this attributes. I have tried to answer this question in a satisfactory manner. In the scheme of Spinoza, the attributes of substance constitute its essential nature as conceived by our intellect. Since, the essential nature of substance is infinite there is also an infinite way in which it can be conceived by the intellect. The eternity of substance, Spinoza says implies the eternity of the attributes. According to him, the idea of infinite attributes is not a fiction though we are able to know only two of them.

Spinoza often takes infinity to imply totality. He also takes "infinite" as a virtual synonym for "all". He takes "God" has infinite attributes" not merely to entail God has "all

attributes" but to be equivalent to it. For Spinoza, the concept of infinite is the concept of the unlimited, which involves no negation. It means that the concept of infinity is something more than the concept of totality, that is, the concept of whole, where nothing is omitted. Spinoza speaks of two kinds of infinite namely "absolutely infinite" and "infinite in its own kind". The former applies to God and the latter to the attributes. By infinite in its own kind he refers to the attributes which constitute the essence of the substance. An attribute is infinite in its own kind only because that there are other attributes besides it. On the other hand God is a being absolutely infinite because there is no other substance other than himself. By making the distinction between what is absolutely infinite and what is infinite in its own kind he is able to explain the pure indeterminate nature of the substance.

According to Spinoza, mental things are not limited by material and vice-versa. Spinoza holds the view that both mind and body

do not occupy space. He claims that we can think of extension without having any limitation within its own sphere. Its infinitude is not even violated by the existence of another attributes of a wholly different kind such as thought for the following reason. The infinite extension can think and the infinite thought can be extended. It means that though the attributes are infinite in their own kind their infinite diversity implies no reciprocal limitation.

A criticism may be raised against Spinoza which is as follows : Each attribute can be regarded as a limitation of the substance because each attribute can express only a part of the nature of substance. Spinoza answers to this criticism in the following manner. It would be a valid objection only if we conceive of the infinite substance as made a part of extension and other attributes.

When we think of a thing as an aggregate or combination of qualities we are

thinking of the part as a whole. Each part is necessarily less than the whole. And whatever it would express it would be a limitation of the whole. But the absolutely infinite substance is not the sum or totality of the substance. Each of the different attribute must express the same infinite reality. If each of the different attribute does not express the same infinite reality then the whole cannot be a absolute whole.

According to Spinoza, the attributes are the real and the operative forms of God's potency. He insists that the a-ttributes do not make the substance divisible. He also holds the view that attributes themselves are indivisible consider the attribute **Extension**. No part of extension is intelligible without extension as a whole, and none could be able to destroy it. Is not the concept of infinite number "self-contradictory in Spinoza's philosophy ?

I have tried to answer this question. Thus the concept of infinite attributes ~~and~~ leads the Pluralism. This question also ^{has been} taken up by me. The reason as to why Spinoza advocates the doctrine of plurality of attributes seems to be this. Spinoza conceives reality as dynamic and active. It is the nature of the absolute infinite power to manifest itself in infinite ways. The attributes are in infinite ways. However, they manifest the self same power and as such are identical in and with it.

I may refer to Jonathan Bennett's interpretation of Spinoza's monism to bring out the relation between the substance and its attributes.

There must be a substance with every possible attribute.


There cannot be two substances with an attribute in common. Therefore, there cannot be more than one substance. The 1st premise in my opinion brings out clearly the position of attribute in substance.

My third chapter is entitled "The problem of freedom", it is not exaggeration to say that the problem of freedom is a problem perennial problem in philosophy. This problem is not peculiar to philosophy only. Because the fact that scientist, social scientist, theologians, and man in the street are equally interested in this problem. There seems to be a diametric opposition between freedom and determinism. I have discussed both this problems with a special reference to Spinoza. Many philosophers are convinced that 'freedom will' must be the basis of morality. Immanuel Kant one of the greatest philosopher of all time has the same belief when he considers freedom as one of the three postulates of morality. He is of the opinion that we cannot have a meaningful moral discourse without postulating freedom of the will. On the other-hand, some philosopher believe that there is universal determination. The position of Spinoza is rather ambiguous. Does he advocate universal determinism, or does he advocate freedom within a deterministic

framework ? I have tried to answer this question by relying mostly on Spinoza's works.

Spinoza's concept of freedom is a key concept of his political philosophy. And this position of him differentiates his political philosophy from that of Thomas Hobbes's. It may be mentioned here that the concept of freedom does not have any role to play in the Hobbesian political freedom.

Spinoza defines freedom as follows :

"A thing is said to be free when it exists by the mere necessity of its own nature and its determined in its actions by itself alone." It is obvious that this definition of Spinoza differs radically from that of the utilitarian. It may be mentioned here that according to utilitarianism freedom is nothing but lack of  constraint.

What does Spinoza mean by "necessity of its own nature" and by "determined in its action by itself alone". These questions can be answered only by understanding what Spinoza

means by "nature". He says that each individual that exist must in some-way be connected with all other individuals. This connection is manifested in everything's participation in the same lawful order. Thus, each individual has its own Nature, those particular laws of the universe which governs its action. According to Spinoza man must be subject to the same laws as the rest of nature.

By this Spinoza means that no human is a special case in the order of Nature. He admits the fact that human beings are bound by certain natural constraint. For example they cannot breathe water. However, according to him, there is one general law of nature which when applied to human has special relevance to Spinoza's idea of freedom and that is self-preservation.

Spinoza opines that a person is responsible for his or her action if and only if he or she is the original cause of them. According to him moral responsibility can be equated with self - determinism.

According to Spinoza, the ordinary analysis of choice and voluntary decision is radically mistaken. The determinist generally hold that the balance of attractiveness determines every choices. Spinoza does not accept this position, he points out that we desire thing the prospect of certain things but we already have an impulse of it.

Part five of the Ethics is called "of the Power of the Intellect" or of "Human Freedom". This title reflect Spinoza's belief that we can achieve a measure of what we call "freedom" through the cultivation of 'that is to use of reason. In part one of Ethics he defines what is "free" "That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone. But that is called necessary, or rather, which is determined by something else to exist and produce an effect in a certain and produce an effect in a certain and determinate manner. Here, Spinoza seems to be arguing out two distinct things, namely (1) "free

cause" as the universe (2) "The will cannot be called a free cause". It must be noted here that for Spinoza the will cannot be called a free cause as it is acted upon from the outside.

Spinoza is not very clear about the place of sense perception in the life of a free-man. On the one hand, according to him, a free-man is intelligibly self - interested. This means that in the long run he does whatever is best for himself. On the other hand according to him, freedom consists in its being self - cost. This means that he is not in the need of "senses". This position of Spinoza seems to be in co-herent.

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